

**Ethnographic Methods**  
**An Introduction to Qualitative Research Techniques**  
**(L6046)**

**1st-Year Core Course - Spring Term 2010**

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**Workshops:** Please see Sussex Direct for timetable details

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**Course Outline**

Ethnographic fieldwork remains one of the hallmarks of social and cultural anthropology. This course provides an introduction to research methods, techniques and skills that are frequently used by anthropologists in the field. The course is taught via a series of practical workshops in which students receive 'hands on' experience in a variety of techniques including participant-observation skills, note taking, semi-structured interviewing, participatory learning and action techniques, and research design. The course encourages students to explore the relationships between project design, data collection methods, and data analysis, to assess the strengths and weaknesses of various research methods in different contexts, and to consider the ethics of field research. There is a great emphasis on team work, and throughout the course students will gain experience using various research methods as they collaboratively design, research, write-up and present group projects on the theme of everyday life in Brighton.

**Course Requirements**

This is a core first year course for single and joint honours students in Anthropology. Each week students are required to participate in a two-hour workshop, which combines lecture, practical exercises and seminar components. Students have been allocated to one of the above workshop times and will not normally be allowed to move between groups. In addition to participating in the timetabled weekly workshops students are expected to work collaboratively on group assignments, including a group project which is assessed through the submission of a jointly-authored *Group Project Report* and through a *Group Presentation*. During the course, students will frequently work in small groups, dividing tasks and pooling results along the way. The organisation and self-management of these research groups should be understood as a key skill to be explored and developed in this course. Throughout the course students will be required to present findings to the class in engaging ways (e.g. using overheads, printouts, PowerPoint presentations, etc.): reading from prepared scripts is not encouraged.

## Organisation of the Course

The course is divided into three parts over the ten weeks of Spring Term. In the first part of the course (weeks 1-6) students are introduced to anthropological fieldwork practices and research methods through a series of workshops. Working in groups of 5 or 6, students will be given various assignments to complete outside the scheduled sessions and will begin to develop group research projects exploring aspects of everyday life in Brighton. In the second part of the course (weeks 7-9) students put into practice the techniques they have been learning, and work in a more concentrated manner on their group research projects. In these weeks, instead of the 2-hour workshops, student groups attend a weekly 20 minute 'research surgery' with their tutors to discuss the progress of their projects. In the third part of the course (week 10), we reconvene in a larger group and each small group will present its research to the others. Each group jointly-authors a 4,000 word *Group Project Report* to be submitted in week 10.

<b>Part One</b>	Week 1	Weekly 2-hour workshops (Mondays, Russell-24)
	Week 2	Group assignments
	Week 3	Design & development of group projects
	Week 4	
	Week 5	
	Week 6	
<b>Part Two</b>	Week 7	Weekly 'research surgeries' (liaise with tutors regarding times & venues)
	Week 8	
	Week 9	Development, research & writing-up of group projects
<b>Part Three</b>	Week 10	<b>Deadline for Submission of Group Project Reports Thursday 18 March 16:00</b> , Global Studies School Office, Arts C168
		Group Presentations (Friday 19th March, Russell-12)

## Assessment

The group research projects, which students work on collaboratively throughout the course, are assessed by two methods:

- (1) *Group Presentation* (25% of mark) – a 15 minute presentation made collectively by each group to colleagues and tutors in the week 10 workshops about the group's research project, with both content and presentation skills being assessed;
- (2) *Group Project Report* (75% of mark) – a 4,000 word written report prepared collectively by each group to be submitted no later than 16:00hrs on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2010 (week 10) to the Global Studies School Office (Arts C168).

Group marks are awarded by course tutors, but students also complete a peer/self-assessment exercise in order to reward or penalise group members who have contributed above or below average effort to the group project. Further guidelines for the group research projects, including assessment criteria and method for individual student weighting will be provided in a supplementary reading list distributed in class.

Although not assessed, students are also required to keep a loose-leaf 'workbook' to organise their written work, assignments and research notes throughout the course. The keeping of a workbook is itself training for good fieldwork practice: those who fail to keep organised notes during fieldwork often discover later how difficult it is to write-up their research.

## **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, a successful student should be able to:

1. Show a knowledge of anthropological research methods
2. Demonstrate awareness of the epistemological and methodological issues involved in ethnographic research
3. Demonstrate practical experience of conducting ethnographic research
4. Demonstrate an ability to analyse primary data drawn from their own research
5. Present the results of their research in written and verbal form.

## Recommended Reading

Due to its practice-based approach, there is less compulsory reading involved in this course than in many others. You are required to read **ONE key text per week**. There is, however, a large literature on ethnographic fieldwork and research methods. Students are strongly encouraged to consult the following works, all of which are available in the University library (titles in bold are particularly recommended). These will be especially useful resources for group project work.

### Weekly Key Reading:

- Week 2: Dewalt, K.M. & Dewalt, B.R. 2002. *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press. (Chapter 4: Doing Participant Observation: Becoming an Observer)
- Week 3: Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. 1995. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. London: Routledge. (Chapter 2: Research Design: Problems, cases and Samples)
- Week 4: Dewalt, K.M. & Dewalt, B.R. 2002. *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press. (Chapter 7: Informal Interviewing in Participant Observation)
- Week 5: Clammer, John. In R.F. Ellen (ed.) *Ethnographic Methods*. London: Academic Press. (Chapter 4: Approaches to Ethnographic Research).
- Week 6: Bernard, H.R. 1995. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press. (Chapter 9: Field Notes: How to Take, Code and Manage them)

### Key texts:

- Bernard, H.R. 1995. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
- **Davies, C.A. 1999. *Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others*. London: Routledge.**
- **Dewalt, K.M. & Dewalt, B.R. 2002. *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.**
- Ellen, R.F., ed. 1984. *Ethnographic Methods*. London: Academic Press.
- **Emerson, R.M., Fretz, R.I. & Shaw, L.L. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.**
- Geertz, C. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books. (Chapters 1 & 15)
- Hammersley, M. 1992. *What's Wrong with Ethnography? Methodological Explorations*. London: Routledge.
- Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. 1995. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. London: Routledge.
- **Robben, A.C.G.M. & Sluka, J.A., eds. *Ethnographic Fieldwork: An Anthropological Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.**
- Sanjek, R., ed. 1990. *Fieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology*. Ithaca: Cornell UP.
- Wax, R.H. 1971. *Doing Fieldwork: Warnings and Advice*. Chicago: Chicago UP.

### Further readings:

- Amit, V., ed. 2000. *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World*. London: Routledge.

- Bernard, H.R. 1998. *Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology*. London: Sage.
- Bernard, H.R. 2000. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage.
- Epstein, A.L., ed. 1967. *The Craft of Social Anthropology*. London: Tavistock.
- Frankfort-Nachmias, C. & Nachmias, D. 1996. *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*. London: Arnold.
- Gray, A. 2003. *Research Practice for Cultural Studies: Ethnographic Methods and Lived Cultures*. London: Sage.
- Gupta, A. & Ferguson, J., eds. 1997. *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science*. Berkeley: California UP.
- Johnson, A.W. 1978. *Research Methods in Social Anthropology*. London: Arnold.
- MacNeill, P. 1990. *Research Methods*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. London: Routledge.
- Silverman, D. 2000. *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*. London: Sage.
- Spradley, J.P. 1979. *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Stocking, G.W., ed. 1983. *Observers Observed: Essays on Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Madison: Wisconsin UP.
- Watson, C.W., ed. 1999. *Being There: Fieldwork in Anthropology*. London: Pluto.
- Wolcott, H.F. 1994. *Transforming Qualitative Data: Description, Analysis and Interpretation*. London: Sage.

## Course Schedule

WK	DATE/LOCATION	TOPICS	WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES	ASSIGNMENTS	GROUP PROJECT
1	Monday 11 January Russell-24	Introduction and overview: anthropology and fieldwork; observation; thick description.	Workbooks; video observation exercises; note taking and jottings	Writing-up of jottings; groups to explore three researchable topics and prepare presentations	Introduction to group project work; divide into research groups; 'brainstorm' research topics
2	Monday 18 January Russell-24	From observation to participant-observation; 'tacit' knowledge; choosing informants	Discussion of writing-up of jottings/notes; 'rituals of routine practice'	Participant-observation of routine rituals; research group meetings; pilot research	Presentation of three researchable topics; choose research topic; preliminary research
3	Monday 25 January Russell-24	Research design; literature search and review; research ethics; triangulation & cross-validation	Discussion of 'routine rituals' research; research design and proposal writing; ESRC guidelines; ASA code of ethics	Writing-up of 'routine rituals' research; research project proposal writing	Presentation of final research topic; research design & preparation of research proposal; division of labour in research group
4	Monday 1 February Russell-24	Interviewing techniques; note taking vs audio recording vs video recording; life histories; non-verbal communication.	Audio interviewing exercises; analysis of <i>Shoah</i> interviews ('reading' vs 'seeing' vs 'hearing')	Transcription of audio interviews; research project literature review	Submission of research proposal; literature review
5	Monday 8 February Russell-24	Multi-sited research; participatory learning & action techniques (maps, flow charts, diaries, focus groups, etc.).	Participatory learning & action technique exercises	Preliminary field research	Presentation of literature review; preliminary field research
6	Monday 15 February Russell-24	Field notes; coding; analysing ethnographic data; writing-up and presentation of research.	Case histories: experiences from the field; questions and answers	Group project field research	
7	Check with tutor	Group Project: Field research (with 'surgeries')			
8	Check with tutor	Group Project: Field research (with 'surgeries')			
9	Check with tutor	Group Project: Writing-up Project Report and Preparation of Group Presentation (with 'surgeries')			
10	Friday 19 March Russell-12	<p style="text-align: center;">Group Presentations  <b>(Deadline for Submission of Group Project Reports:  Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March, 16:00, Global Studies School Office, Arts C168)</b></p>			

# ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS

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### GROUP PROJECT REPORT GUIDELINES

TOTAL LENGTH: 4,000 words (not including bibliography and appendices)

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 16:00hrs on Thursday, 18th March 2010 (week 10) to the Global Studies School Office (Arts C168)

COURSE ASSESSMENT WEIGHTING: 75%

#### RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE

The report should be written in prose style, with minimal use of bullet points. The following headings provide a guideline for the content to be discussed in each section. See 'Global Studies Generic Assessment Criteria' on page 9 of this course outline for further information.

#### 1. COVER PAGE

- a. Project title
- b. Group membership
- c. Abstract (*c. 200 words*)
  - i. What you were researching
  - ii. Where you were carrying out the research
  - iii. How you did the research
  - iv. What the main findings of your research were

#### 2. INTRODUCTION (*c. 300 words*)

- a. Context, contribution to broader 'Ethnography of everyday life in Brighton'
- b. Statement of aims and objectives
- c. Main research questions

#### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW (*c. 700 words*)

- a. Summary of previous writing on the subject
- b. This isn't meant to be an exhaustive bibliography of your topic. Rather you should try to 'map out' the topic, to show in reasonable detail what the main currents within research and analysis are and what the main sources of information about the topic seem to indicate

#### 4. RESEARCH STRATEGY (*c. 1,300 words*)

- a. Methodology
  - i. The methods employed to gather your data
  - ii. Connections between methods used – e.g. triangulation of data using different methods (e.g. secondary data, semi-structured interviewing, participant-observation)
  - iii. Explain exactly how you have applied these methods (it is not enough to simply state that you used participant-observation, you need to describe how, when, where, etc.)
  - iv. Copies of jottings, interview transcriptions, etc. should be attached to the report as appendices
- b. Research site(s)
- c. Sample size
- d. Timetable

5. RESEARCH FINDINGS (*c. 1,200 words*)
  - a. Presentation of results of research – it may be useful to present data under separate headings, commenting separately on the different kinds of data you gathered through different methods
  - b. Discuss the consistencies and inconsistencies between data gathered through different methods
6. CONCLUSIONS (*c. 300 words*)
  - a. Relating your research findings to your aims and objectives
  - b. The main purpose of this section is to draw the conclusions derived from each separate research method into a coherent analytical framework
7. CRITIQUE OF METHODOLOGY (*c. 200 words*)
  - a. Provide a self-reflexive account of how well your research project went overall. If there were problems, what was at their root? Were the problems mainly to do with organisation, limiting factors such as time and resources, or did the problems lie with things like research strategy, individual research methods or writing-up the report?
8. BIBLIOGRAPHY
  - a. You must reference your report properly using the standard Harvard referencing system and provide a full bibliography of all source material used. Don't forget to include online material if used.
9. APPENDICES
  - a. Copy of group research proposal
  - b. Minutes of group research meetings
  - c. Additional appendices as necessary

## **GROUP PROJECT PRESENTATION GUIDELINES**

**DURATION:** 15 minutes, including questions & answers (suggest 10 minute presentation + 5 minutes for questions). Timetable for presentations will be strictly adhered to.

**VENUE:** Groups will make their presentations in the Ethnographic Methods workshops on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March, Russell-12. Attendance is obligatory.

**COURSE ASSESSMENT WEIGHTING:** 25%

The objective of the Group Project Presentation is for each group to present their project to their colleagues and examiners in a succinct and engaging manner. Groups should structure their presentations in a similar manner to their reports, introducing their topic and their aims and objectives, contextualising their research in terms of existing literature, outlining their research strategy and methodology, detailing the results of their research and the conclusions they draw. Groups should be aware, however, that presentation skills as well as content are assessed, and they should therefore be imaginative in the manner in which they communicate their work. Reading from the report or a prepared script is discouraged, while effective use of PowerPoint or other audio-visual media is strongly recommended.

Groups wishing to use PowerPoint or other media resources should liaise with course tutors in advance. **PowerPoint files must be submitted to Geert De Neve by 15:00hrs on Thursday 18th March at the latest** and will be transferred to a laptop prior to the presentations.

## **GLOBAL STUDIES GENERIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

### ***Basis on which marks are awarded:***

**0-19 A mark in this range is indicative that the work is far below the standard required at the current level of your degree programme.** It indicates that the work is extremely weak and seriously inadequate. This will be because either the work is far too short, is badly jumbled and incoherent in content, or fails to address the essay title or question asked. It will show very little evidence of knowledge or understanding of the relevant course material and may exhibit very weak writing and/or analytical skills.

**20-39 A mark in this range is indicative that the work is below, but at the upper end is approaching, the standard required at the current level of your degree programme.** It indicates weak work of an inadequate standard. This will be because either the work is too short, is very poorly organized, or is poorly directed at the essay title or question asked. It will show very limited knowledge or understanding of the relevant course material and display weak writing and/or analytical skills. Essay work will exhibit no clear argument, may have very weak spelling and grammar, very inadequate or absent references and/or bibliography and may contain major factual errors. Quantitative work will contain significant errors and incorrect conclusions.

**40-49 A mark in this range is indicative that the work is of an acceptable standard at the current the level of your degree programme.** Work of this type will show limited knowledge and understanding of relevant course material. It will show evidence of some reading and comprehension, but the essay or answer may be weakly structured, cover only a limited range of the relevant material or have a weakly developed or incomplete argument. The work will exhibit weak essay writing or analytical skills. It may be poorly-presented without properly laid out footnotes and/or a bibliography, or in the case of quantitative work, it may not be possible to follow the several steps in the logic and reasoning leading to the results obtained and the conclusions reached.

**50-59 A mark in this range is indicative that the work is of a satisfactory to very satisfactory standard at the current level of your degree programme.** Work of this quality will show clear knowledge and understanding of relevant course material. It will focus on the essay title or question posed and show evidence that relevant basic works of reference have been read and understood. The work will exhibit sound essay writing and/or analytical skills. It will be reasonably well structured and coherently presented. Essay work should exhibit satisfactory use of footnotes and/or a bibliography and in more quantitative work it should be possible to follow the logical steps leading to the answer obtained and the conclusions reached. Arguments and issues should be discussed and illustrated by reference to examples, but these may not fully documented or detailed.

**60-69 A mark in this range is indicative of that the work is of a good to very good standard for the current level of your degree programme.** Work of this quality shows a good level of knowledge and understanding of relevant course material. It will show evidence of reading a wide diversity of material and of being able to use ideas gleaned from this reading to support and develop arguments. Essay work will exhibit good writing skills with well organized, accurate footnotes and/or a bibliography that follows the accepted 'style' of the subject. Arguments and issues will be illustrated by reference to well documented, detailed and relevant examples. There should be clear evidence of critical engagement with the objects, issues or topics being analysed. Any quantitative work will be clearly presented, the results should be correct and any conclusions clearly and accurately expressed.

**70-84 A mark in this range is indicative that the work is of an excellent standard for the current level of your degree programme.** The work will exhibit excellent levels of knowledge and understanding comprising all the qualities of good work stated above, with additional elements of originality and flair. The work will demonstrate a range of critical reading that goes well beyond that provided on reading lists. Answers or essays will be fluently-written and include independent argument that demonstrate an awareness of the nuances and assumptions of the question or title. Essays will make excellent use of appropriate, fully referenced, detailed examples.

**85-100 A mark in this range is indicative of outstanding work.** Marks in this range will be awarded for work that exhibits all the attributes of excellent work but has very substantial elements of originality and flair. Marks at the upper end of the range will indicate that the work is of publishable, or near publishable academic standard.

## **GLOBAL STUDIES GENERIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: PRESENTATIONS**

### ***Basis on which marks are awarded:***

**0-19 A mark in this range is indicative that the presentation is far below the minimum standard expected.** It indicates an extremely weak presentation that is well below the minimum standard expected. This will be because either the presentation is far too brief, very poorly organised and incoherent in content, or fails to address the issue, topic or theme required. The presentation will exhibit minimal evidence of knowledge or understanding of the material, may contain major factual errors and presentation or speaking skills may be extremely weak.

**20-39 A mark in this range is indicative that the presentation is below, but at the upper end of the range is approaching, the minimum standard expected.** It indicates a weak presentation below the minimum standard expected. This will be because either the presentation is too short, poorly organized and difficult to comprehend, or is poorly focussed on the issue, topic or theme required. It will exhibit minimal knowledge or understanding of the material covered and may display very weak presentation or speaking skills, or contain substantial factual errors.

**40-49 A mark in this range is indicative that the presentation meets the minimum standard expected.** A presentation of this quality will show limited knowledge and understanding of the material covered. It will show evidence of some preparation and comprehension, but the presentation may be weakly organised, cover only a limited range of the relevant material or develop a weak theme or argument. It may exhibit weak presentation or speaking skills, lack appropriate visual aids and may contain some significant factual errors. It may not be possible to follow several steps in the logic and reasoning or in any conclusions reached.

**50-59 A mark in this range is indicative that the presentation is of a satisfactory to very satisfactory standard.** A presentation of this quality will show clear knowledge and understanding of the material covered. It will be focussed and show evidence of thoughtful preparation and clear comprehension of the material delivered. The material will be reasonably well structured, coherently presented and exhibit clear speaking skills supported, if relevant, by adequate use of clear visual aids. There may be some omission of relevant material or limited develop of a topic, theme or argument, it may contain minor factual errors and it may not be possible to follow all steps in the logic and reasoning or in any conclusions reached.

**60-69 A mark in this range is indicative of a good or very good presentation.** A presentation of this quality will show a good level of knowledge and understanding of the material covered. It will be well focussed, show evidence of very thoughtful preparation and a very clear comprehension of the material delivered. The material will be well structured, accurate, very coherently delivered and exhibit high level presentation and speaking skills well supported, if relevant, by good use of clear visual aids. Most or all relevant material will be included, any relevant topic, theme or argument will be clearly developed and it will be possible to follow all steps in the logic and reasoning and in the conclusions reached. There should be clear evidence of critical engagement with the theme, issue or topic being presented.

**70+ Such marks are given for an excellent or outstanding presentation.** A presentation of this standard will exhibit excellent levels of knowledge, understanding and presentation skills comprising all the qualities stated above, with additional elements of originality and flair. It will exhibit a critical engagement with the material presented and include independent argument regarding the theme, issue or topic being presented. It will be excellently presented in a fluent speaking style supported if relevant by excellent visual aids.

## **PEER & SELF ASSESSMENT OF GROUP PROJECT PREPARATION**

Group Project Reports (75%) and Group Presentations (25%) are assessed by the course tutors. Marks for these are combined to provide 100% of the 'Group Mark'. Students do have the opportunity, however, to reward or penalise members in their research groups who have contributed above or below average effort to the group research project. This is achieved through a peer and self assessment exercise to be completed by all students. The exercise generates an individual weighting factor which is then applied to the Group Mark thereby producing the individual mark that each student taking the course will be awarded.

### **Peer & Self Assessment Exercise**

One of the advantages of working as a member of a team is that you can all benefit from each other's strengths. The purpose of this exercise is to give recognition to the varied contributions that individuals make to the working of a group.

Below is a list of some of the processes which you will be involved in completing a group project:

1. Ideas and suggestions
2. Leadership, group organisation and support, minute taking
3. Data collection/collation/analysis
4. Report writing, production and editing
5. Preparing/giving verbal presentation

Using the Self & Peer Assessment Form (overleaf) independently assess the relative contribution of each team member, including yourself. The following grading system should be applied:

1. Minimal, or did not contribute in this way
2. Below average
3. Average
4. Above average
5. Outstanding

In assessing the relative contributions of team members, account should be taken of the quality and effectiveness of the contribution as well as the amount of effort expended.

Average refers to the average contribution of your group members to that particular process.

The Self & Peer Assessment Form should be completed independently by all students in week 9 and handed in at the week 10 workshops.

## ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS - SELF & PEER ASSESSMENT FORM

Please complete this form individually in week 9 and hand in at the week 10 workshops.

Your name .....

Workshop (circle, as appropriate):      M 11:00-13:00      M 14:00-16:00      M 16:00-18:00

1. List the names of your team in the table below.
2. Allocate points to each member of your team, including yourself, for each project process using the following grading scheme, where average refers to the average contribution of members of your group to that particular process:
  1. Minimal, or did not contribute in this way
  2. Below average
  3. Average
  4. Above average
  5. Outstanding
3. You are encouraged to use the range of points at your disposal and avoid the tendency to give everyone a similar score.
4. Sum the number of points allocated to each person and calculate the overall number of points you have given to your team.

Group members in alphabetical order, including yourself	Project processes					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Overall Total =</b>						

- Project processes:
1. Ideas and suggestions
  2. Leadership, group organisation and support, minute taking
  3. Data collection/collation/analysis
  4. Report writing, production and editing
  5. Preparing/giving verbal presentation

## APPENDIX A

### Economic & Social Research Council

#### Excerpts from General Guidance Notes on Constructing a Good Proposal

In week 4, you will be required to submit a research proposal, outlining your group research project, and including a statement of aims and objectives, literature review, proposed methodology, etc. This is precisely what anthropologists do when applying for research funds from bodies such as the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). In the Ethnographic Methods course, your tutors will act as 'the Board' who will decide whether your research project gets the 'go ahead'. These excerpts from the ESRC's guidance notes on constructing a good proposal should be followed closely.

#### Content and Presentation

The research proposal is the means by which you will be trying to convince the Board that your application is worth funding so think carefully about what information you are going to give and how it is presented. Make sure you **think your plan through** and cover all stages.

Ask yourself the following questions.

Have I clearly **formulated the problem**, have I put it in context of contemporary anthropological and theoretical debates, demonstrated the way in which my work will build on existing research and make a contribution to the area? Is there a clear and convincingly argued analytical framework? What will the research do, to whom or to what, and why?

Have I established appropriate **aims and objectives**? Are they clear and concise, do they reflect intellectual aims and practical, attainable objectives?

Have I provided a well-thought out **research design** in which there is a reasoned explanation of the scale, timing and resources necessary? Am I being realistic about these? Am I using the most relevant approach and the most appropriate methods? How will it relate to and deliver the objectives?

What will my research design allow me to say in the **interpretation** of anticipated results?

Have I given a full and detailed description of the proposed **research methods**? Is there any innovation in the methodology I am planning to use? Am I developing any new methods or using established methods innovatively?

If I am using **data collection** have I considered already existing data resources? Am I sure that access will be given where necessary? Am I convinced of its quality, validity, reliability and relevance?

Have I demonstrated a clear and systematic approach to the **analysis of data** and how this fits into the research design?

Have I thought about the **ethics** of what I am planning to do? Are there any sensitive issues or potential problems which need to be addressed? [see Appendix B, ASA Ethical Guidelines]

Have I recognised and planned for the **skills and competencies** that will be required to bring the work to a satisfactory conclusion?

Have I anticipated **potential difficulties**? Have I shown that I recognise these and discussed how they would be handled?

Have I provided a **bibliography**? This will indicate your familiarity with the theoretical grounding and current state of the art of your subject. Where there is genuinely little or no relevant literature, explain this fully. Board members and referees will not assume your erudition, they want evidence.

This proposal will be subject to the **critical appraisal** of my peers. Am I satisfied that I have fully defended my chosen research design and made it clear why others are not appropriate?

Have I identified **potential users** of this research outside of the academic community; have I involved/consulted them in my planning? Have I arranged for their continuing involvement in the research process in an appropriate way?

Have I provided a clear **dissemination strategy** for the research demonstrating how the research outcomes will be communicated to **all** interested parties including potential users of the research outside of the academic community?

Convey to the Board your genuine interest, understanding and enthusiasm for the work. Keep the following questions in mind as you plan:

- what is the story you are telling,
- what is the audience,
- why does it matter,
- why now,
- why you!

It is also important to make sure that you devote enough space in the proposal to describing the research you intend to conduct and the research design and methods - the Board finds it very frustrating when applicants devote pages to explaining why their proposed research is exciting but then provide only a short and inadequate explanation of how they propose to explore this in practice.

See: [www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Support/research\\_award\\_holders/FAQs2/index1.aspx](http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Support/research_award_holders/FAQs2/index1.aspx)

## **APPENDIX B**

# **Association of Social Anthropologists**

## **Ethical Guidelines for Good Research Practice**

### **Preamble**

Social anthropologists carry out their professional research in many places around the world; some where they are 'at home' and others where they are in some way 'foreign'. Anthropological scholarship occurs within a variety of economic, cultural, legal and political settings. As professionals and as citizens, they need to consider the effects of their involvement with, and consequences of their work for; the individuals and groups among whom they do their fieldwork (their research participants or 'subjects'); their colleagues and the discipline, and collaborating researchers; sponsors, funders, employers and gatekeepers; their own and host governments; and other interest groups and the wider society in the countries in which they work.

Anthropologists, like other social researchers, are faced increasingly with competing duties, obligations and conflicts of interest, with the need to make implicit or explicit choices between values and between the interests of different individuals and groups. Ethical and legal dilemmas occur at all stages of research - in the selection of topic, area or population, choice of sponsor and source of funding, in negotiating access, making 'research bargains' and during the research itself conducting fieldwork, in the interpretation and analysis of results and in the publication of findings and the disposal of data. Anthropologists have a responsibility to anticipate problems and insofar as is possible to resolve them without harming the research participants or the scholarly community. They should do their utmost to ensure that they leave a research field in a state which permits future access by other researchers. As members of a discipline committed to the pursuit of knowledge and the public disclosure of findings, they should strive to maintain integrity in the conduct of anthropological research.

To these ends the Association has adopted the following set of ethical guidelines to which individual ASA Members should subscribe. They follow the educational model for professional codes, aiming to alert researchers to issues that raise ethical concerns or to potential problems and conflicts of interests that might arise in the research process. They are intended to provide a practical framework for Members to make informed decisions about their own behaviour and involvement, and to help them communicate their professional positions more clearly to the other parties involved in or affected by their research activities.

### **I. Relations With and Responsibilities Towards Research Participants**

The close and often lengthy association of anthropologists with the people among whom they carry out research entails personal and moral relationships, trust and reciprocity between the researcher and research participants; it also entails a recognition of power differentials between them.

**(1) Protecting research participants and honouring trust:** Anthropologists should endeavour to protect the physical, social and psychological well-being of those whom they study and to respect their rights, interests, sensitivities and privacy:

(a) Most anthropologists would maintain that their paramount obligation is to their research participants and that when there is conflict, the interests and rights of those studied should come first;

(b) Under some research conditions, particularly those involving contract research, it may not be possible to fully guarantee research participants' interests. In such cases anthropologists would be well-advised to consider in advance whether they should pursue that particular piece of research.

**(2) Anticipating harms:** Anthropologists should be sensitive to the possible consequences of their work and should endeavour to guard against predictably harmful effects. Consent from subjects does not absolve anthropologists from their obligation to protect research participants as far as possible against the potentially harmful effects of research:

(a) The researcher should try to minimise disturbances both to subjects themselves and to the subjects' relationships with their environment. Even though research participants may be immediately protected by the device of anonymity, the researcher should try to anticipate the long-term effects on individuals or groups as a result of the research;

(b) Anthropologists may sometimes be better placed than (at the least, some of) their informants to anticipate the possible repercussions of their

research both for the immediate participants and for other members of the research population or the wider society. In certain political contexts, some groups, for example, religious or ethnic minorities, may be particularly vulnerable and it may be necessary to withhold data from publication or even to refrain from studying them at all.

**(3) Avoiding undue intrusion:** Anthropologists should be aware of the intrusive potential of some of their enquiries and methods:

(a) Like other social researchers, they have no special entitlement to study all phenomena; and the advancement of knowledge and the pursuit of information are not in themselves sufficient justifications for overriding the values and ignoring the interests of those studied;

(b) They should be aware that for research participants becoming the subject of anthropological description and interpretations can be a welcome experience, but it can also be a disturbing one. In many of the social scientific enquiries that have caused controversy this has not arisen because participants have suffered directly or indirectly any actual harm. Rather, the concern has resulted from participants' feelings of having suffered an intrusion into private and personal domains, or of having been wronged, (for example, by having been caused to acquire self-knowledge which they did not seek or want).

**(4) Negotiating informed consent:** Following the precedent set by the Nuremberg Trials and the constitutional laws of many countries, inquiries involving human subjects should be based on the freely given informed consent of subjects. The principle of informed consent expresses the belief in the need for truthful and respectful exchanges between social researchers and the people whom they study.

(a) Negotiating consent entails communicating information likely to be material to a person's willingness to participate, such as: - the purpose(s) of the study, and the anticipated consequences of the research; the identity of funders and sponsors; the anticipated uses of the data; possible benefits of the study and possible harm or discomfort that might affect participants; issues relating to data storage and security; and the degree of anonymity and confidentiality which may be afforded to informants and subjects.

(b) Conditions which constitute an absence of consent: consent made after the research is completed is not meaningful consent at all. Further, the persons studied must have the legal capacity to give consent. Where subjects are legally compelled (e.g., by their employer or government) to participate in a piece of research, consent cannot be said to have been meaningfully given by subjects, and anthropologists are advised not to pursue that piece of work.

(c) Consent in research is a process, not a one-off event, and may require renegotiation over time; it is an issue to which the anthropologist should return periodically.

(d) When technical data-gathering devices such as audio/visual-recorders and photographic records are being used those studied should be made aware of the capacities of such devices and be free to reject their use.

(e) When information is being collected from proxies, care should be taken not to infringe the 'private space' of the subject or the relationship between subject and proxy; and if there are indications that the person concerned would object to certain information being disclosed, such information should not be sought by proxy;

(f) The long period over which anthropologists make use of their data and the possibility that unforeseen uses or theoretical interests may arise in the future may need to be conveyed to participants, as should any likelihood that the data may be shared (in some form) with other colleagues or be made available to sponsors, funders or other interested parties, or deposited in archives.

**(5) Rights to confidentiality and anonymity:** informants and other research participants should have the right to remain anonymous and to have their rights to privacy and confidentiality respected. However, privacy and confidentiality present anthropologists with particularly difficult problems given the cultural and legal variations between societies and the various ways in which the real interests or research role of the ethnographer may not fully be realised by some or all of participants or may even become "invisible" over time:

- (a) Care should be taken not to infringe uninvited upon the 'private space' (as locally defined) of an individual or group;
- (b) As far as is possible researchers should anticipate potential threats to confidentiality and anonymity. They should consider whether it is necessary to even a matter of propriety to record certain information at all; should take appropriate measures relating to the storage and security of records during and after fieldwork; and should use where appropriate such means as the removal of identifiers, the use of pseudonyms and other technical solutions to the problems of privacy in field records and in oral and written forms of data dissemination (whether or not this is enjoined by law or administrative regulation);
- (c) Researchers should endeavour to anticipate problems likely to compromise anonymity; but they should make clear to participants that it may not be possible in field notes and other records or publications totally to conceal identities, and that the anonymity afforded or promised to individuals, families or other groups may also be unintentionally compromised. A particular configuration of attributes can frequently identify an individual beyond reasonable doubt; and it is particularly difficult to disguise, say, office-holders, organizations, public agencies, ethnic groups, religious denominations or other collectivities without so distorting the data as to compromise scholarly accuracy and integrity;
- (d) If guarantees of privacy and confidentiality are made, they must be honoured unless they are clear and over-riding ethical reasons not to do so. Confidential information must be treated as such by the anthropologist even when it enjoys no legal protection or privilege, and other people who have access to the data should be made aware of their obligations likewise; but participants should be made aware that it is rarely, if at all, legally possible to ensure total confidentiality or to protect the privacy of records;
- (e) Anthropologists should similarly respect the measures taken by other researchers to maintain the anonymity of their research field and participants.

**(6) Fair return for assistance:** There should be no economic exploitation of individual informants, translators and research participants; fair return should be made for their help and services.

**(7) Participants' intellectual property rights:** It should be recognised that research participants have contractual and/or legal, interests and rights in data, recordings and publications, although rights will vary according to agreements and legal jurisdiction.

- (a) It is the obligation of the interviewer to inform the interviewee of their rights under any copyright or data protection laws of the country where research takes place, and the interviewer must indicate beforehand any uses to which the interview is likely to be put (e.g., research, educational use, publication, broadcasting etc).
- (b) Under the UK Copyright Act (1988), researchers making audio or video recordings must obtain 'copyright clearance' from interviewees if recordings are to be publicly broadcast or deposited in public archives. Any restrictions on use (e.g., time period) or other conditions (e.g., preservation of anonymity) which the interviewee requires should be recorded in writing. This is best done at the time of the interview, using a standard form. Retrospective clearance is often time-consuming or impossible where the interviewee is deceased or has moved away.

(c) Interviewers should clarify before interviewing the extent to which subjects are allowed to see transcripts of interviews and fieldnotes and to alter the content, withdraw statements, to provide additional information or to add glosses on interpretations.

(d) Clarification must also be given to subjects regarding the degree to which they will be consulted prior to publication.

**(8) Participants' involvement in research:** As far as is possible anthropologists should try and involve the people being studied in the planning and execution of research projects, and they should recognise that their obligations to the participants or the host community may not end (indeed should not end, many would argue) with the completion of their fieldwork or research project.

## **II. Relations With and Responsibilities Towards Sponsors, Funders and Employers**

Anthropologists should attempt to ensure that sponsors, funders and employers appreciate the obligations that they have not only to them, but also to research participants, and to professional colleagues.

**(1) Clarifying roles, rights and obligations:** Anthropologists should clarify in advance the respective roles, rights and obligations of sponsor, funder, employer and researcher:

(a) They should be careful not to promise or imply acceptance of conditions which would be contrary to professional ethics or competing commitments. Where conflicts seem likely, they should refer sponsors or other interested parties to the relevant portions of the professional guidelines;

(b) Anthropologists who work in non-academic settings should be particularly aware of likely constraints on research and publication and of the potentiality for conflict between the aims of the employer, funder or sponsor and the interests of the people studied;

(c) Where some or all of the research participants are also acting as sponsors and/or funders of the research the potential for conflict between their different roles and interests should be made clear to them.

**(2) Obligations to sponsors, funders and employers:** Anthropologists should recognise their general and specific obligations to sponsors, funders and employers whether these are contractually defined or are only the subject of informal, and often unwritten, agreements. In particular:

(a) They should be honest about their qualifications and expertise, the limitations, advantages and disadvantages of their methods and data, and they should acknowledge the necessity for discretion with confidential information provided by sponsors and employers;

(b) They should not conceal personal or other factors which might affect the satisfactory conduct or completion of the proposed research project or contract.

**(3) Negotiating 'research space':** Anthropologists should be careful to clarify, preferably in advance of signing contracts or starting their research, matters relating to their professional domain and to control over the research project and its products:

(a) They are entitled to full disclosure of the sources of funds, personnel, aims of the institution, the purpose(s) of the research project and the disposition of research results;

(b) They are entitled to expect from a sponsor, funder or employer a respect for their professional expertise and for the integrity of the data, whether or not these obligations are incorporated in formal contracts. Even when contractual obligations may necessitate the guarding of privileged information, the methods and procedures that have been utilised to produce the published data should not be kept confidential;

(c) They should pay particular attention to matters such as: - their ability to protect the rights and interests of research participants; their ability to make all ethical decisions in their research; and their (and other parties') rights in data collected, in publications, copyright and royalties.

**(4) Relations with gatekeepers:** Where access to subjects is controlled by a national or local 'gatekeeper', researchers should not devolve their responsibilities onto the gatekeeper. Whilst respecting gatekeepers' legitimate interests, researchers should adhere to the principle of obtaining informed consent directly from subjects once access has been gained. They should be wary of inadvertently disturbing the relationship between subjects and gatekeepers since that will continue long after the researcher has left the field.

### **III. Relations With, and Responsibilities Towards, Colleagues and the Discipline**

Anthropologists derive their status and certain privileges of access to research participants and to data not only by virtue of their personal standing but also by virtue of their professional citizenship. In acknowledging membership of a wider anthropological community anthropologists owe various obligations to that community and can expect consideration from it.

**(1) Individual responsibility:** Anthropologists bear responsibility for the good reputation of the discipline and its practitioners. In considering their methods, procedures, content and reporting of their enquiries, behaviour in the field and relations with research participants and field assistants they should therefore try to ensure that their activities will not jeopardize future research.

**(2) Conflicts of interest and consideration for colleagues:** That there may be conflicts of interest (professional and political) between the anthropologists, particularly between visiting the local researchers and especially when cross-national research is involved, should be recognised:

(a) Consideration for and consultation with anthropologists who have worked or are working in the proposed research setting is advisable and is also a professional courtesy. In particular the vulnerability of long-term research projects to intrusion should be recognised;

(b) In cross-national research, consideration should be given to the interests of local scholars and researchers, to the problems that may result from matters such as the disparities in resources available to visiting researcher, and to problems of equity in collaboration. As far as is possible and practicable, visiting anthropologists should try and involve local anthropologists and scholars in their research activities but should be alert to the potential for harm that such collaboration might entail in some contexts.

**(3) Sharing research materials:** Anthropologists should give consideration to ways in which research data and findings can be shared with colleagues and with research participants:

(a) Research findings, publications and, where feasible, data should be made available in the country where the research took place. If necessary, it should be translated into the national or local language. Researchers should be alert, though, to the harm to research participants, collaborators and local colleagues that might arise from total or even partial disclosure of raw or processed data or from revelations of their involvement in the research project;

(b) Where the sharing with colleagues of raw, or even processed, data or their (voluntary or obligatory) deposition in data archives or libraries is envisaged, care should be taken not to breach privacy and guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity, and appropriate safeguards should be devised.

**(4) Collaborative and team research:** In some cases anthropologists will need to collaborate with researchers in other disciplines, as well as with research and field assistants, clerical staff, students etcetera. In such cases they should make clear their own ethical and professional obligations and similarly take account of the ethical principles of their collaborators. Care should be taken to clarify roles, rights and obligations of team members in relation to matters such as the division of labour, responsibilities, access to and rights in data and fieldnotes, publication, co-authorship, professional liability, etcetera.

**(5) Responsibilities towards research students and field assistants:** Academic supervisors and project directors should ensure that students and assistants are aware of

the ethical guidelines and should discuss with them potential (as well as actual) problems which may arise during fieldwork or writing-up.

#### IV. Relations With Own and Host Governments

Anthropologists should be honest and candid in their relations with their own and host governments.

**(1) Conditions of access:** Researchers should seek assurance that they will not be required to compromise their professional and scholarly responsibilities as a condition of being granted research access.

**(2) Cross-national research:** Research conducted outside one's own country raises special ethical and political issues, relating to personal and national disparities in wealth, power, the legal status of the researcher, political interest and national political systems:

(a) Anthropologists should bear in mind the differences between the civil and legal, and often the financial, position of national and foreign researchers and scholars;

(b) They should be aware that irresponsible actions by a researcher or research team may jeopardise access to a research setting or even to a whole country for other researchers, both anthropologists and non-anthropologists.

**(3) Open research:** Anthropologists owe a responsibility to their colleagues around the world and to the discipline as a whole not to use their anthropological role as a cover for clandestine research or activities.

**(4) Legal and administrative constraints:** Anthropologists should note that there may be a number of national laws or administrative regulations which may affect the conduct of their research, matters pertaining to data dissemination and storage, publication, rights of research subjects, of sponsors and employers, etcetera. They should also remember that, save in a very few exceptional circumstances, social research data are not privileged under law and may be subject to legal subpoena. Such laws vary by jurisdiction. Some which may have consequences for research and publication in the U.K. are, for example, the Data Protection Act, law of confidence, Race Relations Act, defamation laws, copyright law, law of contract, and the Official Secrets Act; in the U.S.A. particularly important are the federal regulations governing human subjects' research, the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act and the Copyright Act.

#### V. Responsibilities to the Wider Society

Anthropologists also have responsibilities towards other members of the public and wider society. They depend upon the confidence of the public and they should in their work attempt to promote and preserve such confidence without exaggerating the accuracy or explanatory power of their findings.

**(1) Widening the scope of social research:** Anthropologists should use the possibilities open to them to extend the scope of social inquiry, and to communicate their findings, for the benefit of the widest possible community. Anthropologists are most likely to avoid restrictions being placed on their work when they are able to stipulate in advance the issues over which they should maintain control; the greatest problems seem to emerge when such issues remain unresolved until the data are collected or the findings emerge.

**(2) Considering conflicting interests:** Social inquiry is predicated on the belief that greater access to well-founded information will serve rather than threaten the interests of society:

(a) Nonetheless, in planning all phases of an inquiry, from design to presentation of findings, anthropologists should also consider the likely consequences for the wider society, groups within it, and possible future research, as well as for members of the research population not directly involved in the study and the immediate research participants;

(b) That information can be misconstrued or misused is not in itself a convincing argument against its collection and dissemination. All information is subject to misuse; and no information is devoid of possible harm to one interest or another. Individuals may be harmed by their participation in social inquiries, or group interests may be harmed by certain findings. Researchers are usually not in a position to prevent action based on their

findings; but they should, however, attempt to pre-empt likely misinterpretations and to counteract them when they occur.

**(3) Maintaining professional and scholarly integrity:** Research can never be entirely objective - the selection of topics may reflect a bias in favour of certain cultural or personal values; the employment base of the researcher, the source of funding a various other factors may impose certain priorities, obligations and prohibitions - but anthropologists should strive for objectivity and be open about known barriers to its achievement:

(a) Anthropologists should not engage or collude in selecting methods designed to produce misleading results, or in misrepresenting findings by commission or omission;

(b) When it is likely that research findings will bear upon public policy and opinion anthropologists should be careful to state the significant limitations on their findings and interpretations.

## **Epilogue**

The reputation of anthropological research will inevitably depend less on what professional bodies assert about their ethical norms than on the conduct of individual researchers. These guidelines are aimed at helping anthropologists to reach an equitable and satisfactory resolution of their dilemmas. This statement of ideals does not impose a rigid set of rules backed by institutional sanctions, given the variations in both individuals' moral precepts and the conditions under which they work. Guidelines cannot resolve difficulties in a vacuum nor allocate greater priority to one of the principles than another. Instead, they are aimed at educating anthropologists, sensitizing them to the potential sources of ethical conflict and dilemmas that may arise in research, scholarship and professional practice, at being informative and descriptive rather than authoritarian or prescriptive. They aim to ensure that where a departure from the principles is contemplated or where the privileging of one group or interested party or parties is deemed situationally or legally necessary, the researcher's decisions should be based on foresight and informed deliberation.

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