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ANTH 5020
Fall 2021
Wednesday 6.30 - 9.15 PM
Venue: YIA 403

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Office Hours: By appointment

ANTHROPOLOGICAL FIELD METHODS

Draft



How do anthropologists conduct research? What distinguishes research as anthropological? How do field methods shape anthropological knowledge production? How does the writing process frame and redefine a project? What are the strength and limitations of anthropological field research? Anthropological fieldwork starts from one's desire to know an unfamiliar world out there and is made possible by one's determination to step out of the comfort zone. This course is designed to introduce you to anthropology through its research methods. You will read texts on anthropological research methods, fieldworkers' reflections on their experience, and a few ethnographic writings. Through various assignments, you will acquire hands-on experience in data-collecting techniques, including participant observation and interviews. In the last part of the course, we will focus on the writing-up process and reflect on anthropological field methods in the contemporary world of global connections.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completing this course, students will be able to

- deepen their understanding of anthropology and anthropological knowledge production,
- employ and further explore anthropological research methods and data collecting techniques,
- evaluate the quality of an anthropological research project, and
- enhance their critical reading of ethnographic works.

Readings:

This course uses various articles and book chapters. All required materials are available on Blackboard.

However, we will read several chapters from the following books. You are encouraged to acquire a copy for your reference.

Bernard, H. R. (2011) *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*.

Emerson, R. M., R. I. Fretz, et al. (2011) *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*.

Sluka, J. A. & Antonius C. G. M. Robben (2007) *Ethnographic Fieldwork: An Anthropological Reader*.

Requirement and Assessment:

This **seminar** course is discussion intensive. You are expected to finish all required readings (marked with an asterisk*) before and and participate actively in class.

Class participation	15%
In-class exercises and short writing assignments	60%
Final reflection or research proposal	25%

Participation marks reflect your engagement in lectures and on Blackboard. While the quality of a student's comments matters, what is even more critical is whether you have prepared for the class, shown strong motivation to engage with your classmates, and made contribution to further our discussion.

Methods Exercise and Short Writing Assignments: We will conduct six methods-related exercises in class. After most exercises, you will submit short reflections via Blackboard. These exercises aim to help you get hands-on research experience. Though they are still different from long-term fieldwork, they help you to understand methods by doing, in addition to reading and discussion. These exercises will also prepare you for your finals. Details will be further explained in class. ***Due in various weeks via Blackboard.***

Final Reflection or "Research Proposal:" By the end of the course, you can choose to write an essay or submit a draft of a "research proposal." 1) *Final reflection:* Write an essay to reflect on what you have learned in this course critically. Think about how you will answer the questions listed at the beginning of the course introduction. (Word limits: 2500 words in English and 5000 words in Chinese). 2) *Research Proposal:* Submit a "research proposal" that explains your research question, relevance to anthropology, methods, training, and contribution. I put "research proposal" in quotation marks as we will have the flexibility not to include a better-developed literature review, which is necessary for a formal proposal. The course adopts the Wenner-Gren Foundation model of proposal writing. More details will be explained later. (Length: approximately 3000 words in English and 6000 words in Chinese). ***Due on 10 Dec via Blackboard.***

****Formats and other requirements:*** 1) Please use double-spaced, font size 12 or larger, and standard margins. 2) All writings (except for those done in class) must be submitted to VeriGuide (https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.jsp). An assignment without a **signed** declaration from VeriGuide will not be graded.

***Extra reminder about essay writing:** A good essay is a concise one with a clear thesis or argument. It shows your curiosity, creativity, and organizational skills. As long as it is succinct, the length of it is not a top concern.

Course Schedule

Week 01 (Sep. 8): Introduction: Anthropologists and their Knowledge Production

Syllabus and course overview

No reading due

Week 02 (Sep. 15): History, Fieldwork, and Ethnography

*Malinowski, B. (1922) "Introduction: The Subject, Method and Scope of this Enquiry." In *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*. Pp. 1-25.

*Sluka, J. A. & Antonius C. G. M. Robben (2007) "Fieldwork in Cultural Anthropology: An Introduction." In *Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Pp. 1-28.

*Wolcott, H. F. (2005) "Ch2: Fieldwork as Art?" In *The Art of Fieldwork*. Pp. 15-24.

Spradley and McCurdy (1974) "Ch1: Culture and Contemporary World." In *Conformity and Conflict*. Pp. 1-11.

Film/Video: *A Man Called 'Bee': Studying the Yanomamo*. By Napoleon A. Chagnon and Timothy Asch. Watertown, Mass.: Documentary Educational Resources. 2001(1974). 43 mins.

Film/Video: *An anthropological introduction to YouTube*. Presentation at the Library of Congress, June 23rd, 2008 by Michael Welsh

Week 03 (Sep. 22): Public Holiday, no class

Week 04 (Sep. 29): "The Real Life of An Anthropologist in the Field"

*Barley, Nigel (1983) "Ch1: The Reason Why," "Ch2 Be Prepared," "Ch3 To the hill," & "Ch4 Honi soit qui Malinowski." In *The Innocent Anthropologist: Notes from a Mud Hut*. Pp. 7-36.

*陳如珍 (2019) "田野中的圓滿：你那個研究還沒做完嗎？" 出自：《*這反田野：人類學異托邦故事集*》. 237-272

*蔡晏霖、趙恩潔 (2019) "反田野，返田野：給這一輪田野盛事的備忘錄" 出自：《*這反田野：人類學異托邦故事集*》. 7-26.

*Behar, Ruth (1996) "Ch1. The Vulnerable Observer" and "Ch6: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart." In *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology That Breaks Your Heart*. Pp. 1-33 & 161-177.

Malkki, Lisa H. (2007) "Tradition and Improvisation in Ethnographic Field Research." In *Improvising Theory: Process and Temporality in Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Pp. 162-188.

➤ **Exercise 1: Problem definition**

Week 05 (Oct. 6): From Idea to Project

*Wolcott, H. F. (2005) "Ch4: Fieldwork versus (Just) Being in the Field." In *The Art of Fieldwork*. Pp. 57-78.

*Maxwell, J. A. (1996) "Ch.1: A Model for Qualitative Research Design," "Ch.2: Purposes: Why Are You Doing this Research" & "Ch.4: Research Questions: What Do You Want to Understand?" In *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. Pp.1--24 & Pp. 49-62.

- *Bernard, H. R. (2011) "Ch.3: Preparing for Research." In *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Pp. 54-81.
- Becker, H. S. (1986) "Ch.8: Terrorized by the Literature." In *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book or Article*. Pp. 135-149.
- Przeworski A. & F. Salomon (1988) "On the Art of Writing Research Proposals." Social Science Research Council. www.ssrc.org
- Anonymous (n.d.) Instruction of the Wenner-Gren Foundation.
<http://www.wennergren.org/programs/application-procedures/project-description-questions>

➤ **Exercise 2: Problem definition (editing and revision)**

Week 06 (Oct. 13): Participant Observation I: Rapport

- *Sluka, J. A. (2007) "Fieldwork Relations and Rapport: Introduction." In *Ethnographic Fieldwork: An Anthropological Reader*. Pp. 121-125.
- *Agar, Michael H. (1980) "Ch.3: Who Are You to Do This?" In *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*. Pp. 41-62.
- *Bernard, H. R. (2011) "Ch.12: Participant Observation" In *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Pp. 256-290.
- Spradley, J. P. (1980) "Ch.2: Doing Participant Observation." In *Participant Observation*. Pp. 53-62.

➤ **Exercise 3: Participant observation plan (4 weeks)**

Week 07 (Oct. 20): Participant Observation: Collecting and Reflecting

- *DeWalt, K. M. and B. R. DeWalt (2002) "Ch.1: What is Participant Observation," "Ch.3: Doing Participant Observation: Becoming a Participant," & "Ch.4: Doing Participant Observation: Becoming an Observer." In *Participant Observation: a Guide for Fieldworkers*. Pp. 1-15, Pp. 35-66, and Pp. 67-82.
- *Emerson, R. M., R. I. Fretz, et al. (1995) "Ch.1: Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research" and "Ch.2: In the Field: Participating, Observing, and Jotting Notes." In *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Pp. 1-38.
- Bernard, H. R. (2006) "Ch.13: Field Notes and Database Management" & "Ch.14: Direct and Indirect Observation." In *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Pp. 291-305 & 306-336.

➤ **Exercise 4: Fieldnote writing and editing**

Week 08 (Oct. 27): Interview

- *Rapport, Nigel (2012) "Ch.1: The Interview as a Form of Talking-Partnership: Dialectical, Focussed, Ambiguous, Special." In *The Interview: An Ethnographic Approach*. Pp.53-68.
- *Hockey, Jenny and Martin Forsey (2012) "Ch.2: Ethnography Is Not Participant Observation: Reflections on the Interview as Participatory Qualitative Research." In *The Interview: An Ethnographic Approach*. Pp.69-88.
- *Bernard, H. R. (2011[1995]) "Ch.8: Interviewing I: Unstructured and Semistructured." In *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Pp. 156-186.
- DeWalt, K. M. and B. R. DeWalt (2002) "Ch.7: Informal Interviewing in Participant Observation." In *Participant Observation: a Guide for Fieldworkers*. Pp. 120-140.

➤ **Exercise 5: Unstructured and semi-structured interview**

Week 09 (Nov. 3): Visual Materials: Senses and Representation

- *Mead, Margaret (2003) "Visual Anthropology in a Discipline of Words." In *Principles of Visual Anthropology*. Pp. 3-12.
- *Collier, John Jr. and Malcolm Collier (1986) "Ch.1: the Challenge of Observation and the Nature of Photography," "Ch.2: The Camera in the Field," "Ch.3: Orientation and Rapport," "Ch.17: Finding Patterns and Meaning." In *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method*. Pp. 5-28; 195-202.
- *Rouch, Jean with Dan Georgakas, Udayan Gupta, and Judy Janda (2003) "The Politics of Visual Anthropology." In *Cine-Ethnography*. Pp. 210-228.
- 陳如珍 (2020) "老屋的光影與散落的西瓜：不說話的人類學家"。出自：《人類學好野：關於人類的我都想學》。199-222.
- Film/Video:** Selections of clips from "Jaguar (1967)," "Jean Rouch – Premier Film 1947-1991 (1991)" and "Jean Rouch & His Camera in the Heart of Africa (1979)."
- Film/Video:** *Project Syria: An Immersive Journalism Experience* by Nonny de la Peña
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jN_nbHnHDI4

Week 10 (Nov. 10): Ethics

- *Sluka, Jeffrey A (2012) "Introduction [to Fieldwork Ethics]." In *Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Pp. 299-305.
- *Bourgois, Philippe (2012) "Confronting Anthropological Ethics: Lessons from Fieldwork in Central America." In *Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Pp. 318-330.
- *Cajas, Juan and Yoliliztli Perez (2017) "Anthropologists, Economic Retribution and Informants: Notes about Ethics in Social Research." In *AGATHOS*, Vol. 8, Issue 1(14): 143-154.
- *American Anthropological Association (2012) "Code of Ethics." In *Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Pp. 359-364.
- Dettwyler, Katherine A. (2013) "Dancing Skeletons." In *Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa*. Pp. 139-148.
- Berreman, G. D. (2012) "Ethics versus 'Realism' in Anthropology." In *Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Pp. 331-352.
- Srivastava, Vinay Kumar (1992) "Should Anthropologists Pay Their Respondants?" In *Anthropology Today* 8(6): 16-20.
- Shay, Christopher
 2009 "Should Anthropologists Go to War?" *Time* December 13.,
<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1947095,00.html>
- Allen, Charlotte
 1997 "Spies Like Us: When Sociologists Deceive Their Subjects." *Lingua Franca* Nov., 30-39.

- **Exercise 6: Assess AAA case studies of ethical dilemmas**
<http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ch3.htm>
- **Reflection of participant observation plan (exercise 3) due by 16 November**

Week 11 (Nov. 17): Gender [Will update the required/recommended readings later]

- *Kulick, Don. (1995) "Introduction. The sexual life of anthropologists: erotic subjectivity and ethnographic work." In *Taboo: Sex, identity, and erotic subjectivity in anthropological fieldwork*. Pp. 1-21.
- *DeWalt, K. M. and B. R. DeWalt (2011) "Ch.6: Gender and Sex Issues in Participant Observation." In *Participant Observation: a Guide for Fieldworkers*. Pp. 99-108.
- *Markowitz, Fran (1999) "Sexing the Anthropologist: Implications for Ethnography." In *Sex, Sexuality, and the Anthropologist*. Pp.161-174.
- *Williams, Walter L. (2012) "Ch.6: Being Gay and Doing Fieldwork." In *Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Pp. 114-123.

Ashkenazi, Michael and Robert Rotenberg (1999) "Cleansing Cultures: Public Bathing and the Naked Anthropologist in Japan and Austria." In *Sex, Sexuality, and the Anthropologist*. Pp.92-116.

Warren, Carol A. B. (1988) "Ch. 2: Gender and Fieldwork Relationships." In *Gender Issues in Field Research*. Pp. 12-41.

Week 12 (Nov. 24): Writing-up

*Emerson, R. M., R. I. Fretz, et al. (1995) "Ch.3: Writing Up Fieldnotes I: From Field to Desk," "Ch.4: Writing Up Fieldnotes II: Creating Scenes on the Page," "Ch.7: Writing an Ethnography." In *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Pp. 39-107 & 169-210. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Golstein, Daniel (n.d.) Grant Proposal, Fieldnotes, and The Spectacular City.

Bernard, H. R.

2006 Ch. 17: "Qualitative Data Analysis I: Text Analysis." In *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Pp. 463-521. Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.

Week 13 (Dec. 1): Lessons from the Pandemic: Reflections on the Cores of Anthropological Methods [\[Will think about the materials again\]](#)

*Miller, Daniel (2020) *How to Conduct an Ethnography during Social Isolation*.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSiTrYB-0so&ab_channel=DanielMiller Published on 3 May, 2020.

*The Familiar Stranger Podcast. Episode #66: Method Adaptations, Big Bugs & aguaje: Diana Tung on Doing Fieldwork During Covid-19. <https://thefamiliarstrange.com/2020/11/02/ep-66-method-adaptations/> Accessed: 31 August, 2021.

*Stoller, Paul (2009) "Prologue: The Power of the Between." In *The Power of the Between: An Anthropological Odyssey*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press. Pp. 1-11.

Boellstorff, Tom (2008) "Chapter 3: Method." In *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. Pp. 60-86.

Lupton, Deborah, Ed. (2020) Doing fieldwork in a pandemic (crowd-sourced document) Available at: (Skim and ask questions)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1clGjGABB2h2qbduTgfqribHmog9B6P0NvMgVuiHZCl8/edit?ts=5e88ae0a#>

Some additional materials good for wrapping up this course:

The Impacts and Limits of Anthropological Methods

*Wolf, M. (1992) "Ch.5: Writing Ethnography: The Poetics and Politics of Culture." In *A Thrice-Told Tale: Feminism, Postmodernism, and Ethnographic Responsibility*. Pp. 127-142.

Clifford, J. and G. E. Marcus, Eds. (1986) "Introduction: Partial Truths" & "Afterward: Ethnographic Writing and Anthropological Careers." In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Pp. 1-26 & Pp. 262-266.

Abu-Lughod, Lila (1993) "Introduction." In *Writing Women's Worlds: Bedouin Stories*. Pp. 1-44. Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford, University of California Press.

Rabinow, P. (2007 (1977)) "Preface to the Thirtieth Anniversary Edition." In *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*. Pp. xi – xxv. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press.

➤ **Final Report or Research Proposal due on 10 Dec via Blackboard.**

Grade descriptors

Grade Overall course

A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
B	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Policies

Late Submission: Late submission will suffer a fraction of a grade per day. For example, an A will become an A-.

Academic Honesty: You must cite properly (guidelines: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ant/tstyle.doc>), and please refer to the university website (<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/index.htm> and http://www.ilc.cuhk.edu.hk/english/resource/referencing_avoidingplagiarism1.pdf) to avoid plagiarism.

Laptop Policy: Please do not use mobile phones, laptops, or tablets in class. Browsing websites, checking social media, and texting or answering phone calls distract not only you but your classmates and me. Research has also shown that taking notes by hands is much better than on your laptop. See: <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/17/08/note-taking-low-tech-often-best>

Recording: No (video and audio) recording is permitted in this class. Please pay proper respect to your classmates and me. We would all like to ensure a space of free and open discussion of ideas. If you have any needs for recording, please consult me first.