

Ethnographic Fieldwork in Racial and Ethnic Communities
Ethn 107 x USP 130

Summer Session I
2011

Instructor: Angela W. Kong

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Mailbox location: Department of Ethnic Studies, Social Science Building, Room 201

Class Meets: T/TH 11am – 1:50pm, Social Science Building, Room 102

Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 2pm – 3:30pm and by appointment at SSB 241

Course Description/Purpose:

Ethnographic fieldwork is an important research tool to help us understand the social world around us. Primarily used in the academic disciplines of anthropology and sociology, this course provides a nuanced understanding of the research methodology through an examination of how race, space, and power shape our daily lives. Nineteenth century researchers used ethnography to understand and gain control of indigenous, enslaved, and immigrant populations, constructing them as “savages” and ‘orientals’, while current “damage-centered” research frames disenfranchised communities as “broken” and “depleted” (Tuck, 2009). The course examines our positionality as the “researcher” to understand how our perspectives and experiences shape what is being “researched.” The course also provides hands-on tools to help students critically examine the ordinary in everyday life. Students will conduct participant observations, write fieldnotes, interview and transcribe interviews, code, and develop themes from their data. The culmination of the course will be a final research paper and a research presentation.

**Instructor reserves the right to make changes as needed.*

"This course contains ideas that are illegal in the state of Arizona:
todos somos Arizona."

Required Texts:

Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*.
Available at UCSD Bookstore

Fieldwork in Racial and Ethnic Communities (Ethn 107/USP 130) Course Reader
available at Cal Copy, 3251 Holiday Court La Jolla, CA 92037-1803 - (858) 452-9949.

Required Materials:

Composition manual, audio recorder, digital camera, video recorder (optional)

Evaluation:

Attendance/Class Participation 20%

Positionality Paper with Gaze Photo 5%

Ethnographic Field Notes (3 coded sets with 1 memo) 15%

Interviews (3 interviews with 1 coded transcription) 20%

Final Research Paper (includes research proposal and group presentation) 40%

*All assignments need to be completed to receive a grade from the instructor.

Attendance and Class Participation (20%):

You are required to attend every class. This means you are expected to come to class on time, for its entirety, and be prepared for discussion. You are expected to actively engage in class discussions and encourage others to speak without dominating the conversation. You are required to bring in one question and one comment to share with the class in regards to each reading. They should reflect a deep and thoughtful engagement with the readings. These will be collected at the beginning of each class. Your participation and investment is necessary for the success of the course.

Positionality Paper with Gaze Photo (5%):

Details will be discussed in class.

Ethnographic Field Notes - 3 coded fieldnotes with 1 memo (15%):

You will visit your research site to conduct participant observations. You will need to allocate 45 minutes to collect notes per visit to the site. While you inhabit the space, you will jot down descriptive notes using your five senses of sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch. These notes will be typed up into fieldnotes and coded. One memo will be turned in with your coded fieldnotes.

Interviews - 3 interviews with 1 coded interview transcription (20%):

You will conduct three interviews that directly connect to your research topic. You will develop the interview questions. You will also need to fully transcribe one out of the three interviews. The length of the interview will be a minimum of 45 minutes. I highly recommend you either borrow or purchase an audio recorder to conduct the interviews. Recording the interview will help you remember what was talked about, provide you the ease of revisiting the interview, and help you with transcribing the interview.

Final ~ Research Paper (40%):

You are required to conduct a critical ethnography research project for the course. You will develop a topic that focuses on race, space, and power. You are to have knowledge of library research on your topic to examine what has been written. What has been researched (cite authors)? What is missing from the research they conducted? How is your research similar and/or different? What are you contributing to the field of study? The positionality paper, interviews, coded fieldnotes, and memo will be used as data to complete the research paper. Your two-page research proposal is due Tuesday, July 5, 2011. Research paper is due Tuesday, July 26, 2011. Group presentations will be held on Thursday, July 28 and Saturday, July 30.

Research paper proposal (5%), 2 pages due July 5

Research paper (25%), 7-9 pages due July 26

Group presentation (10%) held on Saturday, July 30, 2011 from 11:30am to 2:29pm in the Social Science Building, Room 102.

Late and Make-up Assignments Policy: No make-ups allowed. You have ample time to prepare for the assignments. Review the syllabus thoroughly to plan accordingly.

Grounds Rules: The number one rule is to respect each other. There will be a vast range of opinions expressed during the course of the class therefore harsh language and offensive behavior will not be tolerated. It is paramount to provide constructive comments, questions, and critiques that offer a critical analysis of the course material.

ADA Statement: If you have a disability or condition that compromises your ability to complete the requirements of this course, you should inform me as soon as possible of your needs. I will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate you. If, as a result of a

disability, you cannot accept the content or terms of this syllabus, you need to notify me in writing within one week of receiving it.

Principles of Community:

You are part of a supportive learning community that respects the diversity each student brings to the classroom. To read further on UCSD Principles of Community visit: <http://www-vcba.ucsd.edu/principles.htm>

Academic Integrity:

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. "Integrity of scholarship is essential for an academic community. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor this principle and in so doing protect the validity of University intellectual work. For students, this means that all academic work will be done by the individual to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind." ~ (UCSD Policy on Academic Integrity). In other words, you are expected to cite your work when you are borrowing an idea or when you are directly quoting from an author, researcher, or an individual's work.

Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies at UCSD

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of "interest" yet have no information about the major or minor and don't realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, public policy, government and politics, journalism, education, public health, social work, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Yolanda Escamilla, Ethnic Studies Department Undergraduate Advisor, at 858-534-3277 or yescamilla@ucsd.edu.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 ~ What is ethnographic fieldwork?

June 28 (Tuesday)	Introduction – What is research? What is ethnographic research? What are the strengths and limitations?
June 30 (Thursday)	How to conduct research?
	Readings: Tuck, Eve. 2009. "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities". Harvard Educational Review. 79 (3): 409-428.
	<i>Chapter 1 ~ Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research ~ Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes</i> by Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (1995), pages 1-16.

Week 2 ~ Race and Space

July 5 (Tuesday) What is the racialization of space and the spatialization of race?

RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE

Readings: Lipsitz, George. 2007. "The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape". *Landscape Journal*. 26 (1): 10.

Kelley, Robin D.G. 1997. "Looking for the 'Real' Nigga: Social Scientists Construct the Ghetto" (Ch. 1, pp. 15-42). In *YO' mama's disFUNKtional: Fighting wars in Urban America*. Boston: Beacon Press

July 7 (Thursday) FIELDNOTES #1 DUE

Readings: Leonardo, Zeus, and Margaret Hunter. 2007. "Imagining the urban: The politics of race, class, and schooling". In Michele Foster (Ed.), *International Handbook of Urban Education*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer, pp. 779-801.

Chapter 4 ~ Writing Up Fieldnotes II: Creating Scenes on the Page ~ Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes by Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (1995), pages 66-107

Week 3 ~ Researching and Understanding Your Data

July 12 (Tuesday) What do you do with your data?

Readings: *Chapter 6 ~ Processing Fieldnotes: Coding and Memoing ~ Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* by Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (1995), pages 142-168.

July 14 (Thursday) 1 MEMO, 3 SET OF FIELDNOTES, 1 INTERVIEW WITH TRANSCRIPTION DUE

Readings: *Chapter 7 ~ Writing an Ethnography ~ Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* by Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (1995), pages 169-210

Week 4 ~ Researching Activist Spaces

July 19 (Tuesday) How to document social change?

2 INTERVIEWS DUE

Readings: Yang, K. Wayne. 2007. "Organizing MySpace: Youth Walkouts, Pleasure, Politics, and New Media". *Educational Foundations*. 21 (1-2): 9-28.

July 21 (Thursday)

Readings: Pulido, Laura. 2006. "Serving the People and Vanguard Politics: The Formation of the Third World Left in Los Angeles"(Ch 4, pp. 89-122). In *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left: Radical Activism in Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Week 5 ~ Possibilities

July 26 (Tuesday)

What are the possibilities of your research? What are the possibilities in being a researcher?

RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Readings: Pulido, Laura. 2008. "FAQ: Frequently (Un)asked Questions about Being a Scholar Activist" (Ch 13, pp. 341-365). In *Engaging Contradictions: Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Scholarship*, edited by Charles R. Hale. Berkeley: University of California Press.

July 28 (Thursday)

GROUP PRESENTATION

July 30 (Saturday)

GROUP PRESENTATION

