

Department of Anthropology and Archaeology
Anthropology 411
Methods and Analysis for Anthropology
aka
Experiments in Ethnography

Instructor:
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Class Info: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 14:00 – 15:15
MS 217

Office hours: Dr. Perić will be holding **virtual** office hours every Wednesday of the semester, from 1-2pm. You can also make an appointment to meet outside of those hours by sending an email to: speric@ucalgary.ca

Prerequisite: ANTH 391 or 490

Land Acknowledgement:

Oki, Aba-wath-tech, Tansi, Dadanast'ada, Hello! My name is Sabrina Perić, and I am a settler, living as an uninvited guest in beautiful Treaty 7, where the prairies and the mountains meet. I want to acknowledge that the University of Calgary is located on the traditional territory of the people of Treaty 7. This includes the Niitsitapi (including the Siksika, Piikani and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Iyethka Nakoda (which includes the Wesley, Bearspaw and Chiniki First Nations). Calgary is situated on the confluence of the Bow and Elbow rivers, the Niitsitapi name for this place is Mohkinstsis, the Iyethka call it Wicispa Oyade, and the Tsuut'ina call this area Gutsistsi. Calgary is also home to the Metis Nation of Alberta, Region 3. It is important for me to trace out these ties – because without them we would not be here. Universities and scholars have benefited greatly from the dispossession of Indigenous people. Territorial acknowledgement is therefore very important for me – it is not only about my accountability as a settler to ongoing processes of colonialism, but as a member of a large immigrant family. I do not want to simply take for granted where I live and where I work. Nor do I want colonial processes to continue with immigrants as key actors – as they have in the past. So I begin by thanking the people on whose territories I continue to live and work as an uninvited guest in the sincere hope that we can go forward together in new and good ways: Nitsiniyi'taki, Isniyes, Kinanâskomitin, Siyisgaas, and Thank you!

Course Description and Objectives:

Ethnography has two meanings: it denotes both the *methods* by which anthropologists have learned about the diversity of human lifeways, struggles and experiences, but also the *representations* (often in the form of writing, but not limited to it) that anthropologists create in order to communicate those lifeways, struggles and experiences. This course therefore provides attention to both methodological and representational aspects of ethnography. Together, we will ask: what steps does ethnography entail? What ethical, political and other challenges do anthropologists consider while engaging in ethnography? How do we sense, gather and note

ethnographic insights? How do we design an ethnographic project? How do we interact and collaborate with other people, animals, organisms and objects? How do we conduct interviews? How do we curate our assembled libraries of notes, artefacts, images and other things, and analyze these multimodal ethnographic libraries? How does who we are as people impact who we become as ethnographers? How do we create responsible ethnography and novel approaches to anthropology? Through a combination of reading, class discussion, field-based activities, peer review and writing exercises, students will practice, apply and produce ethnography.

Learning Outcomes:

This course is an introduction to ethnographic practice. By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Explain the objectives, possibilities and the limitations of ethnographic methods;
- Critically analyze and discuss the ethical obligations and principles that ethnography entails with reference to specific ethnographic practices, including fieldwork and representation. Students should be able to identify and reflect upon the power relations that undergird ethnographic practice;
- Define and practice some of the methodological tools of ethnography, including participant observation, structured and semi-structured interviews, human/non-human collaborations, flash ethnography, some audiovisual approaches, and critically reflect on them;
- Analyze collected ethnographic data and interpret it in an appropriate ethnographic form (textual, visual or other);
- Critically discuss ethnographic writing and identify the methodological and representational approaches used by an author. Students should be able to: identify research questions, how data was collected, analyzed, representational approaches, as well as evaluate the ethnography;
- Design a complete research project that uses ethnography, appropriate to a community and fieldsite, and enact this in the context of ANTH 573 (Honours Seminar), or other independent research project.

Course Format:

Class time will be spent on some lecture, but mostly class discussion, sharing of work and assignments, peer review, group work and reflective writing. You must therefore come to class prepared. Coming to class prepared means:

- 1) Reading **all** of the readings for the class;
- 2) Reading the Ethnographic Activity Sheet (EAS) for that class (if applicable), and completing any required activities as specified by the EAS.
- 3) Come to class with an open mind, and a willingness to listen to your peers, and to share your thoughts on the subject matter. The classes will be student-led and instructor-guided, and are intended to allow you to try and nurture ethnography practices in a supportive setting.

Because some of the activities will be done in class in groups or in pairs, you must be prepared so as not to compromise the ability of your groups or class partners to do their work. Some of the activities are purposely collaborative in nature in order to emphasize the collaboration that is necessary to ethnographic practice.

Learning Technologies and Requirements:

In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students are required to have reliable access to the following technology.

- A computer with a supported operating system
- A current and updated web browser
- A word processor, preferably Microsoft Word

Optional technologies for this class:

- A camera (can be a cell phone, digital camera, webcam or other image capturing device)
- A sound recorder (can be a cell phone, voice recorder, laptop or other sound capturing device)
- A video camera (can be a cell phone, laptop or other video capturing device)

None of the optional technologies are required to complete the assignments in this class. If any of this technology is unavailable to you, or you have concerns, please email Dr. Perić as soon as possible.

Course Assessment and Assignment:

Assessment Philosophy:

Ethnography is not an intuitive or easy practice. It takes time, much reflection, a committed sense of responsibility, and also the recognition that we will make mistakes in the process. This is especially true if we are working on difficult topics, committed to meaningful engagement with people, animals, other forms of life and things, and want to innovate ethnography, especially in our current time and place. Ethnographic practice also requires that we rely on and recognize the value of an engaged community of peers, like those in the 411 classroom, to provide direction to our work, to steer us if we are off course, or to provide further insight into our work. We also have to be honest with ourselves about our ethnographies, and learn to evaluate whether or not our ethnographies are achieving their objectives. ANTH 411 therefore is intended to be a class where you can engage in ethnographic practice in the true sense of a ‘practice’: you should be able to practice (sometimes repetitively) doing ethnography and, over time, come to understand your approach to ethnography. You should do so in a setting where you can make mistakes, you can take risks, and you can learn from yourself and your peers.

Considering the above, ANTH 411’s assessments will follow the principles of *ungrading* (see: Blum, Susan D., and Alfie Kohn. *Ungrading: Why rating students undermines learning (and what to do instead)*. Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2020. Text is available at: <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/78367>). After students have completed each assignment, they will be provided with detailed feedback (but not a letter grade) from the instructor and/or from a peer. After receiving this feedback and conducting their own informal evaluation of their work, students will have to complete a Self-Assessment Quiz for each assignment throughout the semester, where they will assess their own work. Each Self-Assessment Quiz (made up of true or false, or multiple choice questions) will be worth a certain number of points (see Course Assignments below), and students will be assigned a grade based on the point tally from the Self-Declaration Quiz. For example, the Self-Assessment Quiz for the Research Plan will be out of 10 points – and the point grade from the Quiz will be the grade for the Research Plan assignment. Each quiz will add a certain amount of points (see “Course Assignment Points” section below) to your semester grade, which will be provided out of 100 total points (see letter grade equivalents below). The Final Ethnographic Digital Portfolio is not a new assignment. Rather, the portfolio is an opportunity for students to re-do the already completed course. For the Final Ethnographic Digital Portfolio, students will pick what they consider their 5 best course assignments, and re-do them, incorporating feedback from the instructor/peer/classmates. These 5 assignments will then be submitted to our class D2L webpage as an E-Portfolio. The Final Ethnographic Digital Portfolio will also be assessed by the students through a Self-Assessment Quiz.

Course Assignment Points:

Assignment	Points	Due Date
What should/could ethnography be? Twitter Essay	5	1/18/22
Sensing food experiences	10	1/25/22
Flash ethnography in the city	10	2/8/22
Research Plan	10	3/1/22
Who am I? What is my research?	10	3/1/22
In-class ethics exercise reflection	5	3/8/22
Classroom interview script	5	3/15/22
Multispecies Salon Contribution	10	3/24/22
Biographical write-up	15	4/5/22
Final Ethnographic Digital Portfolio	20	4/25/22

The final mark out of 100, will then be converted to a letter grade as follows:

A+	94.9–100	A	89.9–94.8%	A-	84.9–89.8 %
B+	79.9–84.8 %	B	74.9–79.8 %	B-	70.9–74.8 %
C+	66.9–70.8 %	C	62.9–66.8 %	C-	58.9–62.8 %
D+	54.9 %– 58.8%	D	49.9–54.8 %	F	49.8 and below

It is not necessary to pass individual course components in order to pass the class.

Course Policies:

General Expectations:

- Please make sure to spell-check, proofread and edit your assignments before you hand them in.
- Attend classes and be prepared for both the discussions and class activities.
- Be supportive of other students in the class, and be generous with your feedback. Generosity is the name of the game for improving your ethnographic practice.
- Keep on top of all of the assignments, and the work that needs to go into them.

Reappraisal of Graded Term Work:

- <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>

Reappraisal of Final Grade:

- <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-3.html>

Missed or Late Assessments:

Late assignments will be penalized at 10% of the total assignment points for each day that it is late. If you will be unable to hand in an assignment on time, please notify the instructor. Students may be asked to provide supporting documentation for an exemption/special request. This may include, but is not limited to, a prolonged absence from a course where participation is required, a missed course assessment, a deferred examination, or an appeal. Falsification of any supporting documentation will be taken very seriously and may result in disciplinary action through the Academic Discipline regulations or the Student Non-Academic Misconduct policy.

Required Readings:

Week 1: Ethnography in “the field”

January 11: What is the field?

You do not need to read anything before class today. We will read excerpts from the texts below in class together.

Malinowski, Bronislaw. *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*. Routledge, 2020. We will be reading pg 11 (pdf pg. 43) – pg 23 (pdf pg 55).

Malinowski, Bronislaw. *Argonauts of the western Pacific: An account of native enterprise and adventure in the archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea [1922/1994]*. Routledge, 2013. Introduction: The Subject, Method and Scope of This Enquiry.

January 13: Imagining new ethnographies

Culhane, Dara, and Denielle Elliott, eds. *A different kind of ethnography: Imaginative practices and creative methodologies*. University of Toronto Press, 2016. Please read: “Imagining: An Introduction”.

Nordling, Linda. "Who Gets to Study Whom?." *Sapiens* (2020).
<https://www.sapiens.org/culture/anthropology-colonial-history/>

In class:

Please read: *What should/could ethnography be? Twitter Essay* EAS

Assignment inspo: Cole, Teju. "A Piece of the Wall." (2014).
<https://twitter.com/tejucole/timelines/444262126954110977>

Week 2: Sensing Selves

January 18: Becoming attuned to our senses

DUE: *What should/could ethnography be? Twitter Essay*

Culhane, Dara, and Denielle Elliott, eds. *A different kind of ethnography: Imaginative practices and creative methodologies*. University of Toronto Press, 2016 Please read "Sensing".

Zhang, Jinghong. "Tasting tea and filming tea: the filmmaker's engaged sensory experience." *Visual Anthropology Review* 33, no. 2 (2017): 141-151.

In class assignment:

Please read: *Twitter Essay Peer Commentary* EAS

January 20: An anthropology of sound

Bull, Michael, and Les Back. "Introduction: into sound." *The auditory culture reader* (2003): 1-18.

<http://pzacad.pitzer.edu/~mma/teaching/MS115/readings/bull&back.pdf>

André-Johnson, Cory-Alice. 2020. "What Does Anthropology Sound Like: Activism." AnthroPod, Fieldsights, January 20. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/what-does-anthropology-sound-like-activism>

In class assignment:

Please read: *Sensing Food Experiences* EAS

Week 3: The hunch

January 25: Fumbling for Something

DUE: *Sensing food experiences*

Perec, Georges. "Approaches to What?" *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*. New York: Penguin, 1997.

<http://artsites.ucsc.edu/faculty/Gustafson/FILM%20162.W10/readings/perec.approaches.pdf>

De León, Jason. *The land of open graves*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015. Please read: Introduction.

In class:

Please read: *Sensing food experiences group review* EAS

January 27: Flash Field Notes

Culhane, Dara, and Denielle Elliott, eds. *A different kind of ethnography: Imaginative practices and creative methodologies*. University of Toronto Press, 2016 Please read "Walking".

Emerson, Robert, Rachel Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Excerpts.

In class:

Please read: *Flash Ethnography* EAS

Week 4: Juxtaposition

February 1: Decolonizing knowledge devices

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. Zed Books Ltd., 2021. Please read the “Introduction.”

Clifford, James. 1983. “On Ethnographic Authority,” In *Representations 2*: 118-146. Please read pgs 118 – 126 only.

February 3: Questioning Museum Logics

Taussig, Michael. *My Cocaine Museum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. Please read Pgs 1 – 86.

Week 5: What goes together? Asking Questions – Finding Answers

February 8: Listening and Rethinking Ethnographic Worlds

DUE: *Flash Ethnography*

Booth, Wayne C. et. al. 1995. “Asking Questions, Finding Answers.” In *The Craft of Research*, 29-47. University of Chicago Press: Chicago.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. New York: Zed Books Ltd., 2021. Please read *Research through Imperial eyes*. Pp 19 – 40.

In Class:

Please read: *Flash Ethnography Group Share* EAS.

February 10: The Field is not a bounded subject

Gupta, Akhil, and James Ferguson. 1997. “Discipline and Practice: ‘The Field’ as Site, Method, and Location in Anthropology.” In *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science*. University of California Press. Pp. 1-46.

OR

Marcus, George. 1995. “Ethnography in/out of the World System: The Emergence of MultiSited Ethnography.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 95-117

In Class:

Please read: *Gupta and Ferguson/Marcus Reading Exercise* EAS.

Week 6: Making relations

February 15: Re-Search

Wilson Shawn. *Research is ceremony. Indigenous research methods*. Winnipeg: Fernwood. 2008. Excerpts

Absolon, Kathleen E. *Kaandossiwini: How we come to know*. Fernwood Publishing, 2011. Please read Chapter 1.

Perić, Sabrina. "Introduction" in *A Mine is a Story*.

February 17: Finding Voice

De la Cadena, Marisol. *Earth beings: Ecologies of Practice across Andean Worlds*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015. Please read Preface and Story 1.

In Class:

Please read: *Who am I? What is my research?* EAS.

February 20 – 26, READING WEEK: Please work on your *Who am I? What is my research?* Assignment and your *Research Plan*.

Week 7: Collaboration I: What is Ethical?

March 1: The Ethics and Politics of Research

DUE: *Who am I? What is my research?* And *Research Plan*.

Parikh, Anar. 2018. "Race is Still a Problem in Anthropology." *Anthrodendum*, April 9, 2018, <https://anthrodendum.org/2018/04/09/race-is-still-a-problem-in-anthropology/>.

Low, Setha M. and Sally Engle Merry. 2010. "Engaged Anthropology: Diversity and Dilemmas." *Current Anthropology* 51: S203-S226.

March 3: Ethics Scenarios

AAA Statement on Ethics: <http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/>

In Class:

Please read: *In-Class Ethics Exercise* EAS.

Week 8: Collaboration II: The Portrait

DUE: *In Class Ethics Exercise Reflection*

March 8: The Responsibility of Portraiture

Hamdy, Sherine, and Coleman Nye. *Lissa: a story about medical promise, friendship, and revolution*. Vol. 1. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017. Excerpts.

Fujii, Lee Ann. 2010. Shades of Truth and Lies: Interpreting Testimonies of War and Violence. *Journal of Peace Research* 47(2): 231-41.

March 10: Interviews and the Portrait

Forsey, Martin Gerard. 2010. "Ethnography as Participant Listening." In *Ethnography* 11 (4): 558-572.

In-Class:

Please read: *Classroom Interview Work* EAS.

Week 9: Ethnography in the Anthropocene

DUE: *Classroom Interview Script*. You should also be trying to conduct your classroom interview this week.

March 15: Queer Animacies in the Anthropocene

Kirksey, Eben, ed. *The multispecies salon*. Duke University Press, 2014. Please read: Tactics of Multispecies Ethnography, Hope in Blasted Landscapes.

Chen, Mel Y. *Animacies*. Duke University Press, 2012. Excerpts.

March 17: Human-Animal Relationships

Haraway, Donna Jeanne. *The companion species manifesto: Dogs, people, and significant otherness*. Vol. 1. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003.

In-Class Screening: Nakoda AV Club. *Abomapéni: Relations and Rez Dogs*, 2018.

Week 10: Collaboration II: The Multispecies Salon

March 22: Implosion Writing

Dumit, Joseph. 2014. "Writing the Implosion: Teaching the World One Thing at a Time." *Cultural Anthropology* 29, no. 2: 344–362. <https://journal.culanth.org/index.php/ca/article/view/ca29.2.09/301>

In Class:

Please read *Implosion Writing* EAS.

March 24: Class activity Multispecies Salon

DUE: Multispecies Salon Contribution

In Class:

Please read *Multispecies Salon Peer Critique* EAS.

Week 11: Drafts and the Curation of Ethnographic Archives

DUE: Nothing specifically is due this week, but you should be trying to write up your Biographical Write-up this week.

March 29: Bringing together different forms of evidence

De León, Jason. 2015. *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Excerpts.

March 31: The many products of Ethnographic Archives

Check out: the Undocumented Migrant Project's Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/hostileterrain94/?hl=en>

Norton, Holly. 2018. "What anthropologists can tell you about the US Border and immigration crisis." *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2018/jul/18/what-anthropologists-can-tell-you-about-the-us-border-immigration-crisis>

Aviles, Mary. "Data Visualization As an act of Witnessing" *Nightingale*.

<https://medium.com/nightingale/data-visualization-as-an-act-of-witnessing-33e346f5e437>

Week 12: Multimodal Ordering/Writing

April 5: The Genre of Ethnography Part I

DUE: Biographical Write-Up

Culhane, Dara, and Denielle Elliott, eds. *A different kind of ethnography: Imaginative practices and creative methodologies*. University of Toronto Press, 2016 Please read "Writing".

Ralph, Laurence. *The Torture Letters*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020. Excerpts.

April 7: The Genre of Ethnography Part II

Bonilla, Yarimar, and Jonathan Rosa. 2015. "Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States." *American Ethnologist* 42 (1): 4–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12112>.

Ralph, Laurence. *The Torture Letters*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020. Excerpts.

April 12: Wrap up

In-Class:

Please read *Biographical Write-Up Peer Review* EAS.

For Finals Week: Please read *Ethnographic Digital Portfolio* EAS. Final Ethnographic Portfolio is due **MONDAY, APRIL 25th on D2L.**

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit <https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/student-services/access>. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor or the Department Head. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/accommodation-students-disabilities-procedure>.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

“Academic Misconduct” includes such things as cheating, falsification, plagiarism, unauthorized assistance, and failure to comply with exam regulations or an Instructor’s expectations regarding conduct required of Students completing academic assessments. Students who participate in, or encourage the commission of, Academic Misconduct will be subject to disciplinary action which could include Probation, Suspension, or Expulsion from the University. For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-3.html>

Further support on academic integrity is available at: <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students’ assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

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SUPPORT AND RESOURCES:

Please visit the Registrar's website at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for additional important information on the following:

- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success Centre
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Safewalk