Field Working Studyguide 1
Stepping In and Stepping Out: Understanding Cultures

1. What is the difference between an insider stand and an outsider stance?

2. What are two reason for wanting to research the everyday world around us?

3. What is “culture”?

4. What is the goal of fieldworking?

5. What are cultural artifacts?

6. What do fieldworkers do?

7. Who are ethnographers, and what do they do?

8. What is the attitude of colonization, and how does it affect ethnographers' abilities to observe culture?

Stepping In: Revealing our Subcultures

9. What is a subculture?

10. List the subcultures of which you are a member, and brainstorm the rituals, insider phrases, and behaviors for those groups.

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<th>Group</th>
<th>Rituals</th>
<th>Insider Phrases</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
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Investigating Perspectives: Insider and Outsider

11. What is subjectivity?

12. How is subjectivity a useful skill for the ethnographer?

Posing Questions: Ethnographic vs. Journalistic

13. Fill out this Venn diagram of the similarities and differences between ethnographers and journalists

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Ethnography

Journalism
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14. How are the ethnographer’s and the journalist’s questions different?

15. What is the emic perspective? What is the etic perspective? How would the story and interpretation of a culture be different from an emic perspective versus an etic
perspective? If someone wrote an ethnography of your subculture, would you rather it be from an etic or an emic perspective? Explain your preference.

16. Take out a fresh sheet of paper and list all of your subcultures on that page.

   a. Please leave space around the name of each subculture so that it is easy for others to read those names quickly.

   b. In your group, share your subcultures. If you find that you share a subculture with others or if you remember other communities of which you are a member, please update your list.

17. What are artifacts? How can artifacts help the ethnographer to interpret what she or he observes?

18. What is a consultant, and how can that consultant help the ethnographer to understand the culture?

19. Please complete this table, filling in information for your groups with names of artifacts and particular consultants you might approach to help you to understand the culture.

20. What are objective field notes?

21. What are subjective field notes?

22. Why does an ethnographer need to take both objective and subjective field notes?

An Ethnographic Study: “Friday Night at Iowa 80”

23. Summarize the ethnographic study of Iowa 80 into two to three sentences.

24. Questions about Iowa 80

   a. Describe how Zollo's narrative is written. To which writing form does the author of the book compare Zollo's piece?
b. What are Zollo’s sources of data?

c. How does Zollo help his consultants to feel comfortable enough with him to talk about their lives?

   i. How might you do something similar in your own subculture in order to help potential consultants to feel comfortable enough to talk to you?

d. What interpretations does he offer?

e. What is the culture that he describes?

f. What makes it a culture?

g. Can you see the places that he describes?

h. Do you understand what it would be like to be an insider in this culture?

i. Sometimes the narrator seems more informal in his writing. Why might the author choose to incorporate phrases like “waving a hearty hello before [he makes his] hi-ho Silver” into his ethnography?

j. Where and why does the ethnographer integrate academic literature into his ethnography? What is the effect of that outside literature has on the meaning of his ethnography?

25. Why do ethnographers need to admit their biases? How does that admission help to strengthen the ethnography?

26. Why might other ethnographers need you to have write about the subject of your own research and bias?

27. What should a field researcher do in if s/he discovers contradictory or complicating information?

28. What is the “slice of time” device?
a. What might be your “slice of time” moment for your fieldwork? Please fill out this table with the groups, artifacts, possible consultants, and the slice of time event.

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<th>Possible Consultants</th>
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Field Writing: Establishing a Voice

29. Why do field writers use “I” in their fieldwork?

30. How does Zollo help the subculture of Iowa 80 come to life for his readers?

31. What are the three pieces of advice that the authors of the book offer to ethnographers in order to help the reader to develop their own “voice”?

A Community Action Study

32. What are ways that community can be formed?

33. In which ways are ethnographers both participant and observer?
34. How does Nikolic integrate herself into her narrative about her fieldwork?

35. What is Nikolic's connection to the people she is studying?

36. Why does Nikolic think about her father when she is speaking with Solomon, the man looking for work as a bank teller or as a substitute teacher?

37. How do headings help the reader to understand the ethnographer?

Reflection as Critique

38. How is reflection a kind of critique?

39. What function does the research portfolio play in your research?

40. What should be included in the Research Portfolio?

41. What are the four key activities of fieldwork?
SELECT A FIELDSITE

1. Make a list of the communities or subcultures that you might study on campus from a fieldworking perspective. Think about the people, places, events, or subcultures that capture your attention or that you’ve always been interested in.

2. Pick three or four of those subcultures to think more about. Where might you step in or out to gain a more distanced perspective on that group’s ways of being an operating?

3. What are the ethical concerns that you might have about such studies?
   a. What might be the drawbacks of studying that group?

   b. Which objections might be raised by the insiders?

   c. Which problems might you encounter in your study?

4. Which issues are most likely to impact your study? Be specific:
   a. What is your place in this culture?

   b. Who is in charge?

   c. Is that group responsible to any other groups?

   d. How might you could give back to the community that you are studying?
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