

ANTH 5708

Ethnographic Research Methods

Instructor	Cati Coe
Term	Winter 2027
Course Delivery	In person
Email Address	caticoe@cunet.carleton.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to ethnographic and qualitative research. Ethnography is the study of culture and social organization primarily through participant observation and interviewing. Ethnographers carry out their research by becoming a participant/observer or observing participant, to varying degrees, in the social setting they wish to study. Ethnographic research provides descriptive and interpretative analyses of the routine practices of everyday life. Accounts represent different ways people make sense of their lives and describe the types of social organization (for example, gender relations, political authority, or social movements) that, in part, serve to structure or pattern behavior.

This course has both practical and conceptual goals. 1) Students should learn how to do a smallscale qualitative research project, and in the process, they should gain skills in various qualitative research methods such as interviewing and writing fieldnotes. 2) Students should explore conceptual and ethical questions that have been raised with respect to qualitative research. Some questions concern the nature of the knowledge produced by qualitative research: What counts as good evidence for knowledge claims about a subject's world? What is the relationship between what people say and what outside observers think they are doing? Other questions concern the social position of the researcher in qualitative research: Does one have to be a member of a group to do good qualitative research on that group? Should qualitative research have practical or critical goals? Why does interpretive research matter and to whom?

EVALUATION

Assignments:

- Participation in seminar discussion and activities
- Research proposal
- Visual/Sound data
- Interview transcript
- Fieldnotes
- Analysis memos
- Presentation
- Research paper

TEXT

- McGovern, Mike. 2017. *A Socialist Peace? Explaining the Absence of War in an African Country*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [available through ARES] \$32 used; \$42.56 new
- Maxwell, J. A. 2013. *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [not available electronically on ARES, but only through 4-hour physical reserve] \$39.62-\$100.25
- Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [not available electronically on ARES, but only through 4-hour physical reserve] \$22 used; \$29.26 new