

Research Portfolio and Mini-Ethnography
(30%)

Your portfolio is a collection of items chosen from your archive of documentary materials – your data. You have been continuously collecting, selecting, and rejecting data as you conducted and continue to conduct your fieldwork. You will organize and reorganize your mini-ethnography and portfolio based on theme, chronology, and data types. Your final portfolio and mini-ethnography are a representation of your entire research process. The portfolio is also a means for reflection.

Your portfolio must include in this order:

- your portfolio reflection
- an annotated table of contents
- artifacts and data that will walk your portfolio reader through your research process (see below)
- Up-Draft of mini-ethnography with original feedback from peers and me
- Dental-Draft of your Mini-Ethnography
- informed consent forms for all informants cited in your mini-ethnography

You must include some or all of the following in your portfolio:

Each item you select should have contributed in some way to your Mini-Ethnography Paper

- fieldnotes
- interview transcripts
- artifacts
- scholarly “reading” articles
- photographs
- e-mail correspondence
- short written homework assignments
- in-class writing assignments
- exploratory writing (freewriting, outlines, etc.)

Do not include valuable artifacts or irreplaceable items in your portfolio.

Mini-Ethnography (20%)

Instructions

In this paper you will synthesize your fieldwork and integrate your research into one 10- to 12-page essay. This essay will build from all the writings and research you have completed during the semester. You will attempt to answer your research question(s), and in the process you will speak to the questions that have guided your fieldwork, such as “**What’s the story?**” and “**Where’s the culture?**” You will reevaluate your fieldwork descriptions, interpretations, and analyses. *You will represent the subculture in which you have become a participant-observer and the informants you have come to know, and you will offer a unique insight (your thesis) about the subculture you have been studying.*

Required Format

- Use MLA or APA style
- Double space
- Title your paper
- Include Works Cited/Reference page
- Use 12-point Times New Roman font
- Leave 1" margins

Evaluation Criteria

Your paper should

- state and develop a coherent and compelling thesis about your subculture/fieldsite
- answer or attempt to answer your research question(s)
- support your thesis with data collected during fieldwork
- triangulate data and incorporate appropriate sources (*minimum 5 secondary “reading” sources, 4 of which need to be *scholarly*, and primary sources, such as interviews and observations*)
- use organizational techniques such as analytic section headings
- be clear, engaging, and error-free

Due Dates

Up-Draft Due Thursday, April 17 (Make sure to bring 3 copies – 1 for you, 1 for your peer reviewer, and 1 for me.)

Dental-Draft Due in Research Portfolio Thursday, May 8

Portfolio Reflection (5%)

This two-page analysis/reflection is a snapshot of the ethnographic research and writing experience you've engaged in throughout the term. It will give you an opportunity to explore ideas and overall themes in your research. It will also help me view, respond to, and evaluate your body of work. As part of your reflection, consider the following questions:

- What assumptions did you have going into the field? What did you expect to see, and what did you actually find?
- Which initial impressions turned out to be part of your final piece? Which ideas did you discard?
- What strategies did you develop to analyze your data? What didn't fit?
- What is your favorite piece of data — or data source — and why?
- What decisions did you make about writing up your fieldwork?
- What is your best piece of writing? Why?
- How much of your voice is or will be in the final project? How much of your informants' voices?
- What was your most significant experience as a fieldworker?
- How have you changed as a writer and as a researcher? What do you know about writing and the research process now, that you didn't know at the beginning of the semester?

Evaluation Criteria

Your portfolio reflection should

- examine your progress as a fieldworker, indicating your awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses
- demonstrate your growth as a writer
- reflect on positions and assumptions
- be written in a clear, engaging, and error-free manner

Annotated Table of Contents for Your Research Portfolio (5%)

Instructions

Create a list or table of contents for your portfolio. What different types of data did you gather? Print sources? Web sources? Artifacts? Stories and interviews? As you list your contents, identify the strategies that you've developed to categorize your data. Do you use patterns that are linear? Thematic? Chronological? Abstract to concrete? Concrete to abstract? Remember that the Research Portfolio is a representation of your entire research process, culminating in your Mini-Ethnography.

Below each table of contents entry, include a two- to four-sentence annotation — a descriptive note — about each listing.

Example: In her “Annotated Table of Contents,” Emily Wemmer lists the following:

Bidding number, bidding number registration card, and invoice from horse sale

These three artifacts help explain how the auction itself works. Everyone buying at the sale must register for a free bidding number. The number is good for only one sale. Getting a number is very easy — just a name, address, and bank name and you're eligible to buy a horse. After you're done bidding, you pay up at the office and receive an invoice or receipt. Then, you must show the invoice either to the people in the tack room or the loading dock personnel before putting a horse on your trailer.

Evaluation Criteria

Your portfolio's table of contents should

- represent data collected, fieldsites visited, informants interviewed, and artifacts evaluated in portfolio
- accurately describe and selectively organize research
- categorize data effectively
- draw connections among items collected in portfolio
- be written in a clear, engaging, and error-free manner