

**Soc 955 Ethnography**  
**Alice Goffman**  
**Fall 2013**

This is a nuts and bolts course where students learn how to do ethnography by conducting a small fieldwork project for the semester. Students will come up with a field site before class begins. The field site can be any public or private place in which social life as it is lived: a moving bus, a restaurant kitchen, an ER waiting room, a convenience store, or even someone's apartment. In deference to sociology's long tradition of wrestling with the modern moment, students may also choose a field site in an online community.

Each week we'll focus on one thing that great ethnography does. Students are assigned a weekly reading and also come to class with one to two pages of polished field notes on the week's topic. In the first half of each class we'll discuss the reading, and in the second half students will go around the room reading their own field notes aloud. In the final ten minutes we'll discuss problems or questions that are coming up in the field. A final paper based on the weekly memos will be due after the class ends.

This course is good for anybody who wants to do ethnography but also good for anybody who wants to understand how to think about and evaluate ethnographic work. It's a nice follow-up to Mustafa Emirbayer's course on ethnography and theory, and to Michael Bell's qual. research methods classes, but there are no prerequisites. Folks with no background in ethnography will do just fine.

Sept 9 | The Four Tenets of Ethnography  
Shipping Off plus your own selection

Sept 16 | Eavesdropping and Observing  
Pride and prejudice

Sept 23 | Showing the People  
Random Family  
The Chinese Laundryman

Special Event: Sept 25, Wednesday | Elijah Anderson, The Cosmopolitan Canopy  
His talk at noon followed by a session with our class

Sept 30 | Bo Paille, Toxic Schools

Oct 7 | Showing the Interaction  
Sidewalk

Oct 14 | Depicting Variation  
Passing On

Oct 21 | Saying Vs. Doing  
Tally's Corner

Oct 28 | No Class

Special Event: November 1, Friday | Colin Jerolmack, The Global Pigeon  
His talk at noon and early dinner with our class

Nov 4 | The Career Approach  
Section from Hustlers, Beats and Others  
The Moral Career of the Mental Patient  
How to Become a Marijuana Smoker

Nov 11 | Interviews and Diaries  
Two in a Bed  
Uncoupling

Nov 18 | Reflexivity and Ethics  
On the Run  
IRB person coming to class

Special Event: Nov 22, Friday | Waverly Duck  
Talk at noon

Week 12, Nov 25 | Cool Counting  
The Philadelphia Negro  
Selections from Making Ends Meet, All Our Kin, movie by Bill Holly Whyte

Week 13, Dec 2 | The Micro Macro Link  
Black Metropolis

Week 14, Dec 9 | Naming Stuff: Ethnography as a Basis for Theory  
The Presentation of Self