FIELD & LABORATORY METHODS

Ethnomusicology Seminar (Music 2442)

Spring 2023



Tuesdays, 9:30-11:45

MB Room 302

Professor Andrew Weintraub

Office Hours: Tuesdays after class (MB 305)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
What does it mean to "do ethnography"? This course examines various approaches to the ethnography of music in relation to cultural and social life. Particular emphasis will be placed on theories, methods, and practices developed within the fields of ethnomusicology and anthropology. Students will leave this course at the end of the semester with theoretical grounding, practical training, and useful experience in ethnographic fieldwork.
The course combines classroom study with an actual ethnographic research practicum, in which students, in consultation with the professor, will conduct exploratory fieldwork projects in the Pittsburgh area. The class sessions roughly follow a chronology from pre-fieldwork planning to post-fieldwork writing and representation of data. The course will present methods and techniques related to three main components of field research: 1) preparation (research design and proposal); 2) fieldwork (studying and documenting musical life *in situ*) and 3) ethnography (interpreting fieldwork experience and writing about it). Students will learn to develop practical skills including interviewing and eliciting techniques, the use of audio and video technology, data interpretation and analysis, ethical issues, archiving and storage techniques, and virtual ethnography. We will examine the history of ethnographic representation as a discursive practice that raises questions of authority, power, and cultural critique.

FIELDWORK PROJECT:
Work for this course will include a semester-long fieldwork project. Students will select a local field site, community, or organization in the Pittsburgh area that you can visit *at least once per week*; write up fieldnotes for each visit; document the site using technologies of digital audio, video recording, and still photography; interview using questionnaires; observe and document a performance event at your site; and archive your field materials. During the semester, we will share our field work experiences, problems, and solutions with the class. The final product will be an oral presentation and descriptive essay about your site and the ethnographic questions it raises.

ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION, AND IN-CLASS ETIQUETTE:
Students are expected to attend all seminar sessions and arrive on time. Students are expected to actively and openly participate in discussions. Students may be expected to introduce material for discussions on assigned weeks. We may meet outside of class time for fieldtrips (to be determined). Students are expected to have good faith, humor, and respect towards each other. Respectful disagreements are expected and encouraged.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS (for purchasing):
Barz, Gregory and Timothy Cooley, eds. 2008. *Shadows in the Field*. 2nd edition. New York: Oxford University Press.
Becker, Howard. 1998. *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You're Doing It*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Emerson, Robert, Rachel Fretz, and Linda Shaw. 2011. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes.* 2nd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Lassiter, Luke E. 2005. *The Chicago Guide to Collaborative Ethnography*. Chicago: University

of Chicago Press.

MATERIALS:
• Dedicated field notebook or laptop.
• Smartphone or other device that can record sound and video and take photographs.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:
Students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic honesty, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity <http://www.as.pitt.edu/fac/policies/academic) integrity>.

GRADING:
Grading: Assignments = 40%; Class Participation = 25%; Final Oral Presentation = 10%; Final Project = 25%

Course Schedule

(Readings should be prepared for the corresponding class session)
(* = items posted in Canvas; all others available online through Pittcat)

10 January – Introduction to the Course
**Orientation and class expectations; historical overview of ethnography in ethnomusicology; Topic, Scope, Theoretical Framework, Rationale, Methodology, Research Findings*

17 January – Inquiry
**What is a field and what is fieldwork? What are research methods? What is a theoretical framework? What is ethnography?*

Reading:
*Herndon, Marcia and Norma McLeod. 1983. *Field Manual for Ethnomusicology*. Norwood: Norwood Editions. Pp. 1-24.
*Rabinow, Paul. 2008. "Inquiry." In *Marking Time: On the Anthropology of the Contemporary.* Princeton: Princeton University Press. Pp. 6-11.
*Spradley, James. 1980. "The Ethnographic Research Cycle." *Participant Observation*. New York: Hold, Rinehart, and Winston. Pp. 26-35.

Assignment #1: Choosing a Topic (due 16 Jan)
Choose a potential ethnographic research topic for your term project. It should be a topic that you are genuinely interested in studying. Do some preliminary searches to find out what has been done and to narrow your focus. Do a library search, internet search, AND a Google Scholar search on your project topic. Get a sense of how debates about your topic are framed (or something theoretically related, if you can't find much on your specific topic). Discuss your ideas with your colleagues outside of class. What questions occur to you as you are thinking about

this topic? Write a paragraph about your potential topic and post it on Canvas by January 16. We will discuss these individually and in class.

24 January – Ethnographies of Music
**How do ethnomusicologists do fieldwork? How do they write about it? How do you see your work as part of a dialogue with ethnomusicologists and anthropologists?*

Assignment #2: Report on Ethnography (due 24 Jan)
Choose one of the following ethnomusicological ethnographies and write an essay of approximately 4 pages in length. This is not a conventional book review. Write one paragraph about each of the following: Topic & Scope; Theoretical Framework; Methodology; Analysis; and Research Findings. In the final paragraph of your report, link the argument of the book to your own project this term. How might you use the main argument in the book to reflect on your own fieldwork? How might the book's theoretical framework, methodology, and analysis inform your project?

Reading:
Mientjes, Louise. 2017. *Dust of the Zulu: Ngoma Aestetics after Apartheid*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Ndaliko, Chérie Rivers. 2016. *Necessary Noise: Music, Film, and Charitable Imperialism in the East of Congo*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Daughtry, Martin J. 2015. *Listening to War: Sound, Music, Trauma and Survival in Wartime Iraq*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Silverman, Carol. 2012. *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Hahn, Tomie. 2007. *Sensational Knowledge: Embodying Culture Through Japanese Dance.* Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.
Levin, Theodore. 2006. *Where Rivers and Mountains Sing: Sound, Music and Nomadism in Tuva and Beyond*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Gaunt, Kyra. 2006. *The Games Black Girls Play: Learning the Ropes from Double-Dutch to Hip-Hop*. New York: New York University Press.
Hagedorn, Katherine. 2001. *Divine Utterances: The Performance of Afro-Cuban Santeria*. Smithsonian Books.

31 January – Research Design and Gaining Access
**Research design: what makes a good project?*

Reading:
*Becker, Howard. 1998. "2: Imagery." In *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While You're Doing It.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 10-66.
*Holmes, Seth. 2013. "Introduction: 'Worth Risking Your Life?'" In *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 1-29. ebook full text online.
*Malinowski, Bronislaw. 2014 [1922]. "Introduction: The Subject, Method and Scope of this

Inquiry." In *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. Waveland Press. Pp. 4-25. Ebook full text online.

Assignment #3: Description of your project (due 31 January)
Your description should include the following: (1) Title; (2) Description of the topic; (3) Research questions (4) Fieldsite; (5) Method for contacting people. Think about how you will include interviews, a photography/video element, and textual or material objects.

Make arrangements to visit your site with a one-page handout (describing your project and what you wish to accomplish) that you can distribute to people at the site. Bring a hard copy to class to share.

Please note: You will not be allowed to change your project after 31 January. There is just not enough time in the semester to change topics midstream. We'll make the time and space to discuss challenges in the field.

7 February – Interviewing
**Contacting people, creating questionnaires, release forms, conducting an interview, transcribing, evaluation*

Reading:
*Briggs, Charles. 1986. "Listen Before You Leap: Toward Methodological Sophistication." In *Learning How to Ask: A Sociolinguistic Appraisal of the Role of the Interview in Social Science*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 93-111.
Hunt, Marjorie. 2003. *The Smithsonian Folklife and Oral History Interviewing Guide*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution. http://www.folklife.si.edu/explore/Resources/InterviewGuide/InterviewGuide_home.html
*Janesick, Valerie. 2007. "Oral History as a Social Justice Project: Issues for the Qualitative Researcher." *The Qualitative Report* 12(1):111-121.
*Spradley, James. 2016 [1979]. "The Ethnographic Interview." Long Grove: Illinois: Waveland Press.

Assignment #4: Consent Form & Interview Questionnaire (due 7 Feb)
Draft a preliminary 1-page consent form to be signed by your research interlocutors. Write a 2-page paper on your consent form. What aspects of your fieldsite are unique and need to be included in your consent form? Do you anticipate any difficulties in getting your consent form signed? How will you use your consent forms? In addition, draw up a 1-2 page questionnaire of preliminary interview questions relevant to your project. Bring hard copies to class.

14 February – Audio, Photography, and Video Recording I
**An introduction to photography, field recording, and video recording equipment*

Reading:

*Ball, Mike and Greg Smith. 2001. "Technologies of Realism? Ethnographic Uses of Photography and Film." In *Handbook of Ethnography*. Paul Atkinson, et.al., ed. London: Sage Publications. Pp. 302-19.

*Stoller, Paul and Cheryl Olkes. 1989. "The Taste of Ethnographic Things" In *The Taste of Ethnographic Things: The Senses in Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. Pp. 15-36. Ebook full text online.

Assignment #5: Fieldsite Overview (due 14 Feb)

Having visited your fieldsite at least once, prepare a 10-minute in-class powerpoint presentation concerning your chosen fieldsite, including main research questions, preliminary research methodologies, theoretical framework of project, and feasibility of completion by the end of the semester. Include preliminary pictures and music examples that may characterize your site.

21 February – Fieldnotes

**How to take useful fieldnotes and what to do with them*

Reading:

Barz. Gregory. 2008. "Confronting the Field (note) In and Out of the Field: Music, Voices, Texts, and Experiences in Dialogue." In *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology, 2nd ed.* New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 206-223. Ebook full text online.

*Clifford, James. 1990. "Notes on (Field)notes." In *Fieldnotes: The Making of Anthropology*. Roger Sanjek, ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Pp. 47-70.

Emerson, Robert, Rachel Fretz, and Linda Shaw. 1995. "Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research." In *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [chapters 1-3]

Assignment #6: Recorded Interview, Transcription, and 3-4 Page Analysis (due 21 Feb)

Conduct and record an interview with a research interlocutor that is at least 30 minutes long. Remember to take notes even though you are recording. SOON afterward, go over your notes (type them if they are handwritten), and choose a segment of the interview to transcribe – around 5 minutes. Write a 3-4 page analysis of the interview, at least half of which should focus on content; half can be a discussion of your own experience of interviewing and transcribing. Post your analysis piece on Courseweb. Your transcription does not need to be posted, but a printed copy should be brought to class to turn in.

28 Feb –Audio, Photography, and Video Recording II

**An introduction to photography, field recording, and video recording equipment, continued...*

Reading:

Post, Jennifer, et.al. 1995. *A Manual for Documentation*... [SEM] Music Library Reference non-circ.

Emerson, Robert, Rachel Fretz, and Linda Shaw. 1995. "Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research." In *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [chapters 4-7]

*Jackson, Bruce. 1987. "Records." In *Fieldwork*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. Pp. 244-58.
*Turk Niskač, Barbara. 2011. "Some Thoughts on Ethnographic Fieldwork and Photography." *Studia ethnologica Croatica* 23:125-148.

Multimedia:
The Ax Fight." 1975. Napolean Chagnon and Tim Asch. 30 min.

Assignment #7: Observation and Fieldnotes (due 28 Feb)
Observe your fieldsite for one hour (preferably when music is being made). Take notes, which should include a description of the place, the people who are there (or who come and go) and any other thoughts you have. You may sketch, draw a map, or create charts or lists. Type up your notes if they are handwritten (~3-5 pages). Add your own analysis of the exercise and your analysis of what you observed. What did you notice at the time? What did you realize you had missed as you typed your notes? How might you do this differently the next time or in different circumstances (be thinking ahead to your fieldsite)? Draft a 2-page narrative, which should draw on your notes and frame the scene for your reader.

7 March Spring Break

14 March – Ethics

Reading:
American Anthropological Association. [year?] *Handbook on Ethical Issues in Anthropology*
http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/toc.htm
Society for Ethnomusicology. 2008. "Position Statement on Ethnographic Research & Institutional Review Boards" (January 16, 2008).
< https://www.ethnomusicology.org/page/PS_IRB>
SEM-L Discussion of IRB (January 27-28, 2017)
*Loughran, Maureen. 2008. "'But What if They Call the Police?': Applied Ethnomusicology and Urban Activism in the United States." *Musicological Annual* 44(1): 51-67.
National Coalition for History. 2017. "New Federal Rule Exempts Oral History from IRB Review." [January 19]
http://historycoalition.org/2017/01/19/new-federal-rule-exempts-oral-history-from-irb-review/
Rodrigues, Corinne. 2014. "Doing Research in Violent Settings: Ethical Considerations and Ethics Committees." In *Social Science Research Council | Working Papers.* Pp. 1-7. <http://webarchive.ssrc.org/working-papers/DSD_ResearchSecurity_05_Rodrigues.pdf>
Zemp, Hugo. 1990. "Ethical Issues in Ethnomusicological Film-Making." *Visual Anthropology* 3, pp. 49-64.

Assignment #8: Video Shoot (due 14 March)
Using digital video as your medium, focus on a person, place, process, or trope central to your fieldwork project. Turn in 3 minutes or 5 minutes (depending on if your clips are edited or not) of at least 2 clips that use different filming techniques learned in class. Write a 2-page commentary discussing your topic, the experience of working with the technology, how/why

you shot and chose the material in a given way, the invitation and/or elicitation process, and your own critique of the technique and product. What are its strengths? What is lost or obscured?

21 March – Archives, Archival Fieldwork, and Repatriation
**How can archives bolster fieldwork? What is the role of the archive in pre-research, during research, and after? Questions of ownership, access, and use.*

Reading:
*Chaudhuri, Shubha. 1992. "Preservation of the World's Music." In *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*. Helen Myers, ed. New York: W.W. Norton and Co. Pp. 365-74.
*Dirks, Nicholas. 2002. "Annals of the Archive: Ethnographic Notes on the Sources of History." In *From the Margins: Historical Anthropology and its Futures*. Brian Axel, ed. Durham: Duke University Press. Pp. 47-65.
*Nannyonga-Tamusuza, Sylvia and Andrew N. Weintraub. 2012. "Reimagining the Role of Sound Archives and Sound Repatriation in Uganda. *Ethnomusicology* 56(2): 206-33.

Assignment #9: Textual Artifact, Record, Material Object (due 21 March)
Choose a material object that is relevant to your research project (a piece of clothing, instrument, statistical record, textual artifact, etc). Write a 2-page archival analysis of your chosen item that includes a description, commentary on how it connects to your research question, or potentially an emergent finding, as well as any pertinent debates we have covered in class. As usual, part of your essay should cover your assessment of the technique itself, such as what is gained or lost in its use, and part of your essay should engage the object itself.

28 March – Identities in the Field

Reading:
*Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1991. "Writing Against Culture." In *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Richard Fox, ed. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press. Pp. 137-62.
*Mahmood, Cynthia. 2008. "Anthropology from the Bones: A Memoir of Fieldwork, Survival, and Commitment." *Anthropology & Humanism* 33(1)2): 1-11.
*Turnbull, Colin. 1986. "Sex and Gender: The Role of Subjectivity in Field Research." In *Self, Sex, and Gender in Cross-Cultural Fieldwork*. Tony Whitehead and Mary Conaway, eds. Chicago: University of Illinois Press. Pp. 17-27.
Rooke, Alison. 2010. "Queer in the Field: On Emotions, Temporality and Performativity in Ethnography." In *Queer Methods and Methodologies: Intersection Queer Theories and Social Science Research.* Catherine Nash and Kath Brown, eds. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited. Ebook full text online.

Assignment #10: Fieldsite Cartogram (due 28 March)
A cartogram is a map in which some sort of thematic mapping variable is substituted for land area or distance. The geometry of the map is distorted to covey information of this alternative

variable. Design some sort of cartogram relevant for your fieldwork project. Bring a hard copy rough draft of your cartogram to class. Write a 1-page document explaining your choice of thematic mapping and what your cartogram shows.

4 April –Sensorial, Collaborative, Embodied Fieldwork
**Engaging the senses through ethnography, embodying musical knowledge, other ways of representing*

Reading:

*Feld, Steven. 1987. "Dialogic Editing: Interpreting How Kaluli Read *Sound and Sentiment*." *Cultural Anthropology* 2(2): 190-210.

Rappaport, Joanne. 2008. "Beyond Participant Observation: Collaborative Ethnography as Theoretical Innovation." *Collaborative Anthropologies* 1: 1-31.

Weidman, Amanda. 2012. "The Ethnographer as Apprentice: Embodying Sociomusical Knowledge in South India. *Anthropology and Humanism* 37(2): 214-35.

11 April - Ethnographic Methods & Virtual Worlds
**How to do fieldwork in virtual environments*

Reading:

Bell, Brandi, Philipp Budka, and Adam Fiser. 2012. "'We Were on the Outside Looking In': My knet.org – A First Nations Online Social Environment in Northern Ontario." In *Connecting Canadians: Investigations in Community Informarmatics.* Michael Gurstein, et. al., ed. Edmunton: AU Press. http://ci-journal.net/index.php/ciej/article/view/568/450

Boellstorff, Tom, Bonnie Nardi, Celia Pearce, and T.L. Taylor. *Ethnography and Virtual Worlds: A Handbook of Method* (2012). Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Caliandro, Alessandro. 2018. "Digital Methods for Ethnography: Analytical Concepts for Ethnographers Exploring Social Media Environments." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 47 (5): 551–78.

Coleman, E. Gabriella. 2010. "Ethnographic Approaches to Digital Media." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39: 487-505.

Cooley, Timothy, Katherine Meizel, and Nasir Syed. 2008. "Virtual Fieldwork: Three Case Studies." In *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology, 2nd ed.* New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 90-107.

Duggan, Mike. 2017. "Questioning 'Digital Ethnography' in an Era of Ubiquitous Computing." *Geography Compass* 11 (5): 1–12.

Fielding, Nigel, Raymond M. Lee, and Grant Blank. 2017. *The SAGE Handbook of Online Research Methods*. Second Edition. Sage Reference. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Przybylski, Liz. 2020. *Hybrid Ethnography: Online, Offline, and In Between*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Wilson, Brian. 2006. "Ethnography, the Internet, and Youth Culture: Strategies for Examining Social Resistance and 'Online-Offline' Relationships." *Canadian Journal of Education* 29(1): 307-28.

Assignment #1: TBA (due 11 April)

18 April - Final Presentations and Final Papers Due
**In class oral multimedia presentations of fieldwork. Final papers must be uploaded to courseweb by midnight on 21 April*

Other topics we won't quite get to cover (although we'll discuss)

Research Design, Grant-Writing, and Proposals
Reading:
Bernard, Russell. 2006. "Preparing for Research." In *Research Methods In Anthropology*. Lanham: AltaMira Press. Pp. 69-81.
Przeworski, Adam and Frank Salomon. "Some Candid Suggestions on the Art of Writing Proposals." (SSRC)
Watts, Michael. 2001. "The Holy Grail: In Pursuit of the Dissertation Proposal." Berkeley: Regents of the University of California.