



Ethnography in Gender Research: Theory, Method and Ethics

Etnografi i genusforskning: teori, metod och etik

Credit points: 7,5

Responsible department: Umeå Centre for Gender Studies

Main field of study: Gender Studies

Level: PhD Studies

Grading Scale: Fail, Pass

Language: English

Course approval

The Director of Umeå Centre for Gender Studies has confirmed this course syllabus on 12th of December 2021 and is valid from spring semester of 2022.

Aim and Contents

This course gives an advanced introduction to ethnographic practice and writing, anchored in how ethnography has been discussed and used within gender research. The participants will explore, interpret and problematize the methodological and analytical practices of ethnography. With this focus, the course will be especially attuned to the specificities of the doctoral candidates own use of ethnographic methods, ethics, and writing. In approaching these thematic, the course will engage with the ethnographic field in relation to research which concern gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class, nationality, postcoloniality and age. What ethical issues can arise when ethnographic methods and writing are being used, and how can these dilemmas be dealt with? Throughout the course, emphasis will also be placed on theoretical aspects such as ontological and epistemological positions in relation to methodological decisions.

Expected learning outcomes

Upon the completion of the course the PhD student should:

Knowledge and understanding

- Account for methodological and analytical challenges of ethnography, with special attention to ethnographic method and writing within gender research.

Skills and abilities

- Be able to independently in written and oral form reflect upon the relationship between ethnographic theory, method and ethics.
- Be able to put ethnography into practice, and with feminist perspectives discuss methodological challenges.

Judgement and approach



- Be able to critically reflect on different aspects of ethnography within gender research and relate to concrete examples, theoretical, methodological and ethical dilemmas within his/her/their own research.

Form of instruction and examination modes

The course is divided into themes, where all participants are expected to read and write before each meeting. Part of the course is based on the participants searching for and selecting relevant literature. The course is given in English.

The learning outcomes are examined through compulsory seminars, written seminar preparation as well as an individually written essay. The essay should contain a discussion and critical examination of course literature and an application to the doctoral student's own research. The final paper can be written in either English or Swedish, Danish and Norwegian.

Course literature

Abu-Lughod, L. (1990). Can there be a feminist ethnography? *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*. 1990. 5(1). 7-27

Davies, C. A. (2008). *Reflexive Ethnography: a guide to researching selves and others*, London: Routledge (selection)

Emerson, R. M., R. I. Fretz, and L. L. Shaw. (2011). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. University of Chicago Press (selection)

Guillemin, M., and Gillam, L. (2004). "Ethics, reflexivity, and 'ethically important moments' in research", *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 261-280.

Lykke, N. (2014). *Writing academic texts differently: intersectional feminist methodologies and the playful art of writing*. London: Routledge (selection)

O'Rielly K. (2012). *Ethnographic Methods*. Second Edition. London: Routledge (selection)

Schrock, D. R. (2013). "The Methodological Imperatives of Feminist Ethnography", *The Journal of Feminist Scholarship*, Issue 5/Fall

Additional literature may be added, max. 100 pp.

Reference literature:

Davis, D.-A. and C. Craven, 2016, *Feminist Ethnography: Thinking Through Methodologies, Challenges and Possibilities*, p. xii, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, MD



Edwards, R. and Mauthner, M. (2002). Ethics and feminist research: theory and practice. In Mauthner, M., Birch, M., Jessop, J., & Miller, T. (Eds.), *Ethics in qualitative research* (pp. 15-31). SAGE

Ellis, C. Adams, T.E, and Bochner, A.P. Autoethnography: An Overview. *Historical Social Research*. 2011. 36 (4) 273 – 290

Van Maanen, J. (2011). *Tales of the Field. On writing Ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

References will be added to the list, through choices specifically made by each doctoral candidate in relation to individual project (subject, method, writing and alike).