

Anthropology 1100
 Assignment 2: Ethnographic Observation Essay
 Due at the Beginning of Class July 25, 2006

Introduction

In this assignment, you are expected to expand upon your ethnographic observations by including analysis using key terms and ideas in anthropology. You are required to repeat your initial ethnographic observation and then discuss both observations with reference to two concepts from our course.

Process

1. Visit the ethnographic scene you visited earlier in the term and repeat your 15 minute observation. Make notes about the scene during and after your observation.
2. Identify two concepts in the course which can help you explain what you saw in your observation.
3. Write an essay with the following components: 1) a comparison of your two observations; 2) definitions of 2 concepts from the class related to your observations; and, 3) the application of the concepts to your observation to help explain what you saw.
4. Submit essay and field notes.

Detailed Instructions

1. Re-visit your ethnographic scene and conduct a 2nd 15 minute observation.

You are not required to go to the exact place at the exact time ... but in your write-up you will need to describe to me how the two observations you did were similar and different.

2. Identify 2 Concepts from the Course

In choosing your concepts, pick two that relate to your observation and/or conclusion. Choose the concepts from the text book or the lectures. Some concepts that might be useful to you are listed on the study sheet for test 1. Possible concepts include:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| • culture | • shaming, guilt |
| • modes of production | • cultural relativity – absolute, critical |
| • groups | • exchange |
| • influence, power | • reciprocity |
| • norms, laws | • ritual |

You may use concepts from the text book that we have not yet discussed. I am happy to discuss up-coming concepts with you if you want to use them.

3. Write the Essay

Your essay should be written in sentences and paragraphs, double-spaced, and be a minimum of five pages and a maximum of 7 pages (1200-1500 words).

In your write-up, you should include the following details. I will use these four points as a guide for marking your essay.

1. A short summary of what you did for your two observations. This can be a short paragraph reminding me of where you went and what you did. Please note any differences in your methods, such as a change in time of day, location of the scene, etc.
2. Tell me about the similarities and differences between the two observations – in what you saw.
3. Introduce the two concepts you use to understand what you saw. This would probably include a general definition of the concepts.
4. Apply the concepts to the scene. Explain to me how the concepts apply to the **observations and conclusions** you made. A successful connection between the concepts and the observation includes the characteristics of the concept and how the observation exhibited those characteristics.

4. Submit Essay and Field Notes (Due Date)

This assignment is due at the beginning of class on July 25, 2006. Please submit your field notes along with your paper.

Other Notes and Suggestions

- Add a general introduction and conclusion, thus making this a more ‘traditional’ style essay. Your thesis statement would likely relate to the concepts you used.
 - eg. “My observations suggest that culture is not nature.”
 - eg. “At school events where food is available, students gather food like foragers. My observations support this claim.”
 - eg. “In this essay, I describe how people buy coffee, I define the concept of norms, and I explain why I think people buy coffee according to specific norms of behaviour.”
- Be sure to use the two concepts to explain what you saw and not how you felt about the observations.
- Your conclusions in the essay do not have to be the same as your conclusions in the first assignment. I would expect that you will notice different things the second time and your conclusions may change as a result. Of course, your observations and conclusions might not change at all.
- You do not need to conduct any library research to complete this assignment.
- Good writing counts and poor or sloppy writing will result in a lower grade. Please have someone proof read your write-up for spelling and grammatical accuracy.
- If you would like me to proof-read a draft of your essay for grammar and general content, please submit a hard copy to me by class time on July 18, 2006 (or earlier). Please include your email address. I will email you back with general comments before the assignment is due.
- You can email me to discuss your return to the cultural scene, your choice of terms, or your write-up anytime. I will respond promptly.