ETHNOGRAPHY (eth-ˈnäg-ra-fē)

Noun 1: the study and systematic recording of human cultures; 2: a descriptive work produced from such research.

WHO DOES AN ETHNOGRAPHER STUDY?
- Humans (of all shapes and sizes), animals, objects and more...
- Activity in isolation, or interactions between subjects
- Real life, in natural settings

WHAT DOES AN ETHNOGRAPHER DO?
- Participate (overtly/covertly) in subject’s daily lives (for a stated period of time)
- Focus on issues that are mundane and extreme to the subjects of interest
- Traverse the life journey of the subject

WHAT DOES AN ETHNOGRAPHER RECORD?
- Surroundings/environments where subjects are
- Subjects going through tasks (breaking it down to the smallest detail)
- Interactions between subjects, subjects and products they use/access
- Data surrounding those aspects of an issue that is being investigated
- Visual, verbal, body language that informs the environment of study
- Routines, and mannerisms as subject performs a routine
- Emotions, juxtaposed with a particular situation
- Obstacles, that seem to present themselves in a situation
- Solutions or workarounds that the subject has, or possibly creates
- Truths - and not opinions expressed/felt by the ethnographer
HOW DO YOU CONDUCT ETHNOGRAPHY?

- Individually (talk your observations on a phone call to yourself, by using your phone recording system)
- Groups (take turns - with video cameras, pictures, taking notes)
- Remember to observe from different perspectives (move to different vantage points, different heights, different views)

WHAT DOES AN ETHNOGRAPHER LOOK FOR, SPECIFICALLY?

PHYSICAL SPACE

- Start with a confined structure, something that has boundaries
- Describe the time of day, the physical description of the place
- Define how the space is being used: what all activities are taking place
- Identify what artifacts contribute to the space and the interaction

PEOPLE

- Identify the number of people, and rough interaction between them
- What are the people doing, based on the context they are in?
- What artifacts are they using?
- Who uses the artifacts? How are they being used?
- Are there groups that can be identified? How would you define the group?
- What is the interaction between people and the group?
- How are people interacting? Are they using anything to do so?

ACTIVITY

- What is the flow of activity between physical space and people?
- What patterns can be charted to show flow of activity?
- Focus on verbs - define it down to the detail, to uncover more motivation behind task
- If someone is walking - how are they walking? What is happening around them?

THEMES AND RATIONALE

- How would you characterize what you see?