

BlueUrban Ethnographic Field Methods Workshop

Facilitators: Dr. Rapti Siriwardane¹ (Week 1) & Dr. Johannes Herbeck² (Week 3, tbc.)

Dates: **June 2 & 6, 2022, 9am-4pm**, Venue: Gedung Building, IASTH 4th Floor, Room 406, Jl. Salemba Raya No. 4, RW 5, Kenari, Kota Jakarta Pusat, Jakarta 10430.

What & for whom?

The two-day workshop caters to researchers who are keen on exploring methods around field-based qualitative research, combining aspects such as interviewing (i.e., in-depth and oral history), participant observation, storytelling formats, and transect walking together with audio-visual approaches. We will also critically engage with: a) notions such as the 'field'; b) practical aspects related to fieldwork as a mode of practice and c) pay close attention to questions around ethics, power, and positionality.

The sessions are designed to be interactive and experiential, with role-play and group work exercises. Prior fieldwork experience is not required. Participants are only required to bring along is a 'beginner's mindset' - to unlearn/challenge, reflect, and rethink.

Our co-learning principles: These workshops are all about peer-to-peer reflexive learning. Your individual disciplinary backgrounds, personal experiences and stories count, and are worthy of sharing.

Main objectives:

- Adopting a roundtable format, the sessions aim at creating a co-learning space for peer-to-peer exchange (we come together in sharing our unique experiences as geographers, urban planners, anthropologists, economists, psychologists, sociologists, legal scholars etc.);
- To get a general understanding of diverse tools and formats used in ethnographically-inspired fieldwork practice;
- To create common ground for methodological experimentation and mixed-methods thinking;
- To critically reflect on ethical dilemmas and situations pertaining to 'field' encounters;
- To glean an understanding of the BlueUrban project.

What happens after the June workshop?

Our training will continue as *discussion circles* via zoom after June 2022. Our broad range of interests will be integrated in ways that reflect the team's diverse disciplinary and professional backgrounds, and will be themed. Team members/participants will continue to share a broad range of mixed-methods research tools from economics, psychology, disaster studies, legal studies etc. during future discussion circles. This learning content will also be co-developed and organised around specific case studies and ongoing publications that involve different clusters of team members.

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Schedule - Thursday, June 2, 2022 (9.00-16.00)

Morning (10am)

1. Fieldwork Praxis: Unthinking the 'field'
2. Actor-centered perspectives and grounded theory
3. 'Being there': The arts of un/seeing and participant observation

Lunch break between 12.30 and 1.30pm

Afternoon/post-lunch (1.45pm)

4. The BlueUrban project: what, why, how?
5. Roleplay exercise: In-depth interviews and oral history dialogues
6. Introducing the weekend project in public space observation

Day 1: Fieldwork in Praxis

We engage with questions around ethnographically-inspired immersive fieldwork, and some of their core ethical dilemmas around process, power and positionality. The first day will focus on the paradoxes and complexities of 'fielding'/fieldwork, together with a critical overview on current debates underlying imperial, extractivist research encounters, practices, and structures. Research itself then (as endeavour) is problematized as a world-making practice.

Participants are encouraged to reflect on their own assumptions and biases regarding what fieldwork is and how the 'field' is imagined, putting in conversation how critical and decolonial thought continues to influence notions of knowledge-seeking and co-production. In particular, this primer favours more phenomenological and grounded theory outlooks to approaching fieldwork. Yet, we reflect on how such approaches are merely one mode of sensing and meaning-making, being, and interacting.

We will also place particular attention to current pandemic realities and ethical dilemmas, and how relational encounters continue to transform in its wake.

Schedule - Monday, June 6, 2022 (9.00-16.00)

Morning (10am)

1. Group discussion on the weekend's observational exercise
2. Research as storytelling, storytelling as research
3. Groupwork exercise: Narrative analysis (text: Yarina, 2018)

Lunch break between 12.30 and 1.30pm

Afternoon/post-lunch (1.45pm)

4. Introduction to practice-based research
5. Mobile methods: Storymapping and transect walking
6. Pairwork exercise: Field diaries and journaling

Day 2: Research as Storytelling

A story is different. It does not expend itself. It preserves and concentrates its strength and is capable of releasing it even after a long time - Water Benjamin

Stories have always been central in the construction of meaning in everyday life. But what does it mean to perceive storytelling as research, while envisioning the research process as a mode of storytelling? On the second day, we explore differences between storytelling and other types of content analysis (e.g., narrative and discourse analyses), while critically reflecting on diverse ways of embodying, co-producing and carrying/relaying stories.³ In particular we ask: whose stories, and what stories appear to be conventionally mattered and why? How have modes and practices of storytelling worked as a mode of contesting existing hierarchies and power relations, and with what limits? We will also briefly explore aspects of visual storytelling⁴ as a primer for forthcoming multimedia / multimodal workshops planned for a later stage.

In addition, we will be diving into two methods - storymapping and transect walking. Drawing on the earliest forms of maps, to contemporary pictorial narrative mapping and

³ We consider the internal diversity of narrative and discourse analyses (in its plural). A localised case study will be used in order to practice some of these modes of understanding and meaning-making of stories that go beyond textual sources, including the visual (e.g., media-related photographic images and other audio-visual representations).

⁴ See for example (<https://www.methodspace.com/imagining-forward-visual-storytelling-to-make-research-accessible-for-practice/>).

narrative cartography (as method), maps exist as more than social artefacts. Indeed, the very acts and arts of mapping embody forms of storytelling, not only of place, space, mobility, and historic change, but also of social belonging and territorialisation through boundary-making and control. We look at digital storymapping as one way of piecing together contradictions, and of 'story completion' (using stems and cues) as method for potentially difficult topics.⁵ Transect walking will be discussed as a mobile method for engaging community participants and for gleaning more vivid oral histories of self and place. We will also briefly discuss reflective writing for recording and documentation.⁶

FURTHER READING

General

Atkinson, P. and Delamont. S. (2006). [Rescuing Narrative from Qualitative Research](#). *Narrative Inquiry* 16(1):164-72.

Cameron, E. (2012). [New Geographies of Story and Storytelling](#). *Progress in Human Geography* 36(5):573-92.

Cronon, W. (1992). A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative. *The Journal of American History* 78(4):1347.

Gherardi, S. (2012). [How to Conduct a Practice-based Study](#). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar,

Lewis, P. J. (2011). Storytelling as research/research as storytelling. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6), 505-510.

Olivier de Sardan, J-P. (2016). [Epistemology, Fieldwork, and Anthropology](#). New York: Palgrave MacMillan (trans. A. Tidjani Alou).

Mapping

Caquard, S. and Fiset, J-P. (2014). [How Can We Map Stories? A Cybercartographic Application for Narrative Cartography](#): *Journal of Maps* 10(1):18-25.

Caquard, S., & Cartwright, W. (2014). [Narrative cartography: From mapping stories to the narrative of maps and mapping](#). *The Cartographic Journal*, 51:2, 101-106.

⁵ See additional material for breakout sessions (Waterworlds, Patan - Nepal): <http://omolden.blogspot.com/p/blog-page.html>.

⁶ Fieldwork notes, logs, diaries and journals have historically and extensively used by anthropologists, for a variety of reasons. Yet, their form, substance and content have often been overlooked as a means of gleaning insights and for analysis. This session combines auto-ethnography, a methodological revival in anthropology and cultural geography. Despite its renewed traction, it remains an older practice (Heider, 1975; Roth, 2005) that inevitably finds itself in a process of reinvention. This session puts journaling (as tool and as reflexive art) in conversation with some of the theoretical, embodied, ethical aspects auto-ethnographic practice. We will also revisit the significance of auto-ethnographic practice as a mobile approach/method.

Braun, V., Clarke, V., Hayfield, N., Frith, H., Malson, H., Moller, N., & Shah-Beckley, I. (2019). [Qualitative story completion: Possibilities and potential pitfalls](#). *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 16(1), 136-155.

Narrative analysis

Earthy, S., and Cronin, C. "Narrative analysis." (2008). Available online: <https://epubs.surrey.ac.uk/805876/9/narrative%20analysis.pdf>

De Fina, A. (2021). Doing narrative analysis from a narratives-as-practices perspective. *Narrative Inquiry*, 31(1), 49-71.

Pasquinelli, C., & Trunfio, M. (2020). [Overtouristified cities: an online news media narrative analysis](#). *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 28(11), 1805-1824.

Ethnographic journaling and auto-ethnography

Hall, G. (2020). Ethnographic diaries and journals: Principles, practices, and dilemmas. In *Handbook of Ethnography in Healthcare Research* (pp. 277-289). Routledge. (to be shared later).

Roth, W. M. (2009). Auto/ethnography and the question of ethics. In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (Vol. 10, No. 1) – open access

Symes, C. (2012). All at sea: an auto-ethnography of a slowed community, on a container ship. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 15(1), 55-68.