

ANTH 233 Ethnographic Studies
Winter 2019

I acknowledge that St FX is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

Mar. 11, 14, 18, 21, 25: Virtual anthropology: Ethnography and ICTs. What is digital (or virtual) anthropology? What form does digital ethnography take? What are its advantages and disadvantages?

READ: Miller, Daniel. 2018. "Digital Anthropology." *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology*. <http://doi.org/10.29164/18digital>

BROWSE through the findings presented through digital forms on the *Why We Post* site (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/why-we-post/discoveries>). Go through at least three discoveries. What are the advantages and drawbacks of this form of ethnographic representation? What are the insights generated by the research that surprised you?

Participatory and ethical issues in digital ethnography

READ: Walton, Shireen. 2016. "The Anthropologist as Curator: Introducing a Digital Photography Exhibition as a Collaborative and Participatory Fieldwork Method." *Visual Ethnography*, 5(1): 47-67. 10.12835/ve2016.1-0058.

Does everyone have (or want) access to ICTs?

READ: Fotopoulou, Aristeia. 2016. "Digital and Networked by Default? Women's Organisations and the Social Imaginary of Networked Feminism." *New Media & Society* 18(6): 989-1005.

Baumer, Eric P. S. Et al. 2015. "On the Importance and Implications of Studying Computer Non-Use." *Interactions*. 22 (2), 52-56.

Miller:

- what is "digital"? What is a "new ICT"?
- what forms?
- what applications?
 - E.g. Numa numa: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmtzQCSh6xk>
 - Evgeny Morozov: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhsC1fdAncw>
- what groups/identities are formed that did not exist prior to the new ICTs?
- how do ICTs relate to surrounding culture?
- what new identities, occupations, social groups, etc. have come into existence because of ICTs?
- how have ICTS fit into people's everyday lives?
- how do anthropologists do digital ethnography?
 - E.g. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/why-we-post/discoveries>
- how do ICTs change humanity? Are these changes good or bad?
 - e.g. : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySR3hpieiQc>

Why We Post site (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/why-we-post/discoveries>). Go through at least three discoveries. What are the advantages and drawbacks of this form of ethnographic representation? What are the insights generated by the research that surprised you?

Also, see the feature on StFX students' work on <https://www.favela-digital.com/>

- what is the digital divide?

Walton: what were the circumstances that led her to do digital ethnography?

- how did she do digital ethnography? With whom? On what topic?
- what does she mean by the “anthropologist as curator”?
- what were the logistics involved in her work?
- what ethical considerations were taken into account?
- who was the audience?
- what are some limitations of this form of presentation that she noted?
 - <http://www.photoblogsiran.com>
- referring back to the ideas presented about ethnography at the beginning of the course, how does Walton's work compare?
 - based on long term fieldwork? Intimate? Contextually informed?
 - holistic?
 - comparative?
 - with or of?
 - description or critically/theoretically engaged? (“anthropology” or “ethnography”)
 - good stories? Accessible?

Note that I also referred to Daniel Miller's contribution to the **Hau** debate in the first section of our class. I quote him as saying:

In our project, we call ethnography holistic contextualisation. ... ethnography has to have the same integrity as everyday life, which is why most of our work is offline.

Ethnography is never just observation because the whole point, for an anthropologist, is that as soon as you make the decision to describe something, with that comes a responsibility to account for what you claim to have observed. Furthermore, at least in our case, we guard against the potential parochialism of ethnography by always working comparatively. (Miller 2017, 28)

also:

This is why I enter a plea for anthropology to accept its humility with respect to ethnography. While I accept all that Signe Howell has argued for the integration between the two, for that same reason, one wants to see anthropologists periodically reimmersed in that humbling experience of ethnography where once again they have to appreciate that the world is always so much more than we can envisage. It is ethnography that keeps us open to the world and provides the insights we return to the world. That is why I would argue that anthropology is the discipline of which we are proud, but the ultimate goal that should define who and what we are is inductive ethnography. (Miller 2017, 30)

Miller, Daniel (2017) Anthropology is the discipline but the goal is ethnography. *HAU : Journal of Ethnographic Theory*. 7(1): 27-31.

