

# Experiencing Ethnography

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# Objective

Using my research as an example, we'll discuss some of the common experiences researchers encounter in first stages of doing fieldwork.

# Overview

- What is ethnographic fieldwork?
- “Getting in”
- Establishing relationships
- Determining the role of the researcher
- The rewards of ethnography

# What is “ethnographic fieldwork?”

“A researcher is immersed in a group for an extended period of time, observing, listening and asking questions.”

- Bryman & Teevan (2005)

# Getting In

- Open vs. Closed field sites
- Gatekeepers

# Overt vs. Covert Research

- Should you disclose your research intentions?

## ***Informed consent***

Agreeing to participate in research based on having accurate knowledge of what that research is about.

- When should you do it?
- How much should you disclose?

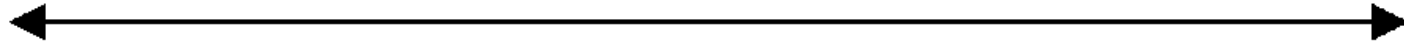
# The Researcher's Role

Complete  
Observer

Observer-as-  
Participant

Participant-as-  
Observer

Full  
Participant



(Gold 1958)

- Defining the boundaries of participation.

# Maintaining Relationships

- Negotiating ongoing access
- Loving and loathing the field

# Maintaining Analytical Perspective

- Avoiding judgment
- Going native

# The Rewards of Fieldwork

- Expands your world
- Sensitizing

# Summary

- What is ethnography?
- The first steps:
  - Getting in.
  - Disclosing your research
  - Finding your boundaries
- Seeing the rewards