Course Description:
This course will teach students the (often lonely) craft of crime ethnography, with two main foci: the collection and analysis of field data and the critique and analysis of ethnographic texts focused on crime and deviance. Students will select a field site and immediately begin writing up their insights and observations. In addition, students will evaluate selected ethnographies focused on crime and deviance for their theoretical, analytical, descriptive, and writing contributions. The readings will range in their themes – from global sex work, to drug dealing, to queer gang members, to street-level book-vending. This range exposes students to both traditional and innovative works, ones that will help them figure out their own crime ethnographic approach. In all, this course will serve as a space of dialogue and exchange, where students share field notes and experiences, offer constructive criticism and insights, and practice innovative writing and ideas.

While each of you needs to submit your own assignments and fieldnotes, it will definitely be beneficial to discuss your thoughts with your classmates before putting them down on paper – and I highly encourage that! In other words: competition is good and natural, but try to benefit from each other in positive ways - it will make everyone’s work better!

Learning Goals:
1. Students will learn how to collect and analyze their field research data.
2. Students will critically understand how scholars produce ethnographies.
3. Students will learn how to write clear ideas, analysis, and descriptions.

Classroom Atmosphere:
This classroom will become our learning community. I expect that you all do the readings before class and come to class prepared to engage with the material and ready to participate in a class discussion. In order to learn with and from each other, it is important that we are all coming to class with an open mind, ready to share ideas and fieldnotes and – potentially – have them challenged by someone else (you should also feel free to question me!). However, the rule is that we always do so in a respectful manner!
**Fieldsite**
By the end of week 1, you will need to choose a fieldsite. This is critical! You can also already identify a fieldsite before the holidays and check in with me regarding the appropriateness of the fieldsite. I would prefer that you choose a fieldsite that you will use toward publishing or advancing toward your degree. I’m not a big fan of people just doing research for research’s sake. In my humble opinion, everything you do in graduate school should help you move closer to publishing or finishing. Each of the fieldnote assignments will be based on your fieldwork at this fieldsite, so you need to pick a fieldsite and stick with it. In general, it’s good to choose a setting that is easy for you to access; given that our course is only 14 weeks long, you may want to avoid fieldwork in which it is difficult to “get in.” Also, you may want to choose a setting in which you will enjoy hanging out and observing. Ethnographic fieldwork is rigorous, but it should also be fun and interesting to you. I have a very broad understanding of crime and deviance and will support a wide range of fieldsites. Students will engage in observations only, there is no REB approval necessary. Should you wish to formally interview participants at your fieldsite, please let me know asap and we can talk about the ethics requirement. However, interviewing is NOT a requirement for the course.

**Evaluation:**

Please note that this course will NOT have a final paper. You will be busy during the semester, yet your course work will be done as soon as the semester ends!

1) **Critical book reviews**
Students must submit critical evaluations of *Sidewalk, Stickup Kids, Dealing in Desire*, and *The Gang’s All Queer* (for obvious reasons, *Unwanted* is excluded). Each assignment must be two single-spaced pages (Times New Roman 12) and contain a short (one paragraph) summary of the book. Further, you have to critical evaluate each book based on the following four criteria:

1) Theoretical Merit (or its place within the topic’s literature)
2) Analytical Rigor
3) Quality of Descriptions and Accounts
4) Writing Style and Clarity

The due dates of the critical assignments are noted on the syllabus. Each critical evaluation will be worth 10 % of your final grade.

2) **Fieldnotes**
You will be required to submit five field note assignments, the dates are noted on the syllabus. The submissions will focus on specific topics to help you think about your fieldwork setting; your place within the research; and the search for themes and categories that will have you think creatively and add scholarly substance to your final product. Each assignment must be three single-spaced pages long and should pay attention to detail, thick description, and have speculations about what is “going on.” Each set of fieldnotes will be worth 10 % of your final grade.
3) **Visual Methodological Presentation**
On the last day class, you will present photos/images of your field sites. The brief presentation (lasting no more than eight minutes) will help you learn how to present the methodology section of your ethnographic research: present the field site, the recruitment and entry process, and the study participants. The photos will give the audience a visual context for the research – and enliven the performance. The presentation will be worth 10% of your final grade.

4) **Participation**
10% of your final grade will be based on active and useful oral participation and attendance. While this should be clear without saying: The format of the seminar is based on the concept of a learning community in which everyone is engaged in shaping the learning experience. This means coming to class prepared to discuss the topics and the readings. Your class mates and we will assume that you are fully ready to commit yourself to the seminar hours we will spend together each week. As such, you will be expected to volunteer your ideas (more than “gum flapping”) and make reasoned, thoughtful and informed contributions.

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**Email**
Email is great for communicating simple information, but extended conversations should be conducted face to face. Please set up a time for an appointment! I will usually reply to emails within 24 hours. If you have not received a response within 48 hours, please re-send your email.
Course policies
Policy about course outlines can be found in §23.4(2) of the University Calendar.

Video/Audio recording
As per University calendar: "Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the instructor."

Academic Integrity
“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

REQUIRED BOOKS


Jan. 8  Course Overview: Ethnography – What is it and why do it?


*Read them before the first class (we will be discussing them).*

Jan. 15  Writing Fieldnotes


Jan 22  Entering a Field Site: Getting in, Observing, Insider/Outsider Issues


Jan. 29  Ethical Issues in the Field

- Betts, Dwayne. 2014. “The Stoop Isn’t the Jungle.” Slate

*DUE: Field Note 1 – Field Site Description (sights, sounds, layout, etc.)*
Feb 5    The Modern Chicago School Model


*DUE: Field Note 2 – Reflexive Positionality Account*

Feb. 14   Challenging the Chicago School Tradition (read in order)


*DUE: Sidewalk Evaluation*

Feb. 19   READING WEEK!

Feb. 26   Finding Global Forces in Everyday Life


*DUE: Field Note 3 – Group/Status Differences at the Field Site*

March 5   Immigration, Exclusion, and Informal Economies


*DUE: *Dealing in Desire* Evaluation*

March 12  Intersecting History, Social Structure, and Biography

March 19  Feminist Ethnography (read in order)


*DUE: Stickup Kids Evaluation*

March 26  Queer Ethnography


*DUE: Field Note 4 (choose only one of the following):

a. Revealing Raced, Classed, and Gendered Phenomena
   (or other phenomena, which you can discuss with me beforehand)

b. Showing A Feminist Approach in Action

April 2 HOLIDAY

April 9  Presentations

*DUE: The Gang’s All Queer Evaluation*

*This schedule is tentative and may be adjusted along the way*