

Writing an Ethnography

If you have never written an ethnography before, it can certainly seem like a daunting task. Like any other research paper there are, of course, many aspects of the writing process one can be worried about. In the case of an ethnography, however, it seems natural that a particularly salient concern would be concerning doing the group you are studying proper “justice”, as it were. I think this is an especially salient concern given the increasing amount of attention we seem to be paying to the inclusion and respect of diverse narratives. And in this sense, I believe you *should* be paying careful attention to your work and taking it seriously. Your ethnography will be one more valuable contribution to the vast ethnographic corpora and, if successful, will either enrich previous studies of a cultural group or perhaps even offer scholars a first glimpse into a culture of note.

The purpose of this paper largely, therefore, is to help make the prospect of writing an ethnography seem less terrifying. Ultimately, the process of writing an ethnography is not terribly different than any other research project you might undertake—both honesty and integrity will take you a long way. There are, however, a few helpful key considerations to keep in mind when writing your ethnography. Specifically, this article will broadly cover the general

approaches/levels of ethnographic writing, as well as basic steps towards drafting an ethnography.