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How to write an autoethnography thesis

We've been learning about ethnography, that is writing about and the study of culture. To write an auto ethnography is to engage in a scientific study of a culture of which you are a member. As an insider to your culture, help outsiders understand what it's like to be "x" --a first generation college student or a multi-racial teen in Bellingham, WA, or a female softball player, or an aspiring jazz musician, or a survivor of a terrible car accident, a world of war craft player, or ??? You will use primary and secondary research to study your own culture. For this assignment, you will practice using the following research methods to develop your writing: Field observation Interviews Library research Self-reflection What is Autoethnography? If we break down the word "autoethnography" into it's component parts, we can gain more understanding of it's meaning. Auto = self ethno =culture graphy = scientific study of What's the goal of autoethnography? Your job is to teach outsiders about your culture through both personal and empirical research, but perhaps, too, to help people within your culture better understand themselves. In "Arts of the Contact Zone," Mary Louise Pratt defines an autoethnographic text as a text in which people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them " (Pratt).The target audience for your autoethnography is outsiders to your culture who may or may not have a positive or accurate understanding of your culture. In other words, autoethnographies "speak back" to outsiders who have misunderstood or misrepresented your culture. Purpose The goals of this assignment, as they relate to our course are to Craft writing to meet and push back against expectations of different audiences Apply primary and secondary research techniques Explore a specific genre of writing: autoethnography Explore qualitative research writing Locate and critically assess sources Incorporate significant research (as above) into writing that engages a question and/or topic and uses it as a central theme for a substantive, research-based essay Use MLA citations for documenting work Directions Choose a culture of which you are a member. Begin research Library research (what others have already said, images others have already shared) Self-reflection (what you already know through experience) Interviews (what others can teach you that isn't already recorded) Observations/ Field notes (what you can see that might give you more insight) Create an Annotated works Cited page Use field notes, interviews, secondary research, and snapshots your own experience to begin describing and analyzing your culture. Use your analysis and research to help identify and clarify misconceptions outsiders might have about your culture. Use your analysis and research to help identify something about your culture that insiders and outsiders should know. Explain why your analysis and research are important, revealing, or useful to our understanding of your culture. What difference do your ideas make? Requirements Include quotes from interviews Include quotes, images, tables from secondary research Include quotes from course reading material Include descriptions, images, and quotes from your field notes Use MLA page layout and documentation style Write at least 1,500-2,000 words. Analyze and draw conclusions about a single culture of which you're a member. Grading (See Rubric Below) Breaking it Down into Steps Step 1: Choose a Culture to Represent We are each members of multiple cultures and sub-cultures. Culture here does not have to mean ethnicity or socio-economic status (although it could mean those things if you so choose). It could also reflect who you are, how you spend your time, what you value, or things you have. We can often locate groups we are a part of by thinking about The things we have The things we do The things we believe Places we've lived Physical constructs Our heritage/ ethnicity Social/ Cultural constructs Our attitudes The following are example core qualities that can separate us into groups: Things you have I'm a parent because I have kids I'm a local taxpayer, because I own a house I'm a driver because I have a license I'm a renter because I have a lease. Things you do Student. I take classes at WCC. Gamer. I play online World of War Craft Chuckanut runner's club member I am a professional photographer Things you believe Baptist-Christian Tea-Party Republican Minimalist Social Justice Activist Places you've lived New Yorker Bellinghamster Southerner Ex-pat Physical construct tall hearing impaired "fat" Bipolar Heritage/ Ethnicity African-American Indonesian Swedish-American Lummi Social/ Cultural Construct widow/er single/ married/ coupled gay/straight/ bi male/ female/ trans Attitudinal meticulous a free-spirit introverted growth-mindset Suffixes that imply people Consider the suffixes -ian, -ist, -er When we add these to the end of a word, they can be used to denote a person or group of people. These words can be helpful to explore as you are thinking about groups you are a part of. Many of these examples represent professions, attitudes, and belief-based groups. Examples of -ian grammarian thespian technician civilian lesbian librarian historian politician egalitarian libertarian utilitarian disciplinarian Examples of -er runner gamer player Southerner employer archer gardener potter photographer Examples of -ist conservationist realist instrumentalist pianist journalist philanthropist capitalist traditionalist perfectionist conformist Study a culture, not just yourself While you will be able to share snapshots of your own experience to help illustrate your culture, you will also need to draw larger conclusions through research and analysis about the culture of, for example, car accident survivors, in general. When you include personal examples, and good autoethnographies often do, analyze a specific memory/experience you had that reveals insight into the culture to which you belong. Then you can take the analysis to the next level and see how your experience may be typical or atypical or how it may vary from other people's understandings of what it is like to be "x." You will use primary research, like interviews of members of your culture, to develop your research beyond just your own experience. If you choose to include your personal experience as evidence, keep in mind that this evidence is one piece of data in what should be a wider data set you give your readers. You are an ambassador of a culture here, but your experience and perspective is not the only voice who matters. How will you set about to represent the group and yourself as a part of that group? Step 2: Generate & Develop Ideas List as many descriptions and definitions of your self as you can.(e.g., I am x, y, z ...) Go back to the ones that intrigue you and develop them a little further. Describe specific memories you have where this core component or culture was challenged, exposed, etc. Freewrite a response to the following questions: What defines you? How do you describe yourself? Of the many wonderful and not-so-wonderful qualities you have, which are significant? Think broadly as well as idiosyncratically. Step 3: Research Assigned Readings and Discussion Choose at least one of the assigned texts to read. Think about these texts as examples of autoethnographies or texts that teach us about autoethnography. How can these texts serve as models that you will or will not imitate for your own autoethnography? Mary Louie Pratt's "Arts of the Contact Zone" David Isay's "Everyone Around You has a Story the World Needs to Hear" Scott McCloud "Setting the Record Straight" Step 4: Gather Information from Secondary Sources Look for any research already done on your culture Gather quotes, images, charts Step 5: Reflect on your own experience Choose a specific incident from your personal history that reveals something important about your culture. Free-write about it. Add interpretive analysis to your narrative of the event. How might this experience be representative of an aspect of your culture? In what ways is it typical or atypical? Step 6: Describe the language of your culture What types of words, phrases, pronunciation--that is language do insiders to your culture use? How might this culture's language clash (or not clash) with the language of an outside culture? Try to examples of this language use to reveal your insider nature, while at the same offering "translations" to outsiders (whether willingly or begrudgingly--that will depend on the tone you choose to take on). Step 7: Describe important artifacts of your culture What types of objects are important to your culture (either physical or not)? What is the "stuff" your culture uses? Why are these things/objects/artifacts important? In what ways do outsiders read or mis-read these objects? Step 8: Describe important traditions of your culture What traditions or rituals are important to your culture? What do these traditions or rituals look like? Give a detailed account from personal experience, field notes, or an interview. Why are these traditions/rituals important? In what ways do outsiders read or mis-read these traditions or rituals? Step 9: What might your research reveal about your culture? What does your research reveal about your culture? What are the larger societal implications of your analysis? How might your work here re-define people's perceptions of your culture? Why might it matter or be important? Step 10: Putting it together Move beyond this list. Rearrange your writing around a point you'd like to highlight What's the most important thing you want to say? How can you arrange the writing you've done in steps 1-9 to highlight that point? Compare and contrast the points you've surfaced in the previous steps. For instance, what do the rituals and cultural objects you've discussed have in common? What is something about your culture these examples together prove? Think about what you want your readers to encounter first? What example, story, description do you want them to see first? Do you want to immediately immerse readers in something really unfamiliar, to emphasize their lack of understanding, for instance? Do you want to lead with a powerful quote from an interview? An image of your culture in a ritual? As an ambassador of your culture, what first-impression might others within your culture want outsiders to have? 1521615599 03/20/2018 11:59pm how to write an autoethnography dissertation. how to write an autoethnography essay

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