



The Cultural Experience: Ethnography in Complex Society

David W. McCurdy, James P. Spradley, Dianna J. Shandy

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The Cultural Experience has helped generations of undergraduates discover the excitement of ethnographic research through participation in relatively familiar cultures in North American society. Grounded in the interviewing-based ethnographic technique known as ethnosemantics, the latest edition continues to treat ethnography as a discovery process. Students are taught how to set up an ethnographic field study, choose a microculture, and find and approach an informant, as well as how to ask ethnographic questions, record data, and organize and analyze what they have learned. Detailed instruction on how to write an ethnography is also provided. The guidelines are followed by ten short but substantive, well-written student ethnographies on such microcultures as exotic dancing, firefighting, pest extermination, and the work of midwives and police detectives. The Second Edition of this popular classroom volume includes boxed inserts that offer suggestions to aid in the research process, material on how to use observation and narratives with the ethnosemantic approach, an emphasis on how to find cultural themes and adaptive challenges by analyzing ethnographic field data, and extensive strategies for writing the final ethnographic paper. It also presents a comprehensive treatment of ethical responsibilities as well as a discussion of the significance of ethnographic research and its applications in the workplace.

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