

ANTH 104 F2018 Participant Observation Assignment

Participant observation assignment (20%)

There are 2 different events on campus in October that students can choose to attend to practice a key fieldwork technique for data collection in anthropology: participant observation. Students will decide on a topic of interest and then attend the event to experience it first hand and talk to people participating in the event to collect information relevant to the topic. Following the event, students will do a small amount of research to provide some context for their own observations and complete their assignment. This is meant to help students understand the value of participant observation as it relates to a particular topic.

Option 1: Camosun's first EVER farmer's market Wednesday October 3

There are many topics of interest that can be considered in the assignment, including:

- How does buying food from local producers affect our communities?
- Food security (how accessible is local food? What are the barriers to accessing this type of food regularly as a student? Are there creative ways to address these barriers to improve access, and why is this important? All of these questions can be explored by visiting with Kim Cummins of the Shelbourne Community Kitchen, who will be representing the organization at the event.)
- Food literacy and health

Option 2: pit cook Friday October 19

Every year Camosun College's Indigenous Studies Program hosts a pit cook on the lawn in front of the Young Building. Students will learn about traditional foods and the logistics of a pit cook from Cheryl Bryce (Songhees nation) and will have an opportunity to talk to elders and share food, highlighting how a pit cook is about more than just calories! There are many topics of interest that can be considered in the assignment, including:

- Traditional foodways and health
- Decolonizing the diet and holistic wellbeing
- Practicing food culture as indigenous activism
- Food sovereignty and Reconciliation
- The pit cook as indigenization (ie. bringing indigenous ways of learning and being into a college classroom context)
- The pit cook as an example of community based knowledge exchange

Description of the assignment:

This assignment combines what you learned from participant observation at one of these events and a small amount of additional research that will help provide context for your observations

and let you explore a particular aspect of the event with an anthropological focus. This assignment combines the qualitative data collected via participant observation and other research information, which may come from sources such as books, journal articles, talking to elders or community members, etc... you are using with the farmers market or the pit cook as a case study to explore the bigger topic.

- For example, if you are interested in the pit cook as an expression of Food sovereignty and Reconciliation you will have to define food sovereignty and reconciliation, and then use the case study (your own experiences and data collected via participant observation) to provide depth to the discussion about these concepts. Ultimately at the end of your paper the hope is that you would have demonstrated how the pit cook contributes to conversations and actions around food sovereignty and reconciliation (or doesn't).
- For example, if you are interested in thinking about how buying food from local producers affects our communities, you can go to the farmers market with an eye towards looking at the types of vendors present, and perhaps talking to one or more of them to get a more detailed understanding of what they produce and their impressions on how a "buy local" ethic affects them and other local food producers. You can also find lots of great resources that quantify the impact socially, environmentally and economically of supporting local food producers that will give you the backdrop for using your experience at the farmer's market as a case study to illustrate your points.

Evaluation will be based on the clear definition and evaluation of the topic, quality and quantity of external content to provide the context for the discussion, and the use of either Camosun event to explore the key topic. The organization and presentation of the information (style of writing, clarity, editing), quality of resources, and presence of proper citations (both in text and at the end of the paper) will also be evaluated. Please come and talk to me if you have any questions and as you are working through the assignment. There are also great student resources like the Writing Center and our dedicated librarians where students can learn about how to research and how to edit papers to clearly communicate their ideas.

This paper will be 5-7 pages in length, with APA style citations. If you would like to present this information in another style (for example, in a story, photographic essay, form of art), that is great but you will still be including the same types of information and evaluation. Feel free to brainstorm with me about how you would like to present this information.