



**The Maynooth University
Department of Anthropology**

invites you to

the 2017

ETHNOGRAPHY WINTER SCHOOL

23-27 January, John Hume Boardroom

**A week-long intensive programme involving
lectures, masterclasses, group work and
presentations**

Ethnography in the Contemporary

What happened to the triumph of market capitalism and the steady march of liberal democracy? The contemporary landscape seems marked by deep cracks and fissures, uncertainties and insecurities, populism and paranoid styles of reasoning. The contemporary, the moving ratio of modernity, seems to be already ethnographic.

Ethnography is uniquely positioned to speak to the present situation. In this Winter School, students will learn all about ethnography, from its scholarly concepts to specific research practices. They will work in groups to learn together. Together we will ask critical anthropological questions about the most pressing matters in today's world.

How should anthropologists respond to the present situation? What do ethnographic studies of banking and finance, extremist politics or bureaucracy hope to achieve?

Maynooth's Department of Anthropology hosts the Ethnography Winter School each year. The School attracts leading figures in anthropology, from Joseph P. Masco to Akhil Gupta. This year is no exception. We are pleased to be hosting two keynote speakers:

Douglas Holmes, Distinguished Professor of Anthropology, Binghamton University. Author of *Integral Europe: fast capitalism, multiculturalism, neofascism* (Princeton 2010) and *Economy of words: communicative interpretives in central banks* (Chicago, 2014), together with numerous innovative disciplinary contributions, including a body of high-profile publications in collaboration with George E. Marcus on experimentation, collaboration and cultures of expertise.

Nayanika Mathur, University of Sussex, author of several publications on conspiracies, transparency, bureaucracy and the public good, as well as the important recent book, *Paper Tiger: Law, Bureaucracy and the Developmental State in Himalayan India* (Cambridge, 2015).

Today, 'ethnography' has gained a certain cachet both within and outside the academy as a way to map and model new social and cultural complexities. Ethnography promises "deep insights" beyond that offered by marketing methods, various types of surveys, etc. But ethnography is not just a methodology that sits alongside other methods. It is *not* a chapter-entry in a qualitative research handbook. Rather, when anthropologists *do ethnography* they write. As Marilyn Strathern has observed, this means that ethnographic practice always has a "double location": "both in what for a century now it has been the tradition to call 'the field' *and* in the study, at the desk or on the lap." Ethnography, in short, is a whole style of thought encompassing forms of observation, analysis, and writing. This is our starting point. But we are also interested to discuss ethnography in the contemporary. In other words, we are asking how the tradition of ethnography grapples with and is altered by contact with the contemporary. According to Paul Rabinow, the contemporary "is a moving ratio of modernity, moving through the recent past and near future in a (non-linear) space" (Rabinow, 2007: 2). But we are also proposing that ethnographic knowledge is already in the contemporary, by which we mean to say that experiments are ongoing – efforts to know and thereby better govern human life itself.



The aim of the School is twofold: we attempt to educate students broadly on the key attributes and sensibilities of ethnographic research, while grappling with key scholarly issues at the same time.



“This is the age of conspiracy, ... the age of connections, links, secret relationships” – Don DeLillo

The school brings together postgraduate students, researchers, and others for focused reflection on ‘ethnography’ today. We have structured the module as a one-week workshop. We hope this format will attract participants of diverse disciplinary orientations and career stages, and we further hope that this cross-fertilization of perspectives will yield fresh insights into what ethnography can teach us about the world in which we live.



“You don’t abandon your tools: you go back to the tools you already have and reconstruct them according to the current situation.” – Marilyn Strathern

The School is convened by Dr Ela Drazkiewicz and Dr. Mark Maguire. You are welcome to register. You should expect an intense but productive week. You are expected to read and contribute!

Module Description

AN862: Ethnography Winter School

This module is a comprehensive introduction to ethnography. The course is delivered in a burst format over one week, and features the collaborative teaching of practicing ethnographers. 'Ethnography' is more than a 'method': it comprises a whole style of thought encompassing forms of observation, analysis, and writing. The module therefore emphasizes analysis and theory in addition to the research practices (interviewing, participant observation, note-taking) conventionally associated with qualitative research methodology.

The module is also structured as a workshop, so that ethnographers at various stages of their careers -- from students planning proposals, to dissertation writers analysing previously collected material, to research professionals who may not be based in academia -- will be able to produce work within the module that relates to their respective career stages, locations, and goals. This work, such as a proposal draft or a stretch of ethnographic writing, forms the basis for module assessment.

Costs

€0

Pre-Requisites and Credit

The course is offered as a 5 ECTS postgraduate module. Prerequisites: BA2.1 or permission to matriculate based on other considerations (e.g., prior fieldwork or professional research experience). All applicants are subject to full Departmental approval.

Non-Maynooth Students

The procedures for non-NUIM students to enroll in the course are somewhat complicated. Students from Irish Universities who wish to enroll in the course for credit should seek an 'Application for Admission as a Research Occasional Student' from Maynooth's Graduate Studies Office. This needs to be completed and received.

Staying in Maynooth?

See:

<https://www.maynoothcampus.com/>

Assessment

4000-word essay or the equivalent thereof.

To Register email: anthropology.office@nuim.ie



Time	Monday, 23 January	Tuesday, 24 January	Wednesday, 25 January	Thursday, 26 January	Friday, 27 January
Location	John Hume Boardroom	John Hume Boardroom	John Hume Boardroom	John Hume Boardroom	John Hume Boardroom
10.00-12.00	Orientation Dr Mark Maguire & Dr Ela Draskiewicz	Masterclass with Nayanika Mathur	Masterclass with Douglas Holmes	Working Groups	Working Groups
13.00-15.00	Roundtable: <i>Histories & Contemporaries</i> TBC	<i>Biopolitics & Parasites</i> Dr Ciara Kierans (Liverpool)	Working Groups	<i>Conspiracies of the Contemporary</i> Dr Jamie Saris (Maynooth)	Closing Discussion
15.30-17.30	<i>Ethnographic Writing: Concepts, Methods and Practices</i> Dr Mark Maguire & Dr Ela Draskiewicz	Keynote: <i>The Economy of Words.</i> Professor Douglas Holmes (Binghamton)	Keynote: <i>Paper Tiger, on transparency, welfare, and neoliberalism in India.</i> Dr Nayanika Mathur (Sussex)	<i>Speaking of Finance</i> Dr Steve Coleman (Maynooth)	Closing Discussion
17.30-18.30		Reception	Reception		

Reading List (will be updated as time goes on)

Available in University Book Store

Holmes, Douglas. *Economy of words: communicative interpretives in central banks* (Chicago, 2014).

Mathur, Nayanika. *Paper Tiger: Law, Bureaucracy and the Developmental State in Himalayan India* (Cambridge, 2015).

Other (available online)

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. 'Fieldwork and its Interpretations'. In *Small Places, Large Issues*, pp. 24-40 (Pluto, 2001).

<https://toleratedindividuality.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/small-places-large-issues-an-introduction-to-social-and-cultural-anthropology-culture-and-society.pdf>

Hosftader, Richard. 'The Paranoid Style in American Politics'

<http://harpers.org/archive/1964/11/the-paranoid-style-in-american-politics/>

Rabinow, Paul. *Steps towards and Anthropological Laboratory* (2006)

http://www.ram-wan.net/restrepo/teorias-antrop-contem/Rabinow_Laboratory.pdf

Rabinow, Paul. Frazer Lecture 2008 on "The Anthropology of the Contemporary"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jDGywEGyJog>