

APPENDIX F

THE AUTOETHNOGRAPHY ASSIGNMENT REFLECTIONS ON SELF & REALITY

OVERVIEW

Select a discourse community that has its own culture, customs, rituals, expectations, and perhaps its own language or dialect. *Create* this discourse for the reader with vivid images. Show us what this discourse is all about perhaps with a narrative-like structure. But more than a simple narrative, the autoethnography selects and illustrates scenes that clarify and portray *larger issues* beyond the narrative itself, issues like *individuality* and *socialization*. You will also *describe and analyze* how this discourse has really shaped you. How has it contributed to your identity, your character, and even your goals and aspirations? Dig deep. Then dig deeper. Meditate, introspect, transcend a narrow lens and unearth how this discourse community has played a significant role in your individual and cultural evolution. The format you use to create and reflect on this discourse is a choice you will make on your own.

To clarify, you are being asked, as would be done within any ethnography, to observe someone (in this case yourself) inside a culture, to record what you see, and to hypothesize about meaning and understanding just as all the researchers and writers whom we have read have done. What does it all mean, so to speak? Be honest, detailed, expressive, and intellectual. You are establishing your own identity in the discourse community and sharing this identity with your reader.

YOU ARE EVALUATED ON

- Your creation of this discourse community and personal reality through attention to important rituals, customs, traditions, languages, and respective realities.
- The depth of your critical analysis in how this discourse has shaped you, *incorporating key class themes, terms, and perspectives* that relate to your own experience, or relate to how you have re-experienced this discourse community.
- Your honesty and vulnerability with the reader. In other words, your attempt to be personal, divulging, and expressive with your inner thoughts, feelings, and realizations.
- Your formal and academic writing style. Connect with your voice, but with professionalism, taking class readings as samples of such intellectual styles.
- Your careful organization of the aforementioned through development of points, ideas, emotions, experiences, and the like, so that your paper is a thoughtful and well-structured account of this discourse community and its effect on you, thus flowing from one idea to the next in a sequence which effectively guides the reader through your thought processes and evolution.
- Your basic **MLA** style formatting, grammar, and mechanics, at least **8-10 pages**. **No works cited page** is necessary, but you must refer in detail to **4-5 course readings**, utilizing **5-8 key terms or concepts** from course material/discussions to fully develop your paper.

HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

- Think about your paper A LOT before writing anything down, *while driving, showering, walking to class*, etc. Get ideas flowing so that you come to the screen prepared.
- Prewrite for at least 20 minutes on what this paper is going to be, what it's supposed to be doing. Outline, freewrite, list points, and finally begin your physical draft.
- Do not worry about grammar and mechanics until the end, and do not attempt to organize everything perfectly at the beginning. Simply begin developing your ideas.