



Ethnography ^[1]

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Ethnography is a well-established anthropological method of writing a holistic description and analysis of a culture. Usually, ethnographies are created through participant-observation and are a key part of anthropological research.

Ethnography presents, usually in writing, mainly qualitative data about a particular culture or social group. Though ethnographies are usually written, some anthropologists choose film or other means to present their data. Ethnography was a method originally used in the discipline of anthropology, but now is widely used across the social sciences, as well.

A key aspect of an ethnography is its holistic nature. This implies that the ethnographer attempts to consider virtually every aspect of the culture, with the belief that even the smallest details can be relevant to understanding behavior.

History

Ethnography, as a method, was primarily developed and popularized by the well-known anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski. This approach was further popularized by anthropologist Franz Boas, who was highly influential in the United States. Due to the influence of both Malinowski and Boas, the method of ethnography quickly became the most popular and common way of discussing and presenting cultural research.

Methods

Much ethnographic research is done through participant-observation ^[3]. Participant-observation is a method of inquiry where a researcher visits a culture—traditionally one that differs from their own—and acts as a participant of that culture to gain insight and collect data.

Ethnographies are published as academic articles and books, or through digital media such as through photography, videos, and recordings.

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