

For your final project, most of you will be submitting a research proposal on a topic of your choosing. By now, you have chosen your topic and have started digging into a set of references and resources.

This is meant to be a proposal to conduct ethnographic research. You do not need to make sweeping conclusions; rather, you should demonstrate 1) informed curiosity, 2) some understanding of what others have done, and 3) some understanding of where you want to work to prepare you for getting into it with people there.

The Proposal Part

Here's one form your final project might take:

- Start with an introduction that introduces the topic and walks through what you will do in the paper.
- Then you can review what has been done on the topic in the literature. You may find it great to have your paragraphs correspond to the categories of your annotated bibliography (see note on bibliography below)
 - (paragraph 1) Work has been done in realm of x... the major focus here is blah blah...
 - (next paragraph) Other scholars focus on... Especially in the psychiatric literature, one finds...
 - (next paragraph) Activists also write on this topic, particular in regard to z...
- After this review, you move on to describing what you then are curious to do / know more about and why.
- Then articulate your own main research question and how you would go about doing such research.
 - If you are proposing to do interviews, include a sample interview guide – showing how you would ask people questions aimed at trying to address your overarching research question.
 - If you are proposing participant observation, talk about where you would be and what you think you might be trying to observe.
 - A great idea for many of you will be getting involved with an organization working in the area – think about how to make contact and work with others!

Some of you may want to model this part of your project on a fellowship application. That is awesome! Identify a source of funding. Include the question or prompts from the application. (Just be sure to also include an annotated bibliography, even if not required by a potential funder!)

PS - Do the annotated bibliography first! It will help you write the proposal!

Then you write.

Lengths will vary. For a rough guide, 3 – 5 page proposal (1 ½ line spacing?) and an extended bibliography, plus an appendix for interview guides, etc. would be outstanding. Being concise takes more work!

Annotated Bibliography Details:

Please include a minimum of 10 citations. Be sure some of them are from anthropology.

(Keep in mind, you don't have to read every single text carefully, just enough to get a sense of what it is / what's out there.)

This consists of almost alllll the work you have uncovered in your poking around (sometimes even stuff you don't think will wind up being useful and especially stuff that demonstrates what you DO NOT want to do cuz you don't like it). Please include full citations for each, annotated and grouped into categories.

The cool thing about categorizing your sources is that it is a solid step in writing up a literature review. (Plus, this bibliography is a gift to your future self, if you ever do more work on this topic!) So as you read, see how sources seem to start connecting with one another. Make a running list of themes that come up. These become the categories of your bibliography.

Note: any given source can appear under multiple category headings.

As part of your annotation, please include who the discipline or profession of the author(s).

Also briefly summarize the piece and what it may contribute to the project goals (or why it's a counter-example or for the trash bin ha).

For pieces that you really read and find useful, you can flesh out a full summary in five sentences following this general outline:

- sentence 1: main theoretical proposition or issue
- 2: setting and research objective
- 3: main ethnographic evidence
- 4: potential counter arguments
- 5: hint/point of conclusion

You can also or instead include pull quotes you find inspiring, bullet point notes, etc.

ANNOTATIONS DO NOT HAVE TO BE LONG! THEY CAN BE BULLET POINTS! **Just make sure you say who the author is and how the piece relates to your project.

- Remember for each reference, give an annotation – including who the author is and what it is about / helps you see.
- Do not simply provide a single alphabetized list of sources. Place them into categories by theme or focus! Remember a reference can appear under more than one 'category'!
 - *Say you were working on a project about forced sterilization. Your categories might include:*
 - forced sterilization in prisons*
 - forced sterilization in California*
 - forced sterilization in Latin America*
 - activism to end forced sterilization*

Final note:

Grant applications follow this type of pattern. See Professor Karen's schematic for writing this type of research proposal:

<http://theprofessorisin.com/2011/07/05/dr-karens-foolproof-grant-template/>

I am not a fan of being motivated by "identifying a gap in the literature" . . . for reasons we should discuss if we haven't already! You can substitute Professor Karen's strong recommendation with an articulation of what you are inspired by and want to do more 😊