



ISS Graduate Proseminar 2015-16: Ethnography and Care-full Description

Cristiana Giordano, Department of Anthropology

This 2-credit proseminar is open to all graduate students to train in cutting-edge interdisciplinary methods.

ANT 298 Fall 2015/Winter 2016

Alternating Wednesdays 2-5 p.m. SSH 273

Fall 2015 CRN: 42211

Winter 2016 CRN: 12315

Course enrollment is limited to 30.

Fall quarter dates:

October 7

October 21

November 4

November 18

December 2

Winter quarter dates:

January 13

January 27

February 10

February 24

March 9



Traditionally, sociocultural anthropology has relied on ethnographic methods to understand, translate and explain the customs, practices and infrastructures of different cultures. These methods include participant observation, structured and semi-structured interviews, “thick” description (detailed and in depth description) and the production of a canonical text that links the experience of fieldwork with theories of social interaction, subjectivity, political and economic systems, and historical narrative.

In order to use this methodology, social scientists need to learn how to observe the complexities and contradictions of social life. Whether it is listening to words others share with us during interviews and conversations (and to the questions they pose us), or observing the practices people engage in, or participating in rituals, ethnographic methods allow us to gather data that can lead to a careful description.

Through workshops, presentations, and guest lectures we will explore 1) different ethnographic methods, and 2) various texts and forms of representation based on ethnographic material.

*Cristiana Giordano is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at UC Davis. Her most recent book, *Migrants in Translation: Caring and the Logics of Difference in Contemporary Italy* (UC Press, 2014) is an ethnographic reflection on foreign migration, mental health, and cultural translation. She earned her Ph.D. in anthropology at UC Berkeley.*

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