

**Course Title:** Ethnographic Journalism, Media Participation, and Homelessness

**Lecturer:** Mgr. Vojtěch Dvořák

**Course objectives**

This course provides an introduction to ethnography, ethnographic journalism, and media participation focusing on minorities, particularly homeless people. We will explore who are homeless people, how they become homeless, and why understanding homelessness matters. We will see how various types of media portray homeless people and analyze local media coverage of homelessness. We will talk about how alternative media attempt to challenge stereotypical representations of homelessness and see their limits. We will also discuss avenues for change through full media participation and empowerment. Learning ethnographic methods, we will engage in fieldwork and cooperate with homeless people to produce media/news outcomes. Exploring the limitations and continuously challenging the process' ethics, we will strive to use media not only as a tool for their empowerment but also as a responsible way of complementing media representations of homelessness.

**Outcomes from learning**

Students will be able to:

- Understand homelessness in its broader social context, including life trajectories and circumstances that lead to it
- Recognize how media tend to portray homeless people with emphasis on revealing stereotypical and harmful representations
- Understand current avenues for change and their limitations – understand how alternative media approach portraying homeless people and using their voice
- Understand and use the theory and ethnographic methods, and ethnographic journalism to challenge stereotypical representations of minorities
- Understand the theory of participation and empowerment
- Understand and mediate full media participation to promote marginalized voices
- Critically review the ethical questions of ethnographic journalism and full media participation

**Teaching Methods**

Lectures

Seminars

Fieldwork

Reading

**Assessment Methods**

Attendance and Participation

Group Project

Written Assignments

## Week 1 – February 17

### Introduction to the course

Assessment methods:

Required attendance: 11 out of 13 lectures/seminars – possibly additional written assignments in case of more absence

Written assignments:

- 1) To be specified Feb 24 – Deadline: **March 6**
- 2) To be specified Mar 17 – Deadline: **April 3**
- 3) Final essay (2000 words)
  - To be specified by Mar 24
  - Expected deadline: **May 6**

Group project – to be specified Mar 24

## Week 2 – February 24 – Lecture

### Homeless people

Who are homeless people? What is homelessness? What is home? Causes of homelessness? Why does understanding homelessness matter?

#### Minimum reading:

Edgar, B. (2009). *2009 European Review of Statistics on Homelessness*. Brussels: FEANTSA (p. 6 – 16, 73)

Recommended reading:

Amore, K., Baker, M., & Howden-chapman, P. (2011). The ETHOS Definition and Classification of Homelessness: An Analysis. *European Journal of Homelessness*, 5(2), 19–37. Wellington: University of Otago.

FEANTSA (2006). *Ethos – Taking Stock*. Brussels: FEANTSA.

Serme-Morin, C., & Lamas, O. (2020). *Fifth Overview of Housing Exclusion in Europe 2020*. Brussels: Fondation Abbé Pierre - FEANTSA

## Week 3 – March 3 – Lecture

### Media and homelessness

How do mainstream media present homelessness? What stereotypes do they use? What is the impact on homeless people's lives, on us? What are the alternatives and what are their limits?

#### Minimum reading:

Schneider, B. (2012). Sourcing homelessness: How journalists use sources to frame homelessness. *Journalism*, 13(1), 71–86.

Doudaki, V., & Carpentier, N. (2019). Critiquing hegemony and fostering alternative ways of thinking about homelessness: The articulation of the homeless subject position in the Greek street paper shedia. *Communications. Media. Design*, 4(1), 5-31.

Recommended reading:

Doudaki, V., & Carpentier, N. (2019). Critiquing hegemony and fostering alternative ways of thinking about homelessness: The articulation of the homeless subject position in the Greek street paper shedia. *Communications. Media. Design*, 4(1), 5-31.

Hodgetts, D., Hodgetts, A., & Radley, A. (2006). Life in the shadow of the media: Imaging street homelessness in London. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 9(4), 497–516.

Howley, K. (2003). A Poverty of Voices: Street Papers as Communicative Democracy. *Journalism*, 4(3), 273–292.

Hrast, M. F. (2008). Media representations of homelessness and the link to (effective) policies: The case of Slovenia. *European Journal of Homelessness*

Torck, D. (2001). Voices of Homeless People in Street Newspapers: A Cross-Cultural Exploration. *Discourse & Society*, 12(3), 371–392.

#### Week 4 – March 10 – Seminar

Critical discussion over the first assignment. Reflection of any shifts from previous understanding of homelessness, prejudice.

#### Week 5 – March 17 – Lecture

##### **Ethnography, and ethnographic journalism**

What is ethnography? Ethnographic methods (observation, participation, taking fieldnotes, interviews...). What are the pros and cons? Autoethnography. Ethnographic journalism. Does it lead to more responsible reporting?

##### **Minimum reading:**

Cramer, J., & McDevitt, M. (2004). Ethnographic journalism. *Qualitative research in journalism: taking it to the streets*, 127-144.

Recommended reading:

Aktinson, P., & Hammersley, M. (1998). Ethnography and participant observation. *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 248-261.

Denzin, N. K. (1999). Interpretive ethnography for the next century. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 28(5), 510-519.

Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2011). Autoethnography: An Overview. *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, 36(4 (138)), 273–290.

Hermann, A. K. (2016). Ethnographic journalism. *Journalism*, 17(2), 260-278.

Week 6 – **March 24** – Seminar

Setting up the group project.

Week 7 – **March 31**– reading week/no class

Recommended:

**Fieldwork.**

Carpentier, N. (2011). Media and participation: A site of ideological-democratic struggle (p. 408). Intellect.

Week 8 – **April 7** – Lecture

**Participation, media participation,**

What does it mean to participate? What types of participation are there? What is power? Participation and empowerment. Enhanced and full media participation. Is it always good to aim at full participation? Public journalism, citizen journalism.

**Minimum reading:**

Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of planners*, 35(4), 216-224.

Recommended reading:

Carpentier, N. (2011). Media and participation: A site of ideological-democratic struggle (p. 408). Intellect.

Carpentier, N. (2016). Beyond the ladder of participation: An analytical toolkit for the critical analysis of participatory media processes. *Javnost-The Public*, 23(1), 70-88.

Cavalieri, I. C., & Almeida, H. N. (2018). Power, Empowerment and Social Participation the Building of a Conceptual Model. *European Journal of Social Science Education and Research*, 5(1), 189-199.

Croft, S., & Beresford, P. (1992). The politics of participation. *Critical social policy*, 12(35), 20-44.

Week 9 – **April 14** – Fieldwork

Engaging with homeless people in the field. We will probably have to move the date and time as 6pm is too late to go out.

Week 10 – **April 21** – Lecture

**Mediating enhanced/full media participation**

No reading.

Week 11 – **April 28** – Seminar

Reflection of the group project.

Week 12 – **May 5** – Lecture

**Ethics of ethnographic journalism and media participation**

Recommended reading:

Atkinson, P. (2009). Ethics and ethnography. *Twenty-First Century Society*, 4(1), 17-30.

Week 13 – **May 12** – Seminar

Discussion on the final essays.