Interpretation and Writing Exercises
Exercises #4 and #5
ANTH 410/510

Based upon the information you gathered earlier this semester when you interviewed a fellow student in our class (Interview Exercise #2) and when you conducted an observation (Observation Exercise #3): **first do Exercise #4**, an interpretation and analysis (parts 1 and 2 listed below), corresponding to topic “11. Interpretation - From Gathering To Writing Culture: Interpreting Another's Story” as assigned in our syllabus, **then do Exercise #5 (at the assigned time)**, presentation and writing (parts 3 and 4 listed below), corresponding to topic “12. Interpretation - From Writing To Representing Culture: Presenting Another's Story” in our syllabus.

**Interpretation (Exercise # 4):**

1. Develop and apply an appropriate theoretical perspective to both sets of information, rendering an interpretation and/or analysis of student’s story and of the setting observed. Such perspectives can range from constructionist to positivist, and be purely descriptive “thick description” to highly analytical in focus. Outline your coding method and your interpretation and/or analysis of both sets of information.

Also consider the modes of legitimizing your information from both situations, from validity and reliability tests to authenticity and trustworthiness.

2. As you begin your interpretation of both sets of information, reflect on your own reflexivity in both situations. Among your reflections, ask yourself what did you bring to the process that influenced how you asked questions, what questions you asked, as well as how you positioned yourself in the observational setting and what issues you were dealing with as you made your observations. Outline your reflexive reflections.

Both sets of outlines are to be kept in your own files for now; not to be turned in.
**Presentation (Exercise #5):**

3. Based upon the theoretical perspective you have adopted, your interpretations (Exercise #4), and, most importantly, driven by the informational content you gathered in both exercises (Exercise #2 and #3), determine the most appropriate manner, style and format for presenting each set of information. In the interview situation, whose “voice” are you attempting to present? Then write out, 1. your observations of the setting you participated in, and 2. write out the story of your interviewee’s route to anthropology (or another discipline). Include a section for your reflections on your reflexivity, as well as your interpretations of both set of information, with reference to the sorts of mode of legitimizing you are seeking. Each narrative/report should be approximately two (2) pages in length, with an appropriate title and any other referencing.

4. Before you submit our narratives, present a copy of your interviewee’s story to him or her first and see what they think. Are they comfortable with the narrative, and allow it to be presented in our class?

5. Be ready to orally present and discuss how you determined your interpretations and presentations styles, and turn in your two narratives/reports at the appropriate time.