**Ideal Vs. Practice: Activity**

This activity involves both in-class discussions and work that should be completed outside of class time, and makes a good companion to the book *Infected Kin.* Feel free to alter this activity to suit the needs, size and style of your classroom.

Companion Activities/Readings: If you have not covered participant observation, I suggest having students read Pages 53-57 of: Spradley, James P. *Participant observation*. Waveland Press, 2016. Alternatively, you could lecture on Spradley’s 6 features of participant observation: Dual Purpose, Explicit Awareness, Wide-Angle Lens, Insider/Outsider, Introspection, Record Keeping. This will help students think about how to observe with increased awareness of their surroundings and give them some ideas of what kinds of things to look for.

In class, introduce and discuss the difference between what people say and what they do. Talk about how fieldwork gets at these differences, and their significance.

Give the students 5-10 minutes in class to review the section "Relationality and Care in Practice" (pg 19-22).

In small groups, have the students discuss the following questions:

1. What is a theory of practice? How does it differ from idealized culture?
2. What kinds of fieldwork techniques do you think would help to reveal the gap between idealized versions of cultural practices and the actual way people live their lives?
3. What is useful about learning both people’s idealized versions of their understandings of culture as well as their everyday practices? What does this tell us about their lives, their hopes, their aspirations?
4. Brainstorm areas of your own life that you think might be very different if you described them to someone and if they observed you doing them? What do you think accounts for these differences?

Outside of class, have students interview a friend about an activity that they do regularly (a sports practice, a music rehearsal, a religious service etc). Try to choose an activity that the interviewing student is not immersed in themselves so their observations can be fresh. Then observe the friend doing the activity.

Depending on how much you want this assignment to be worth, you can have students turn in:

* Interview transcripts
* Field notes of observed activity
* Reflective essay on the gap between ideal vs practice
  1. What were the differences between your interview and observation?
  2. Why do you think some of these differences existed? (ie. They were so commonplace that the person describing them to you forgot to notice them? They were embarrassed? They were blind to them because they were too accustomed to them?)
  3. What insights can you gain from thinking about the difference between ideal and practice.
  4. What insights were gained because you were unfamiliar with the activity you observed? How do you think this would have been different if you observed an activity that you were very familiar with?
  5. In *Infected Kin* how effectively did the authors get at the difference between ideal vs practice? What insights did they gain from careful attention to both? Where could they have improved?

**Infected Kin: Themed Group Discussion Project**

Note for instructor: This group discussion helps students have in-depth, structured conversations around themes present *in Infected Kin*. You can use the themes below, replace them with different ones, or have students come up with their own themes. The discussion can be adjusted for one or two class periods, or can be used (as written below) to discuss the whole book over the course of two weeks. It allows students to dig deeper into the book's themes and helps keep them accountable to group members for the readings. I have included suggested grading below. You can eliminate the individual paper and adjust grades as desired. This works best if you use an online platform such as Canvas or Blackboard, where students can post their discussion questions and notes.

Depending on how you decide to divide up the chapters, you can put links on your online discussion platform with the due dates for discussion questions and discussion notes. You can divide these into as many units as you'd like, but having 2-3 discussion classes and one class where students present on their theme works well.

I have noted **in bold** below where you might want to delete/add/adjust, so please change those before handing out to your students.

**This group assignment has four components:** (worth 10% of your course grade)

In Class Discussions: 1%

Discussion Board Posts: 2%

Presentation: 2%

Two Page Response Paper (individual): 5%

In this group assignment, you will read and discuss the book, *Infected Kin* (Block and McGrath 2019) with your small group of 3-5 students. You will be given time to work with your group in class (**optional - INSERT DATES**), and you might also need to meet outside of class at least once to prepare for the presentation, which should be practiced, polished, and timed. During group meetings, you will be taking notes of your discussion and posting those notes on the discussion board. Every group member must be present at the group meetings, and everyone should arrive with at least 2-3 discussion questions on your theme to pose to the group. One person should be the group secretary, recording notes from the discussion, and posting them on the discussion board. Rotate who serves as secretary for each meeting.

**Discussion Board:**

You should post your discussion questions before class on the discussion board. Group notes should also be posted on the discussion board.

For each session (and the related notes), you should address the following questions:

* What discussion questions did your group discuss?
* What topics did your group discuss?
* What were the dominant themes in the chapters you read?
* How did your theme emerge in that chapter?
* What caught your attention about the reading?
* What did your group not understand? What questions were left unresolved or unaddressed?

**Presentation:**

Additionally, each group will prepare a 15-minute (**can adjust time as needed**) presentation for **INSERT DATE**. Each group is tasked with presenting on how the book addresses a chosen theme. Please present on the themes as they are present throughout the entire book (not merely one chapter where they are more central – this requires close reading and thinking across chapters). Your presentation should not merely present the findings on your theme, chapter by chapter, but should address the theme holistically, across the entire book, pulling out powerful examples and quotes.

* Group 1: **LIST STUDENT NAMES**
  + Theme: Kinship
* Group 2:
  + Theme: Structural Inequality
* Group 3:
  + Theme: Care
* Group 4:
  + Theme: Gender
* Group 5:
  + Theme: HIV/AIDS

Groups should present on their theme, being careful not to exceed the time allotment and involving all group members in the presentation. Each group should have two questions to prompt class discussion of their topic (**OPTIONAL IF TIME ALLOWS**).

**Response Paper:**

Finally, each person should submit a two page (**PAGE LIMIT CAN BE ADJUSTED**) response on **INSERT DATE** (this portion is not to be done as a group) connected to your assigned theme. What argument can you make about what Block and McGrath's book shows about your theme? You should make an argument, and use examples from the book to illustrate your argument. You do not have to cover all the evidence for your theme (since it is a short paper), but can pick a few things that stood out to you, make an argument about them, and provide a few examples. Your paper should be polished, edited, and have a thesis.