

Ethnography and Virtual Worlds: A Handbook of Method

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ISBN13:	9780691149516
ISBN10:	0691149518
Genre:	Anthropology
Published:	September 16th 2012 by Princeton University Press
Pages:	237
Goodreads Rating:	3.97
Language	English

ETHNOGRAPHY AND VIRTUAL WORLDS

A HANDBOOK OF METHOD

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Ethnography and Virtual Worlds is the only book of its kind--a concise, comprehensive, and practical guide for students, teachers, designers, and scholars interested in using ethnographic methods to study online virtual worlds, including both game and nongame environments. Written by leading ethnographers of virtual worlds, and focusing on the key method of participant observation, the book provides invaluable advice, tips, guidelines, and principles to aid researchers through every stage of a project, from choosing an online fieldsite to writing and publishing the results. Provides practical and detailed techniques for ethnographic research customized to reflect the specific issues of online virtual worlds, both game and nongame Draws on research in a range of virtual worlds, including Everquest, Second Life, There.com, and World of Warcraft Provides suggestions for dealing with institutional review boards, human subjects protocols, and ethical issues Guides the reader through the full trajectory of ethnographic research, from research design to data collection, data analysis, and writing up and publishing research results Addresses myths and misunderstandings about ethnographic research, and argues for the scientific value of ethnography