

ETHNOGRAPHIC ENCOUNTERS JOURNAL

Vol. 13

Candlemas 2025

Issue 1

EDITOR'S NOTE

We are thrilled to present the long-awaited new edition of Ethnographic Encounters Journal – our first publication after a three-year hiatus. This marks a new chapter for the EEJ, one that blends renewal with a return to our foundational ethos of showcasing the depth and breadth of student scholarship in social anthropology.

In many ways, this issue takes us back to our roots. At its heart, EEJ continues to showcase the remarkable projects emerging from the Ethnographic Encounters module, undertaken by second-year students. These projects represent students' first foray into the field, where they explore topics that capture their curiosity and conduct ethnographic research for the first time.

In this volume, the diversity of student projects highlights the wide-ranging potential of ethnographic inquiry, with themes spanning activism, institutional life, identity, and interpersonal connection. Several projects critically examine the structures shaping daily experiences: Alyssa Morgan explores how commuting impacts student life and belonging; Victoria Lee investigates non-academic staff perspectives within a marketised university; and Celina Chen documents student-led protests for Palestine, revealing the emotional and political dimensions of activism. Other contributions focus on identity, exclusion, and modes of expression: Theus De'ath offers an artistic reflection on the marginalisation of autistic voices in academia; Alabama Michaud explores how immigrant taxi drivers navigate language and belonging in St Andrews; and Cristina Grohmann examines 'latrinalia' in a local bar bathroom as a space of student solidarity. Finally, Emily Kneppers, Ella Roberts, and Olivia Douglas delve into social bonds and community: Emily Kneppers analyses the complexities

of friendship in ethnographic fieldwork; Ella Roberts investigates the role of gossip and “the debrief” in female student friendships; and Olivia Douglas reveals how cold-water swimming fosters ecological awareness and reimagined relationships with nature. Together, these projects showcase the creativity, critical engagement, and depth of insight emerging from the second-year Ethnographic Encounters projects.

While returning to our initial focus, we are equally embracing a broader, more experimental approach. This edition introduces a new strand of work: autoethnographies. Also created by second-year students, these articles use autoethnographic methodology to explore the self as both subject and site of anthropological enquiry. Through embodied reflection and critical self-analysis, these contributions offer fresh perspectives on the experiential and affective dimensions of fieldwork.

This volume’s autoethnographies offer varied reflections on embodied experience, sensory engagement, and social critique. Several explore sensory and embodied practices: Jennifer Matthews immerses readers in the multi-sensorial world of wild swimming; Elena Azais Tatistscheff examines the everyday sensory complexities of washing dishes through visual and narrative forms; and Katherine Price reflects on the interplay of senses and memory during a coastal walk. Others engage with embodied physical and creative practices as sites of identity and emotion: Skye Parkes recounts the embodied and gendered experience of aikido practice, while Kazi Gilman uses stop-motion animation to investigate creativity, procrastination, and material humour. Themes of social norms, identity, and cultural critique emerge in Daryl Lamb’s article, which critically analyses beauty rituals at a salon through a feminist lens, and in Tara Phillips’ contribution, where a barefoot walk acts as a symbolic disruption exposing implicit social hierarchies. Lastly, Camila Gomez and Laura Marquez Navas focus on cultural meaning: Camila Gomez explores spice and globalisation through an embodied dining experience, while Laura Marquez Navas navigates nostalgia and diasporic identity via the making of a carnival costume. Together, these autoethnographies demonstrate how personal narrative and sensory detail deepen anthropological insight and challenge conventional understandings.

As we relaunch EEJ, we do so with a deep sense of excitement and commitment to supporting the outstanding research carried out by anthropology students at the University of St Andrews. We hope this new era of the journal will continue to inspire, challenge, and expand the possibilities of undergraduate anthropology.

Welcome back to Ethnographic Encounters.

Sophie Cooper

Editor-in-Chief

..... JOURNAL HISTORY

Ethnographic Encounters was founded in 2011 by Zoe Miller, Emily Sheppard and Dr. Craig Lind to provide a platform for undergraduate students in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of St Andrews to share their outstanding ethnographic research.

Inspired by the Ethnographic Encounters project that that second-year students in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of St Andrews do every spring where they conduct their own fieldwork project, the journal highlights the diversity of anthropological inquiry undertaken by students.

After a hiatus, this issue marks our return to publishing and a recommitment to our dedication to showcasing original ethnographic work that reflects the diverse research and perspectives from students within the department.

We remain a student-run journal, and our articles include essays based on fieldwork undertaken during a second-year project to experimental autoethnographic writing.

Our online archives can be found at: <https://ojs.st-andrews.ac.uk/index.php/SAEE/issue/archive>

With special thanks to the University of St Andrews' Department of Social Anthropology.

..... EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor-in-Chief

Sophie Cooper

Head of Operations

Cosmo Billing

Chief Encounters Project Editor

Tatum Macdonald

Chief Autoethnography Editor

Angel Hu

Assistant Editors

Risha Srinivas

Katherine Price

Cover and Layout Designers

Camila Gómez

Amara Baker-Onyancha

Sandra Palazuelos García

Secretary

Finn Salisbury

Development Officer

Lauren Brickell

Social Media Officer

Grace Pasqualucci Sammartini

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of St Andrews for its continued support of Ethnographic Encounters. Special thanks go to Dr Tony Crook, whose guidance as academic link has been invaluable in bringing the journal back to life. Finally, we are deeply grateful to our authors for sharing their thoughtful and inspiring work – this journal would not exist without you.