



***Shane the Lone Ethnographer: A Beginner's Guide to Ethnography.* Sally Campbell Galman. Lanham: Altamira Press, 2007. 120 pp.**

Reviewed by: Janet Kier López

In a one of a kind format, *Shane the Lone Ethnographer: A Beginner's Guide to Ethnography* introduces ethnography through the unique and highly innovative format of cartoons. Author Sally Campbell Galman utilizes the main character, Shane, to demonstrate how novice ethnographers may work through the process of completing an ethnography: constructing a theoretical framework, choosing appropriate research methods, collecting and synthesizing data and working through to the final stages of the write-up. By approaching the topic of ethnography through the use of cartoons, the author gives new ethnographers an approachable format for understanding the art of ethnography. In addition, seasoned ethnographers, graduate students, and faculty in particular, will have enough insider insight to enjoy the text as well as to grow and learn from it. As Shane embarks on her first ethnographic research project, the reader is introduced to the theories, methods, and skills employed by ethnographic researchers.

Like other introductory books that attempt to cover a large breadth of information in a short amount of space, a novice ethnographer would need additional texts to help supplement the individual chapters in Campbell Galman's book, specifically those chapters that cover theoretical frameworks and data collection methods. Yet, Campbell Galman does a remarkable job informing the new ethnographer and using humor to make the entire book's subject incredibly digestible. The author also takes an important pause at the beginning of the book to ask the reader to consider why ethnography should be used (depending on what question one is asking, ethnography may or may not be the best way to approach one's research) and what type of paradigm the researcher will use when conducting their research. The author works hard to move away from creating divisiveness between paradigms, and urges instead that new researchers make educated decisions when choosing both paradigms and theoretical frameworks. Providing such broad overviews of research paradigms may leave positivist researchers disappointed that the author has not focused more on predictability and control, and critical researchers feeling that the book needs to focus more on reflexive research practices, beyond just identifying one's subjectivity. Again, supplemental texts would help put this introductory text in context depending on the focus of individual instructors.

While the chapters on data collection provide very specific and accessible examples of how to collect data, the chapter on safety and sanity in the field seemed less useful to the overall flow of the book. While these topics are not unrelated to conducting ethnography, the book's data collection chapter, which focused on observations, field notes, and ethnographic interviewing, seemed more useful and appropriate for new ethnographers conducting research in a (likely) semester-long format. In addition to the chapter on data



collection, the chapter on how to approach the Institutional Review Board takes a humorous look at demystifying the often perplexing process of obtaining permission to conduct research with human subjects.

Campbell-Galman's final chapter on analyzing data likely will need more guided tutoring from instructors using the text for an introductory level ethnography course. However, she has taken the time to describe both "top-down" and "bottom-up" data analysis, emphasizing that ultimately ethnographers must decide how they will tell someone else's story, and more importantly how to maintain the integrity of the story that they choose to tell. This is a key insight for any researcher conducting an ethnography.

Overall, Campbell Galman's book has made an incredibly unique contribution to the field, as the first-ever comic book introduction to ethnography. More importantly, she has done so with great care and detail, and has made this introduction to ethnography an accessible format that graduate students would look forward to reading each week for class. Faculty teaching introductory and even advanced ethnography courses should not shy away but should instead be drawn to this refreshing text format. While Shane the Lone Ethnographer is a novice, her creator, Campbell Galman, has been trained and influenced by well-respected methodologists in the field of education and anthropology. The author's clever wit, artistic talent, and grasp of the history, methods, and foundations of ethnography make this book an extremely useful pedagogical tool for engaging and teaching students in their own first ethnographic adventures.

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