নৃবিজ্ঞান পত্রিকা, সংখ্যা ২৩, পৃ. ২৭-৪১

Reading *Making it Crazy: An Ethnography of Psychiatric Clients in an American Community* through an Examination of Ethnography as Methods of Knowledge Production

Shahina Parvin[1]

Abstract This paper examines Sue E. Estroff's (1981) *Making it Crazy: An Ethnography of Psychiatric Clients in an American Community* by situating her work in broader discussions of the worth and tensions of using ethnographic methods in producing knowledge. The reading will eventually foster the productive discussion on such methods in anthropology and other social science research. Estroff, a Caucasian woman, foster changes on the notion of the field by doing research on white people with mental illness in the Western space unlike classical ethnographies, which generally represent the Other 'cultures'. However, my position in this paper is that Estroff failed to defend the utility and rationale of doing an ethnographic research in a Western space and failed to defend the problem associated with the classical anthropological representations of the Other. More specifically, she did not contribute to the critical discussions of the power relations between researchers and researched people nor researchers' power in the representation of the Other. Instead, Estroff relies on the positivist and neo-positivist notions of visibility and experiences as a basis for producing knowledge about the Other and often defends the similarities and difficulties of her field similar to Malinowski's ethnographic notion of the field. Therefore, she overlooked her power in the representations of people with mental illness.

Introduction

This paper will examine Sue E. Estroff's (1981) *Making it Crazy: An Ethnography of Psychiatric Clients in an American Community* by situating her work in broader discussions of the worth and tensions of using ethnographic methods in producing knowledge. Estroff conducted ethnographic research of psychiatric patients living in a community setting in Madison, Wisconsin, America. This book is worth examining for two points: one is that Estroff's notion of her ethnographic field differs from the classical ethnographies, and the other is, her research on 'mad' people, where research is lacking. The

[1] Ph.D. Student, Cultural, Social, and Political Thought, University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Jahangirnagar University, Dhaka, Bangladesh (on study leave) Email: s.parvin@uleth.ca

discussions in this paper will be divided into three sections. First, I will discuss the broader aspects associated with Estroff's research topic and her conceptualization of 'field', including the positioning of her 'field', and whether her notion of 'field' complicates the notion of 'field' within ethnographic methods. Second, I will examine how she situated herself amongst her research subjects, her ways of learning about her studied people, and her arguments about knowledge production, and whether her arguments relate to or differ from other scholars' notions of knowledge production through ethnography. Third, I will discuss Estroff's ways of representing her studied people, what kinds of tales she has generally used in her ethnographic writing, and how these representations connect her arguments and objectives of her research. In each section, I will also draw upon the limitations of Estroff's conceptualization of ethnography methods.

Estroff's Research and the Notion of Field

Estroff (1981) studied people with mental illness - from 1975 to 1977- as part of her Ph.D. in cultural anthropology at the University of Wisconsin. Estroff criticizes the process of labelling people 'mentally ill'[2], as she posits that this kind of labelling significantly affects people with mental illness. She became interested in working on people mental illness following the critiques of disability scholars' that institutionalizing and segregating people deemed mentally ill is a form of violence. As a result of the deinstitutionalize movements, many asylums in Western society began to close, and the American government better responded to the needs of people with mental illness. However, Estroff argues that deinstitutionalization is rhetoric, as people with mental illness are not 'truly' included within mainstream communities. Instead, they are segregated from mainstream and often encounter negative attitudes in society, including domination by the general public, and the stigma associated with mental illness prevails. Thus, deinstitutionalization arguably did not significantly change the lives of people with mental illness. According to Estroff, although ethnographic research exits on mentally ill people within the asylum setting, ethnographic research on them within a community setting is scant.

Estroff selected 43 psychiatric patients living in a community setting in Madison, Wisconsin under the Program of Assertive Community Treatment (PACT). In regards to selecting her 'field', Estroff mentions that rather than

[2] It is important to note that from this point forward, when using the term 'mentally ill', or similar kinds of words for addressing people living with mental illness, I will not use quotation marks. However, this does not indicate that I am noncritical of these terminologies, or accepting of them (Malacrida, 2015). Here, I follow Malacrida's argument that using these concepts is a political statement rather than a 'natural' phenomenon (p. xv). By using these concepts, I do not want to put any negative connotation on these people, and I do not perceive they have something lacking (Malacrida, 2015).

"arranging for passage, visas, fearsome injections, getting out my hiking boots, and packing my trunks, I got in my car, drove...to the downtown area…and beg[a]n my field work" (p. 3). She notes that she did not live with the patients, but rather across town in her own apartment. Her strategies show that Estroff's 'field' is not like Bronislaw Malinowski's (1953) notion of 'field', where he suggests that anthropologists need to go to distant, so-called 'primitive' societies to learn about different cultures. Further, Malinowski suggests anthropologists need to imagine that they are beginners in order to learn about new societies, and must not have any previous experiences (p. 4). Ethnographers also need to stay in the research village for long periods of time to participate, and observe the daily lives of the Others in order to fully experience it; these experiences are the basis of anthropological knowledge production. Additionally, ethnographers need to collect many ethnographic materials to bring home before finally beginning to document their experiences. Malinowski believes that in these ways ethnographers will be able to gain the scientific 'objectivity' and 'neutrality' of producing knowledge about Others. Further, to Malinowski, the most 'authentic" Others are those who "are most isolated from ourselves", and "those who [are] most authentically rooted in their 'natural' settings" (Gupta & Ferguson, 1996, p.8).

Estroff (1981) mentions that she did not follow the 'traditional' notion of 'field' in her ethnography; nonetheless, her anxiety of not following the foundational notion of 'field' is expressed through her explicit defense that her field was nonetheless analogous to the 'classical' field in anthropology. For instance, she notes, "[My field was a] more difficult tactical puzzle than the institutional environment …. My subjects were scattered over a much larger area …. I worked more closely approximated the village arena frequently encountered by anthropologists. But it was a village without … visible boundaries" (p. 23). Thus, Estroff argues that the study of an institution could be more straightforward. Further, her position reflects that she also perceives that the epistemological base of ethnography depends on a notion of difference and Otherness and that "'the field' itself [is] the place where the distinctive work of 'fieldwork' may be done, that taken-for-granted space in which an "Other" culture or society lies" (Gupta & Ferguson, 1996, p. 2). She notes that she had a "long, arduous, exciting and frightening journey into differentness and newness", regardless of "the geographic proximity and lack of exotic contingencies" (p.3). Her words here reflect that on some level she perceives that there is an 'exotic' type of anthropological 'field', and that a more exotic Other is separate from the white self. By stating the 'exotic' type of the researched people, she arguably attempts to convince readers that her ethnography follows the epistemologies of ethnography, which depend on the notion of Otherness. Instead, she could have discussed how her research differed from classical ethnographic research; that is classical ethnographies had generally been done by white people, and they focused on cultures other

than the 'Western culture', whereas Estroff, is a Caucasian woman, researching white mentally ill people in the Western space.

Although Estroff explains the otherness of mentally ill people in the Western society to justify her research, she could explain her privilege and power as a white 'normal' woman to research people with mental illness. Further, her ethnography could be enriched by engaging discussion on how the historical context of her research differs from the classical ethnographic research, in particular Malinowski's research (as she has often compared her notion of ethnography with Malinowski). For instance, during the time of Malinowski, the positivist approach was prominent in social science research, and the legitimacy of social science research mostly depended on following the scientific ways of knowing, which arguably encouraged Malinowski to adopt a positivist approach in his notion of ethnography. Even until the 1970s, researchers generally believed the myth of the authenticity and authority of science (Christians, 2005; Haraway, 1988) because science could provide "evidence[s] that by applying reason to nature and to human beings in fairly obvious ways, people could live progressively happier lives" (p. 139).

Positivist social scientists also adopt such nature of inquiry when they study "social facts and social laws" of society to predict human behaviours (Oakley, 1998, p. 710). As the positivistic paradigm was prominent in social science research until the 1970s, the notions of neutrality, objectivity, and detachment from the 'other' were considered necessary for producing a more 'accurate' representation of the 'other'. After the 1970s, the notions of neutrality and objectivity were contested by feminists, post-structuralists, post-modernists, and critical theorists by recognizing that as researchers are integral parts of the social world, the representation of the Other is connected to the writers' self-presence in the text (Denzin, 1998; Mauthner & Doucet, 2003). They recognize that "knowledge and understanding are contextually and historically grounded, as well as linguistically constituted", and theory is also embedded with culture, society, and history; thus, it is "'situated knowledge' and a 'social activity'" (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003, pp. 416-417). Estroff could acknowledge the criticisms of positivist research, mentioned above, in her representations of people with mental illness that could contribute to a more ethical approach in research.

Further, Estroff generalizes that studying an institution might be more straightforward than her field, a claim I found problematic; rather than attempt to position her field in terms of another to negotiate its authenticity, she could have explained, similar to Ulf Hannerz, that she does not believe 'real' anthropology necessarily means doing ethnography away from home and means relying on exploring Otherness (Hannerz, 2006, p. 37). However, Estroff did not problematize the construction of the Other through ethnographic work or comment on how it is connected to colonialism and

white racial supremacy. Malinowski informs colonialism through constructing certain communities of people as the Other, 'primitive', and belonging in a 'natural state', and prompted anthropologists to prove this notion through direct observation and participation (Gupta & Ferguson, 1996, p. 7). Estroff did not engage in discussions of how ethnographic research fetishizes the notion of Others and difference. She could have discussed the otherness of mentally ill people in her ethnographic research.

Additionally, she did not draw upon any discussions of how the separation of 'field' and home is problematic, comment on how this separation is connected with the notion of 'them' vs. 'us', address how this separation contributes to the division between white people and Others, nor address how these conceptualizations are connected to white people's power over Others (Gupta & Ferguson, 1996; Cerroni-Long, 1995; Geertz, 2001). On the contrary, Estroff (1981) justified her selection of 'field' by arguing that while anthropological ethnography generally focuses on cross-cultural human variations and diversity, her aim was to focus on individual's responses to culture, and notes that she is interested in exploring the intra-cultural variation. Further, Estroff's choice of a field near her residence has been informed by not only anthropology but also psychiatry, as she notes that she combined the two approaches in her research, which has enriched both of the disciplines.

Estroff addresses that while anthropological ethnographic studies inform psychiatry in thinking about the variation and diversity of human adaptation from global perspectives, psychiatry informs anthropology in the need to examine "the interaction of individual development and personality configuration with cultural codes and conventions [and] conveyed a view of the individual as a feeling perceiving entity, and not simply as a bearer of culture" (p. 208). However, this interpretation differs from many anthropologists' notion that psychiatry contributed to anthropology in the sense of encouraging the researcher to count the individual as an entity of culture. For example, John Van Maanen (2011) mentions how the practices of ethnography differs based on different discipline; he notes that while sociologists usually use ethnography to explore the "political, economic, public and instrumental aspects of daily life" anthropologists generally use ethnography to explore "sacred, emotional, moral, private and expressive areas of life" (p. 22).

My position is that Estroff's notion of field did not contribute to the critical thinking in the conceptualization of field in ethnographic research. Perhaps this is because Estroff wrote her book in 1981, when the debate about 'fields' in anthropology were only in early stages. However, Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1996); Clifford Geertz (2001), Ulf Hannerz (2006) and E. L. Cerroni-Long's (1995) discussions of 'field' significantly contributed to the notion of 'field'. I am particularly convinced by Gupta and Ferguson's (1996)

argument that anthropologists need to rethink the notion of the 'field' and need to be critical about the position that "truths are only revealed in 'the field"' (p. 38). Instead, in the process of producing text for the readers from field notes and transcription scripts, researchers' interpretation is understood as a central issue (Denzin, 1988). This is because in writing, the researchers represent the research participants, their problems and their crisis, and participants often lack control (Denzin, 1998). Therefore, anthropologists need to decolonize their practice through distancing themselves from the representation of 'exotic' Others, and engage in discussions about the reasons why they are a studying particular society (p. 38). Further, researchers should practice reflexivity, which will acknowledge researchers' motivation, preconceived notions, assumptions, power, biases, and privilege. In other words, taking a critical look at all aspects of researchers' activities in their research (Malacrida, 20017; Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). In the following section, I will draw upon discussions of Estroff's strategies to enter to her 'field'.

Experiences as the Basis of Knowledge Production

The PACT program Estroff focused on provided support for psychiatric patients for 13 months, this support included medication, counselling services, involvement in some social activities, training for living 'normal' lives, and some welfare benefits. Estroff engaged with the patients in two phases, the first from July 1975 to January 1977) in this phase, she focused on patients who were actively receiving treatment for PACT. In the second phase, from January 1977 to August 1977, she observed patients who were discharged from PACT. She explains that she chose to use the term 'crazy' for mentally ill people (although social scientists even in the 1970s were critical of this term), as she found staff and patients often use the term to address PACT patients.

Estroff (1981) posits that experience through participation in 'Other' people's lives is the basis of anthropological knowledge. She notes that anthropologists often do ethnography and learn about people's lives "through asking, doing, watching, testing, and experiencing for [themselves] in the same activities, rituals, rules and meaning as the subjects" (p. 20). Nevertheless, she argues that it was not possible for researchers to reach "optimal levels of experience and participation in the subjects' world" if they study mentally ill people and want to remain sane (p. 21). Thus, enculturation in this case, according to Estroff, is not possible for ethnographers. This statement conflicts Estroff's claim that she is against labelling some people as 'insane', and her stated position that labelling can cause harm to individual's identities. Rather, this statement reflects that Estroff herself still differentiates between 'sane' and 'insane'.

Estroff states that following ethnographic methods, she observed, interviewed, and participated in patients' lives at the highest level possible that did not hamper her participation, her life, or her participants. She claims that she applied "nonethnocentric perspectives" to understand mentally ill people in order to learn the variation of their lives, and uncover how "individuals feel, think, behave, and believe both similarly and differently within a given cultural code and environment" (pp. 14, 15). She argues that these nonethnocentric perspectives informed her views of looking at sociocultural "aspects of being mentally ill" and helped her ignore looking at this condition as a "pathology and sickness", which she perceives as a strength of her research (p. 15).

Estroff notes that it was challenging for her in the beginning to enter her field. She was asked about her identity by patients, in particular whether she was a patient or a staff member. She states that while staff knew her identity from the beginning, patients did not, and she notes that "staff had been instructed not to introduce me to clients but let me do this whenever possible" (p. 22). Further, she states that when she first introduced herself to the staff, she "asked them to ignore" her and to pretend she "was invisible" (p. 27), which reflects the notion that she did not want to contaminate the purity of her field site by her presence. However, her reluctance to reveal her identity to patients in the beginning and her language regarding the representation of staff reflect her power over both staff and patients. This could be read through the lens of Hannerz, Gupta, and Ferguson's arguments that when anthropologists study marginalized groups, power relations often exist between the researcher and those they study (Gupta & Ferguson, 1996; Hannerz, 2006). Estroff's (1981) decision to initially hide her identity raises questions for me as to whether this is a worthwhile and ethical strategy when researching people's lives. Further, Estroff notes that overall, her desire was to be identified as a patient rather than a staff member, because it would ultimately provide her space to participate in patient's lives and eventually help her, as outsider, to reach insiders' views. She notes that to reach the patients' 'actual' lives, it was important to spend as much time as possible with them. She also notes that in some cases her gender identity benefitted her entrance into patients' lives, while in other cases delimited her participation; for example, she did not attend men's recreational activities organized by PACT because she identified as a woman.

During the first phase of her research, Estroff mostly relied upon observational techniques, while in the second phase she engaged in more a personal relationship with the clients. For example, she would go for lunch and dinner with them, give them rides in her vehicle, and also paid for their drinks, sometimes drinking with them. She notes that while she did not like to drink with the patients, and initially refused, her refusal hampered her participation in their lives as this created a perceivable barrier between them. Thus, she chose to drink with them, though lightly so that she did not lose her

control and ability to observe the patients' activities. Estroff explicitly notes that while she did decide to drink with the patients, she did not take marijuana with them. In these ways, Estroff played the role of insider while maintaining her outsider position.

Estroff also took fluphenazine, an antipsychotic medication often prescribed to PACT patients, for six months as a way of participating in her research (p. 30). She notes that she did this to help her learn whether the described side effects of the medication were real and to be able to make 'objective' claims about the medication. She describes experiencing minor side effects of this medicine, such as "shakes, stiffness, and flat facial expression" (p. 100). Estroff's descriptions of her participation in patients' lives suggests that she follows classical formulations of Malinowski in her methodology, such as learning being possible through participation in Others' lives and the notion that "knowledge [is] derived from experiences in the 'field'" (Gupta & Ferguson, 1996, p. 15). Further, Estroff relies on visibility as a source of knowledge production; for example, she notes that she tries to observe the patients' lives at her highest level. Further, she tries to collect as many facts as she can, which also follows Malinowski's formulation of ethnographic methods. Malinowski believes that facts speak for themselves, and by collecting the widest possible range of facts, ethnographers can arrange those facts so the facts speak for themselves in representing Other cultures, eventually providing ethnographers an 'objective' and 'neutral' status (Malinowski, 1953, p. 12).

As I previously mentioned, Estroff's use of nonethnocentric views and her endeavors to reach the 'originality' of facts reflect that she is not concerned about the debate of these conceptions, which may also be attributed to the debates that arose after she published her research. To begin, I consider Johannes Fabian's (2001) critical examination of the concepts 'objectivity' and 'neutrality' in ethnographic research. Fabian argues that the notions of 'objectivity' and 'neutrality' in anthropology have been informed by the positivistic paradigm, and come from science through Malinowski (p. 25). He argues that in anthropology, the notion of 'objectivity' was used to "overcome the eurocentricism", and during the first half of twentieth century, the more valid ethnographic knowledge was considered to be that which lacked or showed an absence of ethnocentric bias (p. 16). At this point, the notion of 'objectivity' emerged, which is perceived as being able to preserve cultural relativism, and thus respond to and learn cultural diversity.

Fabian goes on to note that "cultural relativism under many different guise[s]" supports the "discipline's claims to being scientific and hence objective" (p.17). Fabian suggests cultural relativism obscures the "moral rejection of ethnocentric bias" (p. 17) and provides space for anthropologists' neutrality. Fabian claims that "cultural relativism could not be the ultimate objectivist

theory" and "objectivities are more than one objectivity", and he further argues that what comes forth as objective is superficial and "reduced to certain basic functions" (p. 17). Further, participation becomes the main issue, which reflects the notion that objectivity becomes "an ontological rather an epistemological issue and theory" (p. 18). Fabian argues that this is because "the object(s) of inquiry have been ontologized", which here means "assigning to one or several kinds of objectification a comprehensive reality status" (p. 18). Fabian further argues that the ontololization of objectivity delimits understandings of the relationship and processes that make it possible for ethnographers to access and represent Others (p. 23). Fabian suggests the concept of "human intersubjectivity" might be a basis of epistemology of ethnography, in which he focuses on both the researcher and researched peoples' confrontations and conversations through which knowledge could be produced. With these discussions, researchers should be careful about notions of 'objectivity' and 'neutrality' within ethnographic studies, and should examine findings in historical and social contexts, rather than depending only on observation and participation in subjects' lives.

Similarly, Geertz (2001) also criticizes the notion of relativism and argues that the concept of cultural relativism attacked ethnocentric views in Western society and fought racist notions about primitive societies and culture. However, in many ways, cultural relativism helped preserve the notion of distinction between Other and Western cultures. In this sense, despite the ethnographic emphasis on 'objectivity', the notion instead is inverted racism; this is because ethnographers work to prove cultural differences through their direct physical participation in and observation of other societies. While in their representations they often restrict themselves to avoid putting negative connotations on the culture of the Other, ethnography provides the means to collect and display difference, which itself helps preserve the notion of difference between Other cultures and Western society, ultimately contributing to the notion of racial superiority of white people.

If I situate Estroff's position in terms of Fabian's and Geertz's broader discussions of relativism and objectivity, it could be read that Estroff's research is similar to many ethnographers who ontologized the notion of objectivity through emphasis on experiences, and visibility as the basis of the production of knowledge. However, Estroff criticizes the labelling of mentally ill people and explains how staff, medication, and overall negligence may contribute to peoples' mental illnesses. Nonetheless, Estroff did not adequately address the historical context of the labeling process, nor the political and economic aspects of considering people to be crazy, despite discussing how economic vulnerability has contributed to the patients' lives. To develop further understandings of Estroff's ethnography, in the following section I will examine how Estroff represented her research subjects, what

kinds of tales she used in her writing, and how her representations contribute to her overall arguments.

Estroff's Representations of People with Mental Illness

This section examines Estroff's texts by drawing on Van Maanen's definition of three tales, which I found very informative to understanding different kinds of ethnographic texts. Estroff's book is divided into three parts: in the first part, she discusses her methodology; in the second part, she elaborates on her ethnographic data in what she titles "ethnographic materials"; and in the third part, she explores "interpretations and conclusions". I used Van Maanen's notion of three kinds of tales to examine how Estroff represented her research subjects, including realist tales, confessional tales, and impressionist tales.

I begin with Van Maanen's (2011) notion of realist tales, as he argues that the most prevalent "ethnography writing is the realist account of culture" because it provides the "authenticity of the cultural representations conveyed by the text" (p. 45). In the realist tale, four kinds of conventions are prevalent. One is experiential authority, which proposes ethnographers' endeavors are absent in their descriptive narratives and representations of others. Through these representations the observers leave themselves "out of the ethnographic report" (p. 46), gain the status of objective and neutral, and claim that the representations are uncontaminated by researcher "bias, political goals, or moral judgments" (p. 47). The second convention is that this genre focuses on detailed forms of the everyday life of research subjects. Usually, "rites, habits, practices, and beliefs" of the community is represented in the realist tale. The third convention emphasizes native thoughts and world views (p. 50). Finally, in realist tales ethnographers often interpret Others' practices in such a way that shuts out opportunities to view the issue in alternative ways (p. 53). According to Van Maanen, while the realist tale focuses on the absence of the author in representations of Others, confessional tales focus on "personalized styles and self-observe mandate" (p.73). This tale has three conventions; first is "personalized authority", which recognizes how the researcher situates themselves in their research subject's lives, and explains their field experiences. This attracts readers by revealing humanist qualities, such as "personal biasness, character flaws, or bad habits", and expresses the author's self-identity (p. 75). The second convention is that unlike the realist tale's focus on the native point of view, this tale focuses on researcher's point of view, which usually describes "the new ways of seeing the world" (p. 77). The third convention is naturalness, in which the authors "normalize their presence coming on the scene, in the scene, and leaving the scene" (p. 79).

The third type of tale addressed by Van Maanen is the impressionist tale, which focuses on rare events or accidents. It also has three conventions, first being "fragmented knowledge", which focuses on "novelistic characters" and

is not read like an ethnography (p. 104). The second convention is "characterization", which means that "fieldworkers are certainly not indifferent to their own images in their tales of the field [and the authors] wish to be judge as charitably by their audience as they judge themselves" (p. 104). The final convention is "dramatic control", which addresses some memory but often "put[s] them in present tense to give the tale a 'you-are-there' feel" (p.105). In the first part of the book, Estroff uses mainly confessional tales; as her authority in the texts was present most of the time, she incorporates her point of views. The following are two examples of her confessional tales:

Usually, after report, I sought out various clients on the street, in coffee shops, or at a rooming house where several lived, or I met someone with whom I had made prior arrangements. After repeated disappointments when people failed to show up for prearranged meetings, I learned to come early, to stay late, and then to seek them out if they never appeared. [..] when I told them it really mattered to me, some seemed surprised and pleased but clearly unaccustomed to their friends' expecting that they would be reliable in such matters. (p. 28)

This was to spend four days with my father, who was in Chicago for a convention. This was only six weeks after the start of my research. Though I very much wanted to see him, I was reluctant to leave the field, and I felt a distance and strangeness with him and the new surroundings. I was shaken and resentful that we spent $ 30 for one mean when I had been living with people trying to eat on $4 for a whole day. (p. 4)

The above vignettes demonstrate that Estroff's authorship is present, particularly as she learns about and enters the field. She includes both her feelings as well as those of patients, from her point of view. Further, some human qualities are reflected through these tales. With these examples in mind, I found that confessional tales are significant in describing the methods of ethnography.

In the second part of the book, Estroff provides an in-depth description of the PACT program and patients' activities, including what kind of medications the patients took, how the medications affected their actions, their social and employment status, how PACT programs trained them to be prepared for jobs after the program, and how patients' viewed their craziness. In this section of the book, Estroff generally used realist tales, with occasional use of impressionist and confessional tales. A few brief examples of her realist tales are as follows:

The PACT philosophy and method are based on years of experiences, of trial and error, and of failure and success in treating persons with long-term, complex problems in living. The techniques used in the program seek to alter the clients' life patterns of repeated defeats and psychotic experiences which often result in hospitalization. (pp. 48, 49)

The three quarter way house was next door to the halfway house. It consisted of several two-bedrooms apartments, usually occupied by four women [..] Here, the women were responsible for all household chores [...] Clients reported mixed feelings about the YMCA[3]. Most agreed that the atmosphere was depressing if not oppressive for them [...] .(pp. 54, 55)

I just hate my job. I just hate it. It takes the mind of a seven-year-old to work there. It is boring. My supervisor is like a slave driver. I tried so many Civil Service jobs you wouldn't believe it. Sometimes two or three job interviews a week. But no one would hire me. No one. (p. 136)

Following Van Maanen's arguments about the realist tale, in the above quotations the author is absent, and primarily focused on describing the research setting. Further, patients' views (the native point of view) of the building environments, as well as their personal frustrations are represented in their own words. Utilizing this type of tale supports Estroff's argument that crazy people are isolated and vulnerable in society.

Estroff also uses impressionist tales in the second part of the book, primarily to describe her experiences of taking antipsychotic medication. The following is an example of her use of this type of tale:

2/21 Feel better today, not so tight and shaky. Head is bit foggy. [..] Feeling edgy and a bit as if on thin ice. Not able to sit down to write comfortably. Hands feel odd holding a pen. Begin double dose tomorrow and I am a bit skeptical, though I am back to not feeling the drug much. Others perceive thick speech and some muscular discoordination. Some minor cogwheeling. (p. 102)

This quotation is fragmented, and reads like a novel, rather than an ethnography (p. 104). Here, Estroff does not hide her own image in the representation, as it is key to expressing this part of the experience and field. While examining Estroff's tales, I found variations in her writing. However, I found the second section of the text to be descriptive and generally use empirical data, which reflects the belief that empirical data speaks for itself and authentically tells the stories of crazy people. Van Maanen explains this kind of representation as intentional on behalf of ethnographers', as they strive to make the ethnography more authentic to readers. However, it is Estroff's realist tales that clearly show her argument that psychiatric patients live miserable lives, and face many forms of discriminatory systems.

In the last section, Estroff has added her own interpretation, which is informative. In her discussions of the interpretation of data, Estroff addresses Geertz's notion of interpretation; following Geertz, she argues that

[3] Building name

ethnographers often begin with their own interpretation of their data. Here, ethnographers' ethos of the world have significant impacts on their interpretations. Ethnographers write background information and arrange their findings in such ways which define the finding as rituals and events of Other cultures; thus, what ethnographers address as findings and facts are the ethnographers' constructions (Estroff, 1981, pp.13,14). However, Estroff also discusses Douglas's notion of representation of Others. Douglas argues that what ethnographers write depends on their experiences, observations, and how they know the world. Ethnographers produce 'truths' within those findings about what works, which enables them to understand certain issues. Thus, ethnographers' knowledge is partial and situated (Estroff, 1981, p.14). While Estroff addresses the notion that ethnographers' knowledge is partial and situated, she does not address the conceptions in her representation of her research subjects, nor discuss in what ways her knowledge is situated and partial; rather, her representation seems to be claiming the originality of her research. Here, she explains how people who fail to conform to normative society are often excluded and labeled crazy; she further interprets that economic insecurity, medication systems, and continuous abuse and non-friendly attitudes are common conditions of these people, making their situations worse. Thus, according to Estroff, deinstitutionalization does not mean better lives for psychiatric patients.

Concluding Remarks

This paper examines Estroff's ethnography by situating her work in broader discussions of the worth and tensions of using certain ethnographic methods in producing knowledge. First, I examined Estroff's notion of the 'field', that is she did not go away to study other cultures, what ethnographers generally focus on. Instead, she focuses on the experiences of white people with mental illness in Western society. Estroff argues that she has contributed to the notion of 'field' within anthropology, yet she defended how the difficulties of her field were similar to that of the classical notion of the ethnographic field. She could not adequately define the value of researching at home and did not contest the division of home and away within anthropology. She could have justified her notion of field by arguing that anthropologists do not need to go away from home and explore the Other to prove the authenticity of ethnographic research. She could have argued that although the history of anthropology is connected to the representations of the Other and ethnographic methods are considered a basic means to learn the Other culture, this trend needs changing. Anthropologists' discursive practices of the representations of the Other and speaking for the Other have come under increasing contestation, and many have rejected the practices of representation for the Other as unethical, arrogant, and politically illegitimate (Alcoff, 2008, p.6). In the second section of this paper, I reflected upon Estroff's arguments

about knowledge production, where Estroff, like many other foundational positivist ethnographers, focused on experiences as the basis of knowledge production. To gain experience, Estroff took a medication used by her research subjects; while interesting, I do not think this is a useful strategy in research. Further, I argue that she could have contested the problems of the positivists approach focusing on experience, objectivity, and neutrality to capture the 'essence' of the research 'objects' because these traditions obfuscate the fact that the researcher's own views and epistemology significantly impact the research process and that positivist research methods are neither neutral nor value-free (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Haraway, 1988; Fine, 1992). Thirdly, I discuss how Estroff represented her research subjects by using different kinds of ethnographic tales. Here, Van Maanen in particular has provided in-depth information about different kind of tales. I am convinced of her uses of realist and impressionist tales in the representations of the researched people. Nonetheless, I do perceive that her uses of confessional tales will be enriched not by reflecting on her feeling during the research, such as how the research affected her relationship with her father and how she learned to meet her respondents more efficiently, but by explaining her power, privileges, political stances, bias, and limitations in the representation of the researched people. In other words, she could explain her critical look at every step of her studies, which would definitely contribute to the more accountable approach in ethnographic research.

References

Alcoff, L. M. (2008). The problem of speaking for others. In *Voice in qualitative inquiry* (pp. 129-148). Routledge.

Cerroni-Long, E. L. (1995). Introduction: Insider or Native Anthropology?. *NAPABulletin*, *16*(1), 1-16.

Christians, C. G. (2005). Ethics and politics in qualitative research. In N K Denzin and Y S Lincoln (Eds.), Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative (pp. 165-183). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N.K. (1998). The Art and politics of interpretation. In N K Denzin and Y S Lincoln

(Eds.), Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practices of qualitative

Research. In N.K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitativeresearch* (pp.1-33). London: Sage.

Doucet, A., & Mauthner, N. S. (2006). Feminist methodologies and epistemology. Handbook of 21st century sociology, 2, 36-43.

Doucet, A., & Mauthner, N. S. (2008). What can be known and how? Narrated subjects and the Listening Guide. Qualitative Research, 8(3), 399-409.

Estroff, S. E. (1981). Making it crazy: An ethnography of psychiatric clients in an American community. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fabian, J. (2001). Ethnographic Objectivity: From Rigor to Vigor. In *Anthropology with an Attitude: Critical Essays (pp.11-32)*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Fine, M. (1992), Passions, politics and power: Feminist research possibilities. In M. Fine (Eds.)

Disruptive voices: The possibilities of feminist research. Ann Arbor: University of

Michigan Press.

Geertz, C. (2001). Anti Anti-relativism. *In Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics* (pp. 42-67). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Gupta, A., & Ferguson, J. (1996). Discipline and Practice: 'The Field' as Site, Method, and Location in Anthropology. In Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science (pp.1-46). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Haraway, D. (1988). Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. Feminist studies, 14(3), 575-599.

Hannerz, U. (2006). Studying Down, Up Sideways, Through, Backwards, Away and at Home: Reflections on the Field Worries of an Expansive Discipline. In S. Coleman & P. Collins (Eds.). *Locating the Field: Space, Place and Context in Anthropology* (pp.23-40). Berg:

Oxford: Berg

Islam, A., & Biswas, T. (2015). Mental health and the health system in Bangladesh: Situation analysis of a neglected domain. *Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience, 3*(4), 57-62.

Malinowski, B. (1953). Introduction: The Subject, Method and Scope of the Inquiry. In *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea* (pp.1-25). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953 [1922].

Malacrida, C. (2015). *A special hell: Institutional life in Alberta's eugenic years*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Oakley, A. (1998). Gender, methodology and people's ways of knowing: Some problems with feminism and the paradigm debate in social science. *Sociology, 32*(4), 707-731.

Said, E. W. (1993). *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books.

Van Maanen, J. (2011). *Tales of the field: On writing ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.