



# An anthropologist in the streets: the challenges of researching urban youth.

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The need for a critical but also self-reflective approach.

Because, from my point of view, every space is a suitable place to raise one's voice and be heard.

This poster encompasses a series of reflections on the methodological and gender-related challenges that I, as a young researcher, encountered during the fieldwork of the case study "Young marijuana consumers in public spaces in Mexico City," coordinated by Ángela Margoth Bacca Mejía. One day, it will be transformed into an article.

"A privileged and scientifically necessary exercise, as it enables the merging of positions and spheres of the human that still appear irreconcilable to us." (Esteban, 2004)

The distance between the researcher and the object of research.

The need for a critical, as well as self-reflective, approach.

Let us briefly recall that the position we learn in universities is objectivism, which claims that science is always "neutral" in the face of human values and feelings. This belief is repeated in the classrooms where anthropology and other human disciplines are taught, but is this possible? Does nothing really affect us, or do we ignore what we feel in order to be better researchers?

I position myself from radical tenderness, where everything human touches me and I embrace it. I feel the streets and consider myself a part of them. I accept that aromas surround me, and I recognize myself as a human being who speaks of her emotions and experiences when it comes to being an anthropologist in a research group.

Reflective, observational, and self-observational skills

As an anthropologist, you not only observe others, but you also see yourself through their eyes and engage in constant interaction with the outside world, which includes the necessary task of introspection.

Field diary entry: "Today, I found myself in a situation where I had to fabricate having a boyfriend in order to deter unwanted advances." (September 5, 2018)

## UN CÓMODO RINCÓN DE IZTAPALAPA

la opción de movilidad más rápida y eficaz de la época. De ser una colonia lejana al oriente de la Ciudad de México. La opción de movilidad más rápida y eficaz de la época. De ser una colonia lejana al oriente de la Ciudad de México. La opción de movilidad más rápida y eficaz de la época. De ser una colonia lejana al oriente de la Ciudad de México.

We must acknowledge that ethnography not only regards individual bodies as tools for work and immersion in the world of others but also as indirect data collectors. To bring this to light, it is suggested that as researchers, we cease to solely focus "outwards" and also direct our gaze "inwards," becoming conscious of our own experiences. Reflective research must be grounded in an awareness of our bodies, and this can only occur if we recognize that the social relations and experiences we encounter as researchers shape our research questions, just as objectively as any other factors (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Haraway, 1988; Harding, 1990).

Where emotions are present, objectivity also diminishes.

The status accorded to objectivity.

Field diary entry: "I am a psychologist, and I should be capable of handling the pain that comes with witnessing human suffering." (April 24, 2019)

Field diary entry: "Every Wednesday, I experience stomachaches. I wonder if it is somehow connected to the hostile environment of the Salado. Am I in danger?" (January 29, 2020).

Recognize and explore the interplay between the individual, social, and political aspects of the body

There is an idea of anthropological objectivity in which the researcher is expected to disregard the specificities of everyday life, including their own emotional and bodily experiences.

I am confident that in the future, women researchers will create safe spaces within the academic sphere, where we can openly express, share, and build upon our experiences in the field and the stories that resonate with us. In the distance, we can already hear the walls of disciplinary boundaries crumbling, along with the unfounded illusion of scientific objectivism.

Field diary entry: "We were dancing in El Salado, all together, when a man grabbed me by the waist and refused to let go. Irene and Toño came to my aid, warning him not to mistreat me. Tavo was ready to confront him, but I felt it was necessary to avoid getting involved in such a situation, setting aside my discomfort because I believed it was important to maintain objectivity." (January 1, 2020)

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diaphragmatic respiration  
self-care



Become aware of and explicitly acknowledge the interconnectedness between one's own bodily experience and the research



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