

# *Ethnography Assignment*

## Creativity in Marketing

### Henri Weijo

“Creative people are very good at finding exactly what they need to see to take the next creative step forward.” (Zig Zag, p. 77).

The purpose of this exercise is to help you see problems and turn them into creative opportunities. You must first identify an appropriate *space* where you believe your problem is present, or has a major influence. Explain why this space is part of the problem.

Then, go to this space. Walk around the space, take pictures, make notes, and make sense of the space. Try to question your preconceptions and taken-for-granted assumptions (or in Martin’s words, increase your problem salience). Please don’t disturb the people there, try to be as unobtrusive as possible. It might be possible to briefly interview some people, however.

Important: try to work alone to avoid groupthink!

The deliverable is as follows. Individually, write me a minimum three-page (1.5 space, 1” margins) description of your findings and observations. Add pictures as appendices with appropriate descriptions. Be sure to gather consensus and collect your observation into themes (i.e., observations that were similar or from the same topic/area). Follow the chapter from Madjsberg and Rasmussen for advice and inspiration.

What were the common problems you found and which of these did you think had the most potential for creative opportunities? Explain why you feel this way. Are these problems or opportunities low-hanging fruits? Do they address an unmet need? Are they feasible? Feel free to add pictures. Or in Martin’s words again, move from salience to causalities, and maybe even architecture of a solution.

**The assignment is due in two weeks.** Please return via MyCourses, by midnight.

Attached are some questions to pique your noticing instincts (other side of the page). Know that you don’t need to answer them explicitly; they should simply facilitate your curiosity and help with building salience.

1. Why is the problem present in this space?
2. What is the expressed purpose of this space?
3. What are the “real” purposes of this space (i.e., things going on that are somewhat different from the expressed purpose, like hanging out or “playing around”, flirting?)?
4. What really works in this space, how does it function well?
5. What does not work in this space?
6. What is the spatial layout of this space? What/who is where and why? Should this layout be taken for granted?
7. What are you supposed to see as a consumer to operate in this space?
8. What are you not supposed to see (i.e. what is purposefully withheld from your sight, in the background)?
9. What are you supposed to do in this space as a consumer? How do you behave well here? What is a cool thing to do here?
10. What are you not supposed to do? How do you misbehave here?
11. What are the sequences of doings in this space? What needs to happen first before another thing can happen? When does the experience end?
12. Who influences this space? Who designed it? Who controls it?
13. What different social groups do you identify in this space? How do they interact?
14. What social hierarchies do you see between social groups here? How do they matter? Who is the coolest person in this space?
15. Where do you see inefficiency (waiting around, disorientation, lack of instructions, need of help, lack of access, “getting stumped”, lack of resources)?
16. How would a “foreigner” to this space see this space?