

# Anthropology observation



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

I began my observations in one of my favourite Coffee shops at 2. 55 PM and finished around 3. 45 on a Wednesday in late August. In order to ' activate' my role of participant observer, I ordered a caramel favoured coffee together with my friend, whom I had brought along to help me observe. I sat opposite the serving counter, where two female servants were now making my coffee, over in one of the corners so my observation wouldn't be too obvious. Lit candles were placed on all tables and background music was playing, creating a cosy and relaxed atmosphere.

Wondering whether this would affect my targets, I started to observe. The first persons I laid my eyes on, where the waitresses. One dressed in only black were the other was wearing more casual - but still working clothes. Maybe a way to show who was the one in charge? The black-dressed waitress would look very serious and concentrated whenever the other was not around, however, when they were standing together behind the serving counter, they would meme and dance along to the songs - the casual dressed one being the most energetic of the two of them.

She would encourage the black-dressed waitress to dance and meme along with her. Two girls entered the cafe, walked over to the table to my far left and sat down. The casual looking waitress would then hand them two menus, welcome them and walk away again. She was extremely friendly in her tone, looked them in their eyes and smiled - just how you would expect a waitress to behave like. The two girls, who had just walked in, were around 17 and up. They sat behind two older women (mid 20s - beginning of their 30s), who was chatting and drinking coffee.

Comparing the older 'friend couple' with the younger one was actually quite interesting, seeing how the two generations acted differently in public. The younger girls, were talking very quietly, explaining things with the use of their hands, leaning over the table towards each other and constantly showing pictures, texts etc. from their iPhones. You got the idea that they didn't want anyone to be a part or even hear a word of their conversation, although they chosen to sit down right next to the older women.

The older ones were completely different - they were talking and laughing quite loudly (but not so that it would be considered rude), leaning away from each other on their chairs, which made them look relaxed and comfortable. Despite their difference in behaviour, they did in fact have one thing in common - the iPhone using while explaining things. It was constantly on the table in front of them and frequently put in use. While observing the two 'couples', a man all of a sudden walked into the coffee shop, he was wearing a puzzled look, a fine looking suit and his arms were dangling lifeless next to his body.

His facial expression and hair, which were messy, could easily have fit the homeless guy, who sat outside the cafe. However the suit was too expensive looking to. He walked straight past me, up the stair to the toilet and 10-15 minutes later walked down again, still looking puzzle and confused, straight through the shop and out again. I'm still wondering whether he was drunk or actually was homeless. The last persons I observed were rather interesting. It was a boy and a girl, in the beginning of the 20s, who entered the shop walking quietly next to each other.

As soon as they had sat down, the girl stood up and left for the toilets without saying a word to the boy. It was hard to tell whether they were lovers, friend or maybe siblings. After 5-10 minutes she returned, sat down and started to text on her phone. The boy was at that point looking around in the cafe. First at the girls in the opposite corner and then on me a couple of times, which got quite awkward, so in the end I had to stop so it wouldn't get to obvious that I was observing him.

After five minutes I began to observe them again and noticed that they were now talking quietly with each other. The girl look so reserved towards the boy, that I was now considering them maybe being ex-lovers. The reserved looking girl glanced up at me as I was leaving, giving me a very cold look. The causal looking waitress was the one whom I paid to. As the machine wasn't cooperating, she laughed and made jokes about it - being extremely friendly and open towards me. And as I left she said goodbye just as she had done to all the other costumers.