



## Working the Field: Accounts from French Louisiana

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This book presents accounts of fieldwork conducted in French Louisiana by anthropologists and folklorists between the 1970s and 2000 and looks at the personal, ethical, political, and scientific issues researchers need to confront and resolve when they attempt to explain a modern complex culture by using the traditional tools and methods of anthropology, participant observation, and interviews.

The study casts a critical look at the core anthropological concepts of field, informants, and knowledge. In line with the ongoing reassessment of these concepts, it proposes that the field, identities, and knowledge acquired through research are not set, given entities but rather are a matter of construction. It shows how the personal profiles of the researchers (native or outsider, activist or academic, man or woman, black or white) contribute to frame the research. It illustrates the shifting of these identities during and after the research in response to personal, relational, and political circumstances. It also considers the application of the knowledge derived from research in the fields of tourism, cultural activism, and language policy in the context of the cultural renaissance experienced by Cajuns and Creoles over the past decades.

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