



## Talking about Autoethnography and Narratives: An Interview with Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner\*

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Prof. Serpil Aygün Cengiz, a faculty member at the Department of Folklore in the Faculty of Language and History and Geography at Ankara University, hosted Prof. Dr. Carolyn Ellis and Prof. Dr. Arthur Bochner as guest speakers on June 13, 2022, in the virtual “Research Methods” course she taught in the 2021-2022 spring semester in the graduate program. Dilek İşler Hayırlı, a doctoral student in the program, invited the founders of autoethnography, these two esteemed academics, to the class, and during the lesson. Gülgün Şereföğlü, who graduated from the master’s program in the Department of Folklore, and Dilek İşler Hayırlı acted as their translators. Bülent Ayyıldız transcribed the video recording of the class. After Serpil Aygün Cengiz reviewed the text, Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner edited the text, enriching it in the process.

Carolyn Ellis is Distinguished University Professor Emerita at the University of South Florida. She has established an international reputation for her contributions

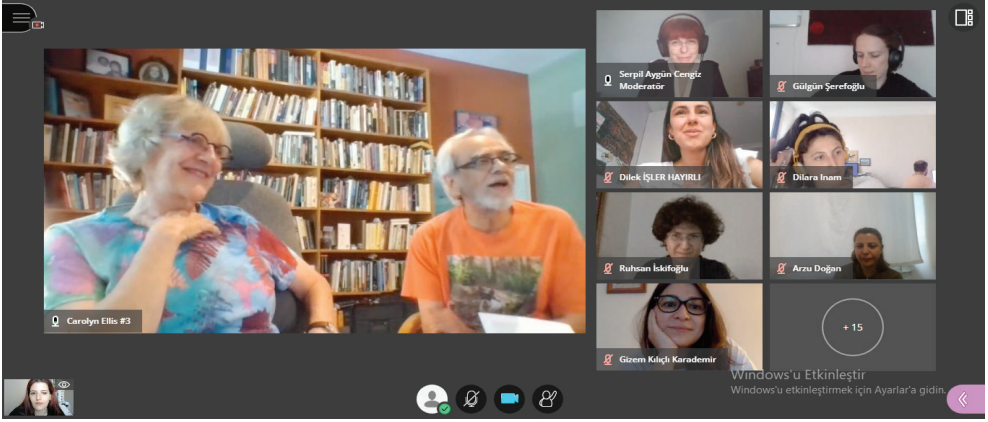
\* The text you are currently reading consists of the conversations that took place in a graduate-level class attended by Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner, presented as they were. Therefore, it is predominantly in English. However, Turkish translations by Gülgün Şereföğlü and Dilek İşler Hayırlı are also included in the text in italics.

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to autoethnography and the narrative study of human life. Dr. Ellis has published eight monographs, seven edited books, and more than 150 articles and chapters. She has edited two book series and presented keynote addresses and workshops in seventeen countries. Her books include *Final Negotiations: A Story of Love, Loss, and Chronic Illness Expanded and Revised Edition*, *Revision: Autoethnographic Reflections on Life and Work, Revised Classic Edition*, and, most recently, the *Handbook of Autoethnography* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., with T. Adams and S. Holman Jones). Her awards include the Charles H. Woolbert Research Award and the Distinguished Scholar Award, both from the National Communication Association (NCA); The Legacy Lifetime Award and best book and article awards from NCA's Ethnography Division; a Lifetime Achievement Award in Qualitative Inquiry, and two best book awards from the International Center for Qualitative Inquiry at the University of Illinois; a Lifetime Achievement Award from The International Conference of Autoethnography in the UK; two Goodall and Trujillo best books Awards for Narrative Ethnography; McKnight Foundation's Most Valuable Doctoral Mentor Award; and The Honorary Distinction for special merits in the development of Autoethnography and Narrative Methods from Transdisciplinary Network of Qualitative Researchers (TSBJ) in Poland.

Arthur Bochner is Distinguished University Professor Emeritus at the University of South Florida. He has published more than 150 articles and book chapters as well as two award winning books, *Coming to Narrative: A Personal History of Paradigm Change in the Human Sciences* (AltaMira Press/Routledge, 2014) and (with Carolyn Ellis) *Evocative Autoethnography: Writing Lives and Telling Stories* (Routledge, 2016). He is a Distinguished Scholar of the National Communication Association (NCA) and served as President of NCA in 2007. He has received lifetime achievement awards from the International Association of Qualitative Inquiry and the Ethnography Division of NCA. His endowed awards for his scholarship and teaching include NCA's Charles Woolbert Award, Bernard J. Brommel Award for pioneering research in family communication, Ohio University's Elizabeth Andersch Award for sustained contributions to Speech Communication Education and Research over one's entire career, the Samuel Becker Distinguished Service Award, the McKnight Foundation's William R. Jones Most Valuable Doctoral Mentor Award for mentoring minority doctoral students, the Goodall and Trujillo Award for Narrative Ethnography, and The Honorary Distinction for special merits in the development of Autoethnography and Narrative Methods from the Coordinating Council of the Transdisciplinary Network of Qualitative Researchers (TSBJ) in Poland.



Screenshot by Budem Çağıl Büyükpoyraz

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Hi again, Professor Carolyn Ellis and Professor Arthur Bochner. Welcome to our “Research Methods” graduate course. It’s really a great honor to welcome you here. Thank you. I am the lecturer of the “Research Methods” course. This course is one of the graduate courses of Folklore Department of Ankara University. Today you see at the right side of the screen our participants’ names. You can see some of the participants are present. Here are graduate students and some are guests. And I thank you again very much for accepting our invitation. Everybody here cannot speak in English. So today two people will help with the translation. Dilek and Gülgün. You know Dilek very well because she wrote e-mails to you and she was very brave about inviting you to our meeting. I also thank her for bringing us together. I’m sure she would like to say a few words to you from the screen.

**Dilek İşler Hayırlı:** I’m so excited, so I’m not sure whether I will be able to speak English or not. I’m very happy to see you and thanks a lot for accepting our invitation. I was really happy when you wrote me “Of course, we can do that”. Welcome and I’m very happy to see both of you here.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Thank you so much. We are happy to be here and so glad to have connected. If participants want to write anything on chat, that will be fine. Thank you.

**Dilek İşler Hayırlı:** Thank you.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you. Gülgün will translate your speech into Turkish. Last year we wrote a book about the anthropology of Renato Rosaldo. I think Dilek sent you our e-book. Gülgün was the translator of our meeting with Rosaldo. So I think she would like to say a few words to you also.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Okay.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Hello. It is a great honor to meet you. Today I will try to help with the interpreting of your speeches. It will be a consecutive one, so I hope I will do it in a correct and accurate way. It’s great to witness this meeting. Thank you for joining us. That’s all. Thank you.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Thank you. Do you want us to pause or just speak slowly?

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Actually, maybe you can pause when you are replying to the questions. Maybe after eight or ten sentences, that would be great. But if it would make you uncomfortable, I can wait until the end of your reply.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Okay. I can stop after a paragraph and then I should wait for you to translate, right?

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Yes.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Okay. So I will try to remember, but you should remind me if I get caught up and keep going.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Okay. Thank you very much.

**Carolyn Ellis:** You just come on and let me know what I need to do at any point in time. Okay?

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Okay. If I have some obstacles, I will cut and say it for sure. Thank you.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you Gülgün. Dear Prof. Ellis and Dear Prof. Bochner, I will now try to make a little introduction to our meeting. Now, Allen Shelton, in his article “Foucault’s Madonna: The Secret Life of Carolyn Ellis”, writes this very first sentence in the beginning of the article: “I first met Carolyn Ellis over the phone. This was good because I was scared to death of her”. This is the very first sentence of the writing of Shelton. We are scared to death of you at the moment. I’m kidding. But I cannot tell you how excited we are all, really. Thanks a lot again for accepting Dilek’s invitation.

Now, this group started reading about autoethnography last fall semester. We have been fully focused on autoethnography since September 2021. Unfortunately, there are few Turkish texts about autoethnography, so naturally, most of the publications we have read are in English. Last semester, we read your book, *The Ethnographic I*. This semester we read your, Adams’ and Holman Jones’s book *Autoethnography*. We also read some of your articles, such as: “Heartful Autoethnography”, “With Mother/With Child: A True Story”, “Grave Tending: With Mom at the Cemetery”, “Good Bread, Bad Bread: Survival and Sacrifice During the Holocaust”, “Telling Secrets, Revealing Lives: Relational Ethics in Research With Intimate Others”, and “The Other Side of the Fence: Seeing Black and White in a Small Southern Town”. We also watched some of your videos on YouTube. Dilek and I attended the International Symposium on Autoethnography and Narrative in 2022.

We also read some articles of Professor Arthur Bochner as well. For example, we read “Love Survives”, “Heart of the Matter: A Mini-Manifesto for Autoethnography”, “Surviving Autoethnography”, and “Criteria against Ourselves”. Also, we read some other articles of other autoethnographers. Now, my question is what did I learn from your texts, you and Professor Bochner? For me, you take ethnography and put it into personal experience. Your texts, all of them, made a revolution in my mind in many ways. For example, in your article “Good Bread, Bad Bread”, you wrote your article with your source person. This article

was the very first article I read in which the source person is also the writer. In mainstream ethnography, we generally do not see something like this. This is a huge thing. This is not something just technical, simple, something like that. Doing this for me requires a very different world view, or another issue is for me. For me, life is very complex and all the meanings are uncertain. And I always find myself thinking in another way. I can never be sure about an issue. I can never feel myself at home, but in mainstream social sciences, to be a person like me is a great sin. When I read your joint article about “which way to turn,” it affected me so much really. I found out being like me is very normal in social sciences. I really feel good now while I’m trying to write ethnographic articles. Thanks to your texts.

Today, the participants of our group will be very happy to ask you questions about all these topics until you say we are fired. Now, the first question is about your becoming autoethnographers from me. We all know more or less how you and Professor Bochner began to write autoethnographic texts. We read about your stories but it will be great to hear your own story from you now in our course. How did you both become autoethnographers?

**Carolyn Ellis:** Okay, well, we love to answer that question.

I know you know some of this, so I will speak briefly, and then we will ask Art to talk a little bit about his history. He also has prepared a few remarks on the broader history of autoethnography, if you would like to hear that, and then we can move on.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Sure. Thank you.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Is the translator okay for me to stop here?

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** She will translate your words to Turkish after your talk.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Okay. Let me take you back to 1981. Well, actually let’s go back just a little farther. I went to graduate school in New York in 1974, and I very much was an ethnographer, and I had, as an undergraduate, done a study of isolated fishing communities. I know some of you know about that, because you sent a question about my study, entitled *Fisher Folk*. When I went to graduate school to get a PhD in sociology, I continued doing the ethnographic study of the fisher folk in the Chesapeake Bay. I published that book, and there was some controversy about what I wrote there, which we can get into later, if you would like.

But let me take you now up to 1981, when I get my first job in a sociology department at University of South Florida. An important event occurred in January 1982, when my brother was killed in a commercial airplane crash coming to visit me in Tampa. That had a huge impact on me. At the same time, my partner had a terminal illness. He was older than I was, and he had emphysema. So, my life suddenly was one of loss and grief and sadness.

I felt like I wanted to use my sociology to help understand this and help understand loss and grief in general. Since I was an ethnographer, I started keeping notes on my experiences, how I felt about losing my brother, how I felt each day as I dealt with whatever emergency was happening with my partner. I felt that what I was writing was some of the best sociology I had ever written, even though it didn’t look like the sociology I had been taught to do. I also felt it was very therapeutic for me to do this kind of writing. It helped me to get what happened on the page. It felt like a comfortable, normal thing to do, to be writing about it, and it shielded me, for

a moment, from the chaos I was living. Then I felt like I could understand more what was going on. I could get through all the confusion and figure out, okay, events are recorded, now I can better organize my life and think about what I need to do first. What do I need to do after that? So, writing down what happened became a very therapeutic exercise for me, and I felt like it was something very meaningful. I knew loss would be a part of my life forever, and that it was a part of everybody else's life. And so, I thought, how do we cope with this? Is there any way that might help us cope? I wanted to share my experience with other people.

After a lot of trial-and-error thinking about doing a more traditional study, such as using control groups, where some would do storytelling and some would try other activities to help the grieving process, I decided I just wanted to write my story. I wanted to write it in a way to bring people into the experience, so they can feel some of what I felt, and they can feel their own experiences. They can see the ways in which I didn't cope well, in addition to the ways I did well. They can see the worst of loss as well as the beauty of attachment. So that became my goal. Of course, I had been trained to write as a sociologist, so I didn't have any education in how to write in this kind of literary way that would evoke people to enter my experience. But I wanted to provide companionship for those who were going through this kind of experience and I did not think I could do that through traditional sociological writing. Providing companionship seemed to me to be really important and meaningful and something that I could offer the world.

So, I changed my whole orientation towards sociology as not just a way of representing life, but a way of contributing to the best life that we could live, to helping others, to writing in a way that was therapeutic for not only me, but for people who might read it and other people who were going through this kind of experience. I wanted to use my stories to open up conversation with other people so that they would then tell their stories. That's the way we learn in everyday life, right? We have conversations, we tell about our lives, people tell back about their lives, and we learn from each other. I had always been taught that you don't say therapy and sociology in the same sentence. That's not what sociology is all about. I rebelled against this idea at that point, and I said, I do not want to write anything that I don't perceive to be helpful to me, to readers, and to the people that I'm writing about.

In terms of chronicling significant events in my life that led to my developing autoethnography, I lost my brother in 1982, then I lost my partner Gene in 1985, and then I met Art in January 1990. Up to meeting Art, I felt like I was working as a loner. I was trying to write this kind of sociology in a literary way that was evocative, that invited people into the experience, that really focused on emotionality, the emotionality of the experience, and the emotionality of the researcher as well. When I met Art, he was on the same page as I was, and we had synergy: the whole of us together was greater than the two of us working individually. We just took off from there with each other's support.

We edited collections, we held conferences, we wrote papers, we came up with new methods. I wrote *The Ethnographic I*, which some of you have read, and it was a methods book, but I wrote it as a novel. I thought, why do methods have to be boring? Then I wrote a



book called *Revision*, which, instead of presenting life as a static picture, I talked about writing what happened more like a video, to show how we might change in the process. In *Revision*, I went back and looked at stories I had written about my brother, my partner, and my mother. And I looked at them from my perspective now, some 20 years later, and how I might change how I told the story, given everything that had happened between then and now.

One more thing. Our latest book that Art and I did together was *Evocative Autoethnography*, and it was based on a workshop that we had given on Autoethnography.

I do want to say that when we started, we had no idea that autoethnography would take off like it has. We have a book series, and we have over 50 books in our *Writing Lives* series. There's an autoethnography journal and an autoethnography conference, which I hope all of you will come to in January. It is online, and the registration fee is very low. For \$50, you can go to all the workshops and all the presentations. We hope that you will submit something. I can write information about that to Dilek, if you would like. I hope that all of you can come and be part of that, because you will love it. When we began this work, there were hardly any entries in Google Scholar on autoethnography, and now there are more than 70,000 entries on autoethnography and there are some single works that have more than 7000 citations. I'm going to stop here with my personal narrative and let Art say a few words about his.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** first, if Gülgün translates all the things you said and after that if we listen to Prof. Bochner, I don't know, I will ask Gülgün. Gülgün what do you think?

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu:** That would be great if I may.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Big job, you have.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Şöyle, hemen başlayayım cevapla. Aslında buna cevap vermek, en çok sevdiğim şeylerden biri, bu hikayeyi anlatmak. Ben biraz kendi hikayemi anlattıktan sonra Arthur da otoetnografinin tarihine, geçmişine ilişkin birkaç şey söylemek istiyor; ama önce ben kendi hikayemle başlayayım. Öncelikle, Hepinize selamlar gönderiyorum. Bu akşam buraya davet ettiğiniz için teşekkür ederek başlıyorum Aslında oto etnografi ye başlamamın geçmişi 1981 yılına kadar gidiyor diyebiliriz. 1974 yılında New York'ta lisanstan mezun olmuşum. ve daha sonra da doktoramı tamamladım sosyolojide. Etnografik çalışmalar yürütüyordum ve ilk kitabım olan Fisher Folk kitabını yazdım. Bu kitabı yayımladıktan sonra da belli başlı itirazlar karşıt düşünceler yükselmeye başladı. Bunlar da daha sonraki çalışmalarına başlamadan önce bana ulaşmıştı bu karşıt düşünceler. 1981'de, ilk kez sosyoloji bölümünde işe başladım ve 1982 yılında da maalesef erkek kardeşim bir uçak kazası sonucunda hayatını kaybetti beni ziyarete gelirken. Ardından da partnerimin çok büyük, önemli bir hastalığını öğrendik. Yaşı benden epeyce ileriye ve anfizem rahatsızlığı vardı. Bu benim çok üzgün ve yalnız hissettiğim bir dönemdi ve partnerimi de kaybettikten sonra sosyolojiyi bu kayıp ve yası anlamının bir yolu olarak kullanmak istedim. Öyle kullanmayı düşündüm ve daha sonra hem erkek kardeşim hem de partnerimin hakkında çeşitli notlar ve günlükler yazmaya başladı, bunları yazarken gördüm ki sosyolojiyle ilgili yazdığım en iyi metinler bunlardı, bugüne kadar. Bu benim için bir terapi gibiydi aslında. Bunu yazdıkça daha rahatlamış hissediyordum, daha normalmiş gibi, durumum normalmiş

gibi hissetmeye başlamıştım. Bunun hakkında konuşmak, bunun hakkında yazmak ne olup bittiğini anlamama yardımcı oluyordu ve ne yapmam gerektiğini anlamak konusunda soruma bir cevap oluyordu, bir terapi gibiydi. Bunun bir terapi gibi olduğunu keşfettikten sonra bunları yazarken insanların bu tür yaz ve acı durumlarıyla nasıl baş edeceklerini görmeleri, öğrenmeleri için bu deneyimleri diğer insanlarla da paylaşmak istedim. Bunun üstesinden gelmenin nasıl bir şey olduğunu anlatmak istedim. Sadece terapiye gitmekle kalmadım; kontrol gruplarına katıldım; hikayemi anlattım; yazdım; çeşitli gruplarla bir araya geldim ve sadece benimkini anlatmak değil, onlarınkini de duymak ve onlarınkini de hissetmemenin gerekli olduğunu anladım. Yani kaybetmek ne kadar üzücü ve zorsa, birisine bağlanmak da o kadar güzel ve önemliydi ve hayat her ikisini de getiriyordu. Sosyoloji eğitiminin içinde bu yoktu aslında. Bu tarzda bir yazma biçimi, böyle bir şeyi anlatmak yoktu. Ben de bunu kendime de bir yenilik olarak yapmış oldum. İnsanlara, yazdıkça kendi hikayemi açtım, onlarınkini dinledim ve sosyolojinin ya da yazdığım bu şeyin diğer insanlara da faydalı, bunu okuyan, yaşamış, deneyimlemiş olan kişilere faydalı olabileceğini gördüm. Dediğim gibi 1982’de erkek kardeşimi kaybettim, 1985’te de partnerimi. Sonra da 1990’da Arthur’la tanıştım. Gördüm ki aslında, akademik anlamda ve olaylara, hayata bakış açısında tam da aynı noktada duruyorduk aslında. İkimiz ayrı ayrı çalışmaktansa bir araya geldiğimizde, bakış açımızla, çalışmalarımızla, yaptıklarımızla, birlikteyken çok daha harikaydık, çok daha verimliydik, çok daha fazla şey ortaya koyabiliyorduk. Çünkü Arthur’un duygusallığı, insanları kendi dünyasına, kendi bakış açısına yaklaştırma yeteneğinin çok önemli olduğunu gördüm, çünkü bazen akademik perspektiften bakınca hayatı böyle statik bir resim gibi, durağan bir şey gibi bazen resmetme eğiliminde oluyoruz. Ama hikayelerimizi anlattıkça, daha duygusal bir perspektiften baktıkça, anlıyoruz ki aslında hayat çok daha farklı bir şey, çok daha başka bir şey. Ben de bütün bunları yaşadığım o günlerden bu günlere geçen yirmiden fazla yılın sonunda bu noktaya gelmiş oldum. Hemen bu anlattıklarımı ek olarak yeni bir kitabım çıkıyor, Evocative Autoethnography diye. Yani bunu nasıl çevirebiliriz, bilemiyorum, belki “çağrıştıran”, “anımsatan” diye...

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** “Çağrıştııcı” ya da “çağrışım sal”.

**Gülgün Şeref oğlu Elverir:** “Çağrıştııcı” değil mi? Hıhım böyle bir yeni kitap çalışmam var. Aynı zamanda da önümüzdeki yıl Ocak ayında bir online konferans, bir konuşma serisi gerçekleştireceğiz. Umuyorum ki gelebilirsiniz. 50 dolar gibi bir ücreti var, katılabileceğinizi umuyorum. Tüm bu ücret karşılığında giriş yaptığınızda konferansa, tüm konuşmalara, tüm oturumlara katılabiliyorsunuz ve onlarla ilgili materyalleri edinebiliyorsunuz. Bugün geldiğimiz noktada sevinerek söyleyebilirim ki Google Scholar’da araştırma yaptığımız zaman, eskiden hemen hemen hiçbir şey bulamıyordunuz ama şu anda 70.000’den fazla başlık var, giriş var. Bunu da bugün sevinerek söyleyebilirim sizlere.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Teşekkürler Gülgün. How did Turkish sound to you Prof. Ellis and Bochner?

**Carolyn Ellis:** I wish I could speak it so you didn’t have to translate it. So sorry.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you. You are very kind. We are very excited to hear from



Professor Bochner about your personal story, and about the history of autoethnography, perhaps a little bit.

**Arthur Bochner:** Well, Carolyn has already told you probably the most important parts of our coming together in 1990. However, she didn't really tell it as a story. The story began when I picked up a copy of the university newspaper called *The Oracle* at the University of South Florida and noticed that there was a professor of sociology who was going to present a talk in the College of Business, of all places. A sociologist talking in business about work she was doing on the methodology of introspection applied to social science inquiry. My department, the Department of Communication, had just begun a new PhD program, which I had designed with colleagues. It would be a different kind of a PhD program from any that existed across the United States. It would be an entirely qualitative research program, not a quantitative one. It would not require quantitative methods, and it would focus on storytelling, interpretive social science, and performance arts. So, all those things were combined into a new program.

Thus, when I saw introspection, I was very interested in that because I knew something about the history of introspection in psychology. I took four graduate students by the arms and said, "come with me. We're going to go over and listen to this sociologist". Now, Carolyn and I had been on the same campus for six years, but we had never met each other. I sat in the back of the room, and I listened to this talk. I don't have time to tell the whole story here, of course, this morning. That would take more than the time that's been allotted for your course. But I did tell the story of this in 2014, in a book I published, which is titled *Coming to Narrative: A Personal History of Paradigm Change in the Human Sciences*. The book focuses on my life as an academic over about 40 years. Chapter eleven is titled "A Simple Twist of Fate". This is the story of the fateful day in which I attended Carolyn's talk in the College of Business. The chapter continues with conversations that we were having during that period of time that ultimately led three or four years later to the beginning of our work on autoethnography. I highly recommend that if you want the longer story, you can get it there as well. Or in the book Carolyn mentioned, entitled *Evocative Autoethnography*.

But to make a long story short, we got together at that time. And we were talking endlessly, continuously with each other because we had never been so inspired by another colleague as we were with each other. We were falling in love and we were falling in love with each other's projects as well. She was giving me pieces that she had written and not yet published, and I was giving her articles I had published. We found that we had so much in common even though we came from two different disciplines. Autoethnography at that time didn't have a real existence or following within the human sciences. I like to refer to the kind of work it represents as "the thing that could not be named". At first we were talking about self-narratives, then first person accounts. We were talking about the way in which we could tell our own stories as researchers. We both agreed that what was left out of social science was the experience of the observer. Even if you weren't telling your own story, if you were telling other people's stories, much like Carolyn has told the story of Jerry Rawicki in her Holocaust research, you were there as a human being with feelings, with thoughts, with ideas.

What was very likely, as even the famous physicist Heisenberg said, “the observer is attached to what is observed. The two cannot be completely separated”.

We were exploring these ideas together. I was commenting on her manuscript that became *Final Negotiations*, which, in my view, is the first book-length autoethnography in the human sciences though we didn’t call it autoethnography at the time it was published. Carolyn had read some works by other people who had used that term. There was only a handful of people who had ever used the term autoethnography and they were using it in a very different way. They meant by autoethnography what we today mean when we use the term ‘indigenous ethnography’. Indigenous ethnography is, for example, a Turkish ethnographer writing about life lived by native people in Turkey. So that’s what these scholars meant by autoethnography. Karl Heider and David Hayano had used this term, but they dismissed personal experience. They weren’t interested in that. Norman Denzin had used it once in a footnote, and Carolyn had used it once in *Final Negotiations*.

But ultimately we came to the term autoethnography as an umbrella for the work we were doing. We first used it in a self-conscious way in our edited collection, in 1996, *Composing Ethnography*. That was a very important book because we searched for other sociologists, communication scholars, social psychologists, or any others, whose work fit the kind of paradigm that we were developing as autoethnography. That book had three parts to it: autoethnography, sociopoetics and reflexive ethnography. We were gradually moving toward autoethnography, and then in the introduction to that book, we had a long conversation with each other about what we were doing and why we were doing it. Immediately we started getting numerous requests from people, especially women in different cultures, minority individuals, and others who were excited about the possibility of writing about their own experience in a systematic, ethnographic way. We began not only with that volume, but also at the same time with a special issue of a journal, *Contemporary Ethnography*, which I think you mentioned. I’m also glad you mentioned the piece on “Which way to turn,” which was connected to that project, because very few people even know about that piece.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** It is my favorite.

**Arthur Bochner:** Yes, we invited people to contribute to an edited volume at that time and we started getting flooded with submissions. We had no idea that we had touched a nerve. And that nerve worked in two ways. The nerve worked for many people who felt left out, that their experience was completely left out of the human sciences, not discussed, as if it were a secret. And there was so much work that was shrouded in secrecy, that couldn’t get published. We were very excited about that, but there were also traditional social scientists who had been trained in the orthodox mainstream parts of sociology, anthropology, psychology, social psychology and all those disciplines. They were defensive. They resisted. “This won’t be scientific; this won’t be systematic. We can’t do this. It’s too subjective,” they said. It’s all these things. OK? And we understood that they were responding from their own experience, which is how they were trained, this is how they understood social science. They were protective, not wanting something new under the sun to take hold.

**Carolyn Ellis:** One person said to me once, if we allow what you do to be, sociology will no longer exist. I mean, that's how it seemed to be to a number of people.

**Arthur Bochner:** But we also had many people who were supportive.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Why do you think they were so afraid of this new ethnography?

**Arthur Bochner:** There was a famous psychotherapist I admired named Jay Haley. One of the things I learned from him and from his writings--and I actually got to know him a little bit when I was in Philadelphia--was the first law of human relations. He liked to say, "whenever change is attempted, it is resisted". We also know this from research on social movements and from cultural change in societies. People resist change because they want something predictable. They fear the unknown and uncertain. And that's what social science was built on, the idea of prediction and control.

**Carolyn Ellis:** And on "distance". We are supposed to be objective observers. Sociology and other social science disciplines so much wanted to be considered sciences, like physics and chemistry. Our work was threatening to that desire, that goal. If it's subjective and subjectivity and emotionality play such a part in human behavior and our research, then how can we ever be objective? And if we acknowledge that the researcher really can never be completely objective, and not only acknowledge that, but say there's something to be learned from that subjectivity, then what we do violates the whole idea of social science being an objective science. I also think there are a lot of people who think they can't do autoethnography and who really aren't very good at it. So, they wanted what they did and what they were good at to be the accepted norm, not this new stuff, where they would have to learn how to write in an evocative way and do things that they had never thought about doing and didn't do very well. There are more reasons for the rejection of autoethnography, but I think those are some of the reasons the rejection was so strong.

**Arthur Bochner:** Does that make sense to you?

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Yes, of course. In Turkey, we experience almost the same things. In Turkey, the mainstream in social sciences is really strong, I guess stronger than in your country. It's very difficult here to defend autoethnography. Most of the academicians here say that it is not social science, it is not science. You are doing something close to literature, et cetera.

**Arthur Bochner:** Well, I'm glad you brought that up because one of the things that influenced me very much in the 1980s was something called the narrative turn. This was very big in the humanities as well as the social sciences where people were saying, "vocabularies matter". The stories we tell that define what we are doing matter. There was one philosopher in particular who I was quite intrigued by. His name was Richard Rorty. He was writing about the importance of vocabularies and also talking about the history of disciplines. We have these disciplines: sociology, anthropology, psychology, and communication, for example, and these disciplines become institutionalized. We begin to imagine that they were somehow ordained from the heavens. But they weren't ordained from the heavens. They were created by human beings and the separations between the disciplines turned out to be very arbitrary. His work created an opening in the 1980s for thinking differently about disciplines.

The cognitive psychologists were very into scientific methods. A famous cognitive psychologist named Jerome Bruner wrote a very important book in 1990, entitled *Acts of Meaning*, published by Harvard University Press. In it he opened up the idea that the division between the disciplines was arbitrary and there was no reason that the human sciences couldn't be more human.

What happened in the history of social sciences? As Carolyn was suggesting, we got more and more distanced, more and more separated. Thus, the idea we had, as did others such as Norman Denzin and Laurel Richardson, was that the human sciences needed to become more human. In one of Richardson's pieces, she admitted, "I don't finish reading half of what I start to read in the social sciences" because they are boring. They are distancing, and too often pretty simple minded or trivial, about things that we already obviously know." And they don't deal with human experience. Both Denzin and Richardson were instrumental in the movement that we were part of.

**Carolyn Ellis:** I always like to talk with my students about the goals of what we do. I have a chart, in fact. It's in the back of the *Ethnographic I*. It looks at ethnography that is being done in terms of what the researchers' goals are. So, the chart goes from, on the left, sociology or social science as literary and as close to humanities, over to the right where ethnography is closer to science. You have to locate yourself on that continuum, and wherever you locate yourself, then there are different rules, different goals, different ways of writing, and so forth. I often use the ideas in this chart when someone is really threatened by what we're doing. Or they say, "well, this is just literature, it's not social science". No, no, look at where the author positions him or herself. I think you as an author owe it to your audience to position yourself and say, "this is the mode I'm writing out of, and so this is the way that it should be judged". If I am working more from a literary perspective, that's not going to be judged in the same way that an ethnography that's trying to be more objective and scientific would then be judged. I don't know if that's helpful or not. We should probably let the translator translate.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Gülgün, are you okay?

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Yes, that's great to hear all of this, but sometimes I'm just forgetting that I'm here to interpret. But just looking at the screen and listening what is happening there, I can do it. Okay. A bit longer than expected, but it will be okay. From the very beginning. Şimdi bu hikayenin kendi açısından olan kısmını anlatarak başlamıştı Arthur. En önemli kısımlar aslında 1992'de ortaya çıktı ama çok da anlatmadı Carolyn dedi. Ben anlatayım dedi size hikayeyi. Kuzey Florida'da bir üniversitenin gazetesinde görmüştüm, "Sosyoloji bölümünden Prof. Ellis İşletme Fakültesinde bir konuşma yapacak." Kendi çalışmaları, metodolojisi, sosyal bilimler üzerine bir konuşma yapacak, tabii bu işletme fakültesi için biraz değişik bir program, konuşma, alışıl gelmedik bir şey. Ben de o sırada iletişim bölümünde yeni bir doktora programına girmiştım. Bu da çok değişikti, yani daha önce Amerika'da hiç yapılmamış bir şey. Herhangi bir kalitatif araştırma hedeflenmiyor metot olarak. Genellikle hikaye anlatıcılığın, uygulamaya yönelik bir programdı. Ben de bu konuşma ilanını gazetede görünce dört arkadaşımı daha alıp "Hadi gelin gidelim

sosyolojide ne var ne yok, ne anlatılacak dinleyelim” dedim ve gittik. O güne kadar altı yıldır aynı üniversitede, aynı kampüsteymişiz ama birbirimizi hiç görmemiştik. Konuşmaya gittim, odanın en arkasında oturdum, dinledim. Bu şekilde tanıştık diyeyim. Çünkü çok uzun bir hikaye. Bunu şimdi burada sizin dersinizin kapsamında anlatamam, hani çok uzun, çok vaktinizi almış olurum. Bu hikayeyi Coming to Narrative kitabımda anlatıyorum. Bu kitapta ben kendi hayatımı anlattım bir akademisyen olarak. Yaklaşık 40 yıldan daha uzun bir süreyi kapsayan bir dönemi anlattım. 11. Bölümde şanslı günümü, Carolyn’le tanıştığım günü anlatıyorum. Detaylı, uzun bir hikaye şeklinde. Dediğim gibi orada tanıştık. Tanıştıktan sonra ilk bir araya geldiğimizde de hiç durmadan konuştuk, yaptıklarımızı anlattık, paylaştık, birbirimizden çok etkilendik, çok esinlendik, ve birbirimizin çalışmalarından da bahsettik. Bu aramızda paylaştığımız adı konamaz bir şeydi. Sonra, ikimiz de şöyle düşünüyorduk. Kendi hikayemizi anlatmak, kendimizle ilgili bir şeyi birinci ağızdan anlatmak ve kendimize dair bir şeyden bahsetmek gerçekten önemliydi ve sosyal bilimlerde bugüne kadar yapılan en önemli şeylerden biri gözlemcinin çalışmanın dışında bırakılmasıydı. Yani kendinizle ilgili bir çalışma yaparken bile aslında dışarıdan bir göz gibi bakıyorsunuz, dışarıdan bir göz gibi anlatıyorsunuz olan biteni ve çalışmanızı. İnsanın insan olma hali içindeki duygularını, düşüncelerini hiç kapsamıyordu. Bundan bahsettik. Yani bu konuda mutabık kaldık.

[Otoetnografi] ilk kez bir dipnotta kullanılmıştı, Carolyn de ilk kullananlardan biri. Önce o kullandı, daha sonra diğer kişiler kullandı ama tabii yıllar geçtikçe, zaman geçtikçe otoetnografi derken kastettiğimiz şeyin anlamı ve içeriği de biraz değişti. Yani ilk otoetnografi dediğimiz gün kastettiğimiz şeyle belki bugün kastettiğimiz şey artık bire bir aynı şeyler değil. Mesela şöyle düşünelim, Türkiye’de bir araştırmacı, oranın kültürüyle, yerel kültürüyle ilgili bir çalışma, bir araştırma yapıyor. Kendisi de aslında o kültürü, o çevreyi deneyimliyor ama kendini bu deneyimin dışında tutuyor bir şey yazarken veya anlatırken. Yani bunun gibi bir şeydi kastettiğimiz. Dediğim gibi otoetnografi kavramı ilk kez, aslında biraz da bilinçsiz olarak, 1996 yılındaki kitabımızda kullanmıştık. Composing Ethnography isimli kitabımızın içinde. Sonra da diğer araştırmacılar, diğer sosyal bilimciler kullanmaya başladılar. Bu bahsettiğimiz kitabın içinde üç bölüm vardı; antropoloji, sosyoloji ve sosyal psikoloji. Giderek bu kavramın kullanımı giderek yayıldı. Biz de bunun üzerine, giderek daha çok konuşur olduk. Yani biz ne yapıyoruz ve neden yapıyoruz. Ne çalışıyoruz ve neden bunu çalışıyoruz üzerine. Az önce Serpil Hocanın bahsettiği makaleye atıfta yanılmıyorsam.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Evet, “Which Way To Turn”.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** “Which Way To Turn” aslında bunu bilen de azdır. Az bahsedilir, az atıfta bulunulur. Bunu da sizin biliyor olmanıza hem şaşırırım hem sevindim. Bu da yayımlandıktan sonra, çeşitli araştırmacılar, kadınlar olsun, azınlık gruplardan bireyler olsun, böyle sayısız istek gelmeye başladı. Kendi hikayelerini anlatmak. Kendilerine ait olanları sistematik bir şekilde, etnografik bir şekilde anlatmak isteyenlerin ve yayımlatmak isteyenlerin bize böyle bir akın şekilde yayınlarını, yazılarını göndermeye başladılar çeşitli dergilere ve yayıncılara. Yani aslında burada, gözlemcinin ya da araştırmacının deneyiminin dışarıda bırakılmasından bahsediyoruz sosyal bilimlerde. Hiçbir zaman tartışılmayan, yayımlanmayan, bir sır gibi saklanan bir şey. Bu neredeyse bütün sosyal bilimlerde böyledir.



İşte bilindik, beylik, genel geçer şeyler ya da daha anaakım konular; antropolojide de böyle, sosyal bilimlerin birçok alanında, psikolojide hep bu tür anaakım haline gelmiş yaklaşımlardan hep faydalanırız. Bu nedenle de aslında çok büyük bir dirençle karşılaştı otoetnografi kavramı. Özellikle klasik ve anaakım çalışmalar yapan araştırmacılar tarafından bunun bir bilim olmadığını, bilimsel olmadığını ve sistematik bir şekilde yapılmasının mümkün olmadığını iddia ederek çok büyük eleştiriler aldı ve çok büyük bir dirençle karşılaştı. Burada sözü tekrar Carolyn alıyor, çok savunmacı bir şekilde yaklaştılar. Yani bu yeni bir şey olduğu için şöyle söylüyorlardı: “Eğer otoetnografi gibi bir kavramın veya böyle bir yöntemin sosyal bilimlere girmesine izin verirsek, sosyoloji yok olur.” Burada Serpil Hocamın sorusu devreye giriyor: “Neden böyle olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz? Neden sizce dirençle karşılaştı?” Arthur, cevabında Jay Hailey’nin bir sözünden alıntı yaptı terapiyle ilgili. Kendisinin çok etkilendiği bir terapist: “Aslında terapiye başladığında ilk reaksiyon her zaman için dirençtir,” değişimin dirençle başladığına dair bir söz. Yani muhtemelen insanlar şöyle düşünüyor olmalılar: “Genellikle sosyal bilimlerde kontrol hep araştırmacının ya da yazarın elindedir, hep tahmin edilebilirdir sonuçlar, hep kontrollüdür.” Bu nedenle de otoetnografide bizim sunduğumuz gibi bir bakış açısı sunmak biraz tehdit edici geldi insanlara diye düşünüyorum. Yani bu çok duygusal, bu çok subjektif. Hiç objektif değil, bilim gibi değil. Bu nedenle de bunun yapılması mümkün olmayan bir şey olduğunu söylüyorlardı ama zamanla anlaşıldı ki otoetnografideki sübjektiflikten de öğrenilecek çok şey var sosyal bilimler adına. Bu sübjektiflikten de bir şeyler öğrenebiliriz. Bunu anladık zaman içinde ve birçok araştırmacı aslında “Bu yapılır mı, yapılamaz mı, bunu yapmak çok zor,” diyenlerin çoğu da ve buna direnç gösterenlerin çoğu da denemeye kalkıştıklarında epeyce başarılı oldular, epeyce de güzel şeyler ortaya koydular. Burada yine Serpil Hocamın bir yorumu devreye giriyor: Yani aslında Türkiye’de nasıl olduğundan Serpil Hocam bahsetti. Burada da akademide otoetnografinin gayet büyük bir dirençle ve karşı koyuşla karşılandığını ve gerçekten bunu savunmanın çok zor olduğu, çünkü genelde “Bu edebiyata benziyor, bu bilim değil” gibi şeylerle biz de Türkiye’de çok karşılaşıyoruz ve bunu savunmak kolay olmuyor. Söz veriyorum en son kısma geldim. I am promising that this is the last part that I will translate.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Gülgün, Carolyn Ellis wrote in what that “We can understand the hand signals of Gülgün”.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Really? Because I am getting too much into it. [laughs]

**Arthur Bochner:** That was breathtaking.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** The last part I guess.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Okay, the last part, yes. 1980’de bir “narrative turn” adı verilen, bunu gerçekten şu an bilemiyorum nasıl Türkçeye çevireceğimi, bir akımın ortaya çıktığından bahsedebiliriz sosyal bilimlerde. Genel olarak, kullanılan kelimelerin, kelime seçiminin de aslında bir şey ifade ettiği, bunun bir önem taşıdığı araştırma açısından. İddiası bu ve bu tartışmanın aslında tarihçesine bakmak için Richard Rorty iyi bir isim. Sosyolojide, antropolojide ve iletişim bilimlerinde daha kurumsallaştırılmış bir yapı, daha kurumsallaştırılmış bir hale getirilmesine, aslında sebep olan bir şey. Yani şöyle düşünebiliriz aslında, bunların, sosyal bilimlerin hiçbiri gökten inmedi, insan eliyle, insanlar



tarafından yaratıldı ve çok da keyfi bir şekilde yaratıldı ve kuramsallaştırıldı. Bütün bunlar, hem yapılan çalışmaların, araştırmaların anlamlandırılması hem içeriği hem kuramsal kısmı gayet keyfiydi ve şöyle söylüyoruz “insani, beşeri” bilimler bundan daha insani, daha beşeri olamaz aslında. Her seferinde bunu daha çok anlıyoruz. Mesela Laurel Richardson tarafından yazılan bazı sosyal bilimler metinleri vardı, çok popüler ve meşhurdu zamanında. Ben bunlardan birine başladım ve yarısında kaldım, bitiremedim. Okumak mümkün değil, çünkü çok sıkıcı ve çok ağır, ağıdalı bir hale getirmişti anlattığı şeyi. Ben aslında bu konularda çok şeyimdir, böyle basit düşünürüm, basit yaklaşırım konuya. Belki de bu nedenle de...

Son olarak, Carolyn 'in söylediği de bir etnografik göz, etnografik bakış açısı kazandırmakla ilgili öğrencilere. Aslında burada önemli olan şey etnografiyi algımlarken buradaki amacınızın ne olduğunu bilmek, ne olduğunu anlamak. Yani amacınız neyse, sosyolojiyi veya sosyal bilimleri bu şekilde kullanırsınız. Etnografi de çalışılırken giderek daha çok bilime yaklaşır. Yani sizin deneyimlerinizden de geliyor olsa bilime daha yakın bir hale gelir. O nedenle kendinizi, her ne yazıyorsanız ve nasıl yazıyorsanız, ona göre konumlandırmış olmanız çok büyük bir önem taşır. Ama tabii ki de her zaman için bu yaptıklarımıza “Bilim” diyenler de olacak, “Bilim değildir, edebiyattır bu” diyenler de olacaktır.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you Gülgün. Perhaps you would like to take a deep breath.

**Arthur Bochner:** Breathtaking.

**Carolyn Ellis:** She is working much harder than we are.

**Arthur Bochner:** Let me just add a few final thoughts. I'll try to keep this quite simple and direct to make it easier on the translator. First, autoethnography has evolved through all these wonderful works that Carolyn has published, so many of which you've read and through the books that we've done and through the book series we edited (Writing Lives), through the ICQI, (The International Congress for Qualitative Inquiry), and now the IAANI (International Association for Autoethnography and Narrative). Autoethnography is a form of inquiry. We are inquiring into our own experiences and hoping to touch the experience of others. It's also very much, and I try to emphasize this in the 'Heart of Autoethnography' piece, a connection, autoethnography is about connection. We get better connected to ourselves at the same time as we connect to other people's experiences. At the outset, when you are beginning to do autoethnography, you are beginning to engage in a form of inquiry, a form of research into your experience. It is not self-evident. You don't yet know what it means. It is an inquiry. You are inquiring into its possible meanings. The reason I mentioned Bruner's book *Acts of Meaning* is that autoethnography is an act of meaning and an attempt to touch the meanings of other people, even to the extent, as one of our former students and now colleagues at USF has suggested, it connects, for example, to the world of art. People make art objects from autoethnographies. For example, Csaba Osvath gave me an original artwork he made, because the story that I wrote, “Bird on a Wire,” which you can find in *Qualitative Inquiry*, touched experiences that he had buried from his childhood; he was touched by my story. As he reflected on those experiences, he made a collage art piece which he and I discussed in the second edition of the *Handbook of Autoethnography*.

A couple of other final points. As an act of meaning, autoethnography is usually an act of storytelling, which means that when we try to teach autoethnographic method, we sooner or later come around to what it means to tell a story and what the elements of a story are, such as scenes, plot, character, and trouble. All those are ingredients, which you might call elements of storytelling. One of the class members asked what it means to be a “poetic science”, because I’ve used that term. Mark Freeman, a psychologist, has also used that term “poetic science” to explain that when you’re doing storytelling, when you’re doing performance of stories, and autoethnography is a way of performing stories, you are “putting life on the page”. Putting life on the page is precisely what is left out of traditional social science. Our work is not cold. It’s warm. Sometimes it’s even hot. It’s not distanced. It tries to move closer to life as experienced. Carolyn mentioned this earlier in her opening, it is not just about knowing. Social science is traditionally obsessed with the idea of epistemology, of how we know. It is also about feeling, about emotion, about being. So, good autoethnography often touches people where they live, an expression that Laurel Richardson has used. So, you reflect on your experience. You turn that experience into a story, and it touches other people’s stories as well. Often it involves a kind of writing that we call vulnerable writing because it is writing in which we aren’t ashamed, we aren’t resistant to presenting ourselves as full-blooded people. That’s what I will leave you with.

*Art leaves the session at this point.*

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** When you write vulnerably, how do you protect yourself? How do you protect your mental health when people attack you?

**Carolyn Ellis:** Okay, well, let me give a little history. When I wrote *Final Negotiations*, which was about the illness and death of my first partner, I was very somewhat fearful about putting that book out there because it was about the 70’s and 80’s, and it mentioned drug use and so forth. I thought, could I lose my job over this? But I didn’t. And I had unbelievably wonderful responses to that book. But I also had some very negative responses not only to the work, but to the personal life that I had lived as well. I remember coming home one day after getting a very critical response from somebody that I admired, who was a sociologist, and saying to Art, do you think I lived an immoral life? Because that’s what was being claimed in this response. He, of course, said all the right things. Still, I went to bed and covered up my head for a couple of minutes. Then I got up and said, “okay, I have to deal with this”. If I really believe in what I’m doing, which I do, and I’m putting my story out there, which I was, and then saying that I can’t control how people respond to it, which I cannot, then I have to be ready for whatever responses they give. I also have to think about what I can learn from their responses.

One of the claims that you hear a lot is that autoethnography is self-absorption. I don’t think good autoethnography is self-absorption, but I think when I went to bed and covered up my head, I was being self-absorbed because it was time then to let go of my feelings about how people were responding. And I had to now turn to investigating their responses. What do they mean? Why are they responding the way they are responding. What in their history led them to feel different from the way I feel or to think of my experience different from the way

I thought about it? When they are responding, that is the time to do more traditional sociology to analyze why this kind of response is coming in. It is not the time to re-feel and worry and obsess about what you have written.

Thinking that way really helped me. So, whenever I now get a negative response, I say to myself, why is this person responding this way? What do I have to learn here about the differences and similarities among people? So that's really the way that I deal with it. Plus, I tell myself, don't concentrate on the five negative responses when you just got many, many positive ones. That's ridiculous.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** My solution is going to psychotherapy.

**Carolyn Ellis:** That's another one. I talk to Art a lot. I can let go of my emotions with him and say, okay, now I have to go figure out what to do with this. But to be honest, I don't get that many negative responses anymore. In the beginning, I did, with people saying some of what you said before, "this is not research", "this is not social science", "If you need to go write about your experiences, do that, but don't claim it's Sociology". I got all of that in the beginning, but now partly because of who I associate with, I don't often hear it. Somebody asked me if autoethnography ever isolates me. And my answer is only in the sense that the people that I probably wouldn't enjoy interacting with don't come around, which is a good thing. People with whom I share commonalities and values about being human do come around. I get to meet a whole lot more people that I relate to in doing all of this.

I always think of where I was when I started this work: I was very much into sociology. Let me in, please, I practically begged my sociology colleagues. Consider what I do to be social science. Now I feel like I'm in the center of a wheel, and there are folks all over the world, including in Turkey, who have become my colleagues. We find each other, and we create a community, and it's not necessarily discipline-related. It's for people touched by this work. It touches them where they live, and it communicates with them about the kind of perspective they want to have in their research.

I think I probably got off of the question, but anyway, you want to let the interpreter respond?

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Gülgün?

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** All right. İlk başta Arthur'un konuşmasıyla başlamıştık. Öncelikle sağ olsun "*Biraz kısa tutacağım kolay çevrilmesi için*" demişti. Bugüne kadar yazılan kitap serileri, Carolyn'in yazdığı kitaplar, çeşitli uluslararası platformlarda yapılan konuşmalar, kendi deneyimimizi anlatırken bunlardan da bahsedebiliriz. Mesela, ICQI, IAAAN gibi çeşitli platformlarda otoetnografiyle ilgili çeşitli konuşmalar olmuştu. Belki biraz bunlardan da bahsetmek gerekiyor otoetnografiyi iyice anlatmak için. Aslında bunlar bir çeşit soru diyelim, yani bir çeşit soru sorma, kendi deneyimimizi anlatma, ve o deneyimi anlattırarak soruyu sormakla ilgili bir şey. Hem kendimize ait olandaki anlamı keşfetmek hem de diğer insanlardaki anlamı kavramak, kavramaya çalışmakla ilgili bir şey. Mesela Bruner Acts of Meaning kitabında bundan bahseder, bu anlamın nasıl ortaya çıkarılabileceğinden. Csaba Osvath'ın bir sanat çalışmasında benim bir hikayem vardı,

“Bird On a Wire”, Qualitative Inquiry dergisinde bulabilirsiniz bu yazımı. Handbook of Autoethnography kitabının son baskısında bu kolaj sanat işini görebilirsiniz. Bir şekilde çocukluğunda kendisine dokunan, kendi hikayesini anlatan şeylerin bir kolajından oluşuyor diyebiliriz. Pardon burası biraz karışık oldu ama şöyle söyleyebilirim, eninde sonunda konu dönüp dolaşp hikaye anlatmanın ne olduğuna geliyor. Konu, arka plan, karakterler; bunun derdi nedir, burada karşılaşılan güçlükler nelerdir. Bunlar bir şekilde gelip hikaye anlatmaya dayanıyor. Mesele bu sabah derste öğrenciler sormuştu bununla ilgili bir şey. “Poetic science” diye bir kavram var. Buna “şiiir bilimi” mi diyelim Türkçede? Bunun ne olduğuyula ilgili konuşurken, bunun hikaye anlatıcılığına dayalı bir performans olduğundan bahsettik. Aslında yaşamınızı, deneyiminizi, elde ettiğiniz her şeyi bir sayfaya koyuyorsunuz. Tabii ki bu sosyal bilimlerin geleneksel mantığına uymuyor. Daha çok bir deneyim olmasıyla ilgili bir konu. Biraz önce Carolyn’in de bahsettiği gibi aslında bu bilmekle, bilginin kendisiyle ilgili değil. Daha çok epistemolojik bir anlamı var; yani nasıl biliyoruz? Hissederek? Duyarak? Nasıl bildiğimizi ve bu deneyimlediğimiz şey kendi yaşamımıza ve diğer insanların yaşamına nasıl dokunuyor? Bunu da “vulnerable writing” yani “kırılğan yazarlık, kırılğan yazma” olarak da söyleyebiliriz. Serpil Hocamın bir sorusu vardı. “Kırılğan bir şekilde yazarken akıl sağlınızı nasıl koruyorsunuz?” Carolyn cevabında, mesela ilk şöyle söylüyor, partnerimle ve partnerimin ölümüyle ilgili yazdığımda korku doluydum, işimi mi kaybedeceğim, insanlar benim hakkımda ne düşenecek diye; ama hayır, işimi kaybetmedim. Aslında insanlardan çok güzel tepkiler de aldım, ama bir de tabii hem yazdıklarıma hem de kişisel olarak bana çok kötü, sert, acımasızca tepkiler veren de olmuştu. Saygı duyduğum bir kişiden çok kötü bir yorum almıştım ve çarşafı kafama çekip yatakta böyle durduğumu hatırlıyorum “Bu nasıl bir şey, ben nasıl eleştiri aldım!” diye, ama birkaç dakika geçtikten sonra dedim ki “Bir dakika bunu burada bırakmalıyım”. Diğer insanların hakkımda ne düşündüklerini ve nasıl reaksiyon verdiklerini kontrol edemem, ama verdikleri bu reaksiyonları kabul edebilirim, bunlarla yaşamayı öğrenebilirim, bunları kabul etmeyi öğrenebilirim. Kafama çarşafı çekmektense insanların ne dediğini, bu söylediklerinden neler öğrenebileceğimi düşündüm. İnsanlar bunu niye söylediler; onların geçmişleri, deneyimleri benimkinden farklıydı, nasıl farklıydı? Belki onlar geleneksel olanın peşindeydi, ona daha çok saygı gösteriyorlardı. Bunları anlayıp, zihnimde kabul edince, her şey daha kolay olmaya başladı. İnsanların birbirinden farklı olduğunu, her şeyi kabul ve ifade ediş biçimlerinin farklı olduğunu anlayınca her şey çok kolay oldu. Kendime dedim ki, söylenen olumsuz şeylere odaklanma, gücünü ve odağını bunlara yönlendirme. Tabii artık bu tür negatif yorumları hemen hemen hiç almıyorum. Başlarda çok kötüydü ama şu an pek öyle şeylerle karşılaşmıyorum. Bu bir araştırma değil, bu bir bilim değil falan diyen çok oluyordu ama artık pek yok, çünkü otoetnografi kendimi biraz bu anlamda izole etmeme yardımcı oldu. Bu tür düşünen, bu çevreden insanlarla bu tür bakış açısına sahip insanlarla bir aradayım ve daha çok birbirimizin çalışmalarını okuyoruz ve değerlendiriyoruz, o nedenle de birbirimizi buluyoruz ve bir topluluk oluşturuyoruz zaman içinde. Aslında belki oydu ve birbirimize dokunan şeyin ne olduğunu keşfettikçe anlattıkça, bütün bu olumsuz dönüşler ve yorumlar da daha kolay kabul edilebilir bir şey haline gelebiliyorlar.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you, Gülgün. Now we can hear our new question. Prof. Ellis, we know about your *Fisher Folk* study and we are aware of the ethical problems you lived through doing this study. Hacı Bayram has now a question about this issue.

**Hacı Bayram Karakurt:** First of all, you are welcome to our humble house. It's a big honor to see you among us. Today, I feel excited. But if you let me, the question for me is rethinking relationally about your research on fisher folks. Today, what would your professional attitude be like if you had one more chance to start from the beginning?

**Carolyn Ellis:** That is an incredibly wonderful question. Thank you. It's interesting for me to think about that. The fisher folk study was not only my undergraduate honors thesis, but then became my PhD dissertation, and then a book called *Fisher Folk*. Then after I wrote it, someone who was somewhat, I guess, envious of the work took the book back to the fishing community and highlighted everything that he thought would upset the fisher folk and read it to them. These folks who had become my good friends were really upset because I had said things such as they worked in fish houses and they smelled of fish. I said they often had sexual relationships with close relatives. I commented on their appearances, and it was very upsetting to them, which was understandable.

So, when I went back to the community, there were people who approached me and were very upset. And I thought, I just have to take it; they deserve to be heard and I need to hear what they feel. So, I went to their homes. I talked to them, I apologized, and I even cried with the man I considered my 'informant' there.

I then wrote a piece after that about the ethics of what I had done. I had done nothing other than what was considered traditional ethnography at that point. I changed the names. I didn't tell where the location was. I described what I had seen and observed. My PhD committee and readers loved that I had insight into sexual relationships and so forth, and I got lots of acclaim for how much I had been accepted by the community.

But I felt horrible after that. And I thought, I am never going to write something like this again that is so hurtful to a community. It is not worth it to me to get the information and then hurt people to that extent and hurt myself too. I was really demoralized about how they responded to me. I ended up still being friends with a number of them after that, who forgave me. But it had ruined my very positive and trusting relationship with this community, which I had had for over nine years. I justified it to myself: well, they knew I was writing about them. Yes, they did. But they didn't really know what that meant. I became a friend to them and they became friends to me. They didn't really know what I was going to write about or that I was going to write about their personal lives.

Some other writers have claimed that's why I started doing autoethnography. I don't think that that's quite the truth. It wasn't a direct relationship between, okay, that didn't work, now I'm going to try something different. Instead I started doing autoethnography because of my own personal life experiences, trying to understand loss and grief and because I saw the value of autoethnography as I was doing ethnography. I saw that most of what I came to understand about the fisherfolk, I understood in interaction with them, through the

experiences and stories we shared. I was very much a participant in that community and I didn't want to pull myself out of the story as though I didn't exist. So even in my book *Fisher Folk*, I become a participant and I'm a speaking person. I'm a feeling person, but not to the extent that I was in my autoethnographic writings afterwards.

So that's a long introduction to get to your question. If I were to start over, I would still like to do the fisher folks study, but I would like to do it in collaboration with them so that they could speak and talk about their feelings and thoughts and desires and so forth. I wouldn't be the 'objective researcher' presenting their lives without feeling for them or feeling for our relationship, or trying to understand on a deep level why they felt and acted as they did. That would be uppermost in my mind. It might be that I would have to present things differently or leave out some things, but that would be okay because I think we still would have a much richer ethnography with their voices being present. In retrospect, I could have gone back to the community. I could have read things to them and asked them to respond and then include their responses in the book. That process can be really hard, and it might introduce other problems. But I think if you have a certain frame of mind of caring about these people, of not wanting to hurt them, of being sensitive, and seek to come to some understanding in your work together, then you can produce something valuable.

I remember I had a student who was writing about people who were seeking therapy in a social agency. She first wrote about going into the clients' houses and described how dirty they were. I said to her, nobody ever gets over having their house described as dirty and being called dirty. Is there a way you can describe what you see without judging it? Just say the clothes were in the corner, the food was out on the table. I mean, it doesn't solve the problem, but at least you're not saying these people were dirty. You're trying to give a visual picture so that the receiver can decide what's going on there.

So, I would do it very differently is the answer to your question.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** The next question will be about collaborative witnessing. It is a related subject, I guess. But first, Gülgün, would you please translate?

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Yes. My pleasure. *Hacı Bayram'ın sorusuydu Fisher Folk ile ilgili. "Bugün yapsaydınız neyi farklı yazardınız, neyi farklı yapardınız?" çok genel hatlarıyla söylemek gerekirse. Aslında harika, çok güzel bir soru. Bu benim için tabii çok önemli çok temel bir çalışmaydı. Bu hem bir alan araştırması hem bir kitap oldu, hem de benim doktora tezimdi. Araştırmayı yazdıktan sonra, kitap haline geldikten sonra, bu balıkçı, benim artık arkadaşlık ilişkisi kurmuş olduğum bu arkadaşlara okutmuşlar metni. Tabii biz araştırma sırasında iyi arkadaş olmuştuk, ama tabii yazdıklarımı okuyunca biraz üzölmüşler, çünkü çok hoş olmayan şeyler söyledim, kötü koktuklarına dair, yakın akrabalarıyla ilişkiye girdiklerine dair, veya işte bunun gibi böyle pek çok belki daha gizli tutulması öngörölen konuyla ilgili şeyler yazmıştım. Bunları duyunca ve görünce çok üzölmüşler. Tabii ben bu durumu öğrenince evlerine gittim, onları ziyaret ettim, özür diledim onlardan. Aslında yeni bir şey yapmamıştım, yani geleneksel etnografinin gerektirdiği ya da antropolojinin gerektirdiği çalışmayı yapmıştım aslında daha fazlasını yapmamıştım. İsimlerini deęiştirmiştim, araştırmanın olduğu kasabanın*



yerini söylememiştim. Sadece oturup gözlemlemiştim ve gözlemlerimi yazmıştım ama tabii iş bu noktaya gelince çok berbat hissettim ve bir daha asla böyle bir şey yazmayacağım dedim. Hem insanların duygularını inciten hem de dolaylı olarak beni inciten böyle bir çalışma asla yapmayacağım dedim bir daha. Bu balıkçılardan bazıları hâlâ arkadaşım aslında, bazıları beni affetti çoğuyla aramız bozulmuş olsa da. Şimdi bazı kişiler şöyle söylüyor: Bu yaptığım çalışma benim otoetnografiye başlamamın temeli olabilir, yani burada yaşadığım üzüntü ve insanlarla olan deneyimim, ama bence direkt bir bağlantı yok otoetnografiyle bunun arasında. Çünkü benim otoetnografiyle olan ilişkimin temelinde daha çok kayıp ve yas var, ve bu kayıp ve yas durumunda kendimi anlatmakla ilgili bir kaygım var. Belki Fisher Folk çalışması da bunun bir parçası olabilir ama tamamen sebebi diyemeyiz buna. Yine yapsaydım neyi değişik yapardım, birinci orada gözlemlediğim insanları konuştururdum çalışmanın içinde. Onlara kendi deneyimlerini ve dünyalarını anlatma fırsatı verirdim. Kendilerini anlattırırdım ve bazı şeyleri daha farklı sunardım yazarken. Bazı şeyleri almazdım, yazmazdım, dışarıda bırakırdım ve sonra bu çalışmayı onlara okutup, onların da gözden geçirmelerine olanak verebilirdim. Yani aslında şöyle oluyor, zamanla yazdıkça kafanızda bir çerçeve oluşuyor yazdıklarınızla ilgili. Mesela bir öğrenciyle konuşmuşum terapi alan insanlarla ilgili. Terapistler onların evlerine gidiyorlar. Eve gittiklerinde kirli olduğunu görüyorlar ama tabii her şeyi söylemenin bir yolu var. Doğrudan sizin eviniz kirli demiyorlar mesela insanlara. İşte yerde köşede bir şeyler duruyordu, masanın üstünde boş tabaklar vardı gibi, bunu daha farklı şekilde ifade ediyorlardı. Tabii bu sorunu çözmez ama hani bunu da ifade etmenin yolu yordamı var. O nedenle, çok uzun bir giriş yaptım sorunun cevabına ama, söylemek istediğim şey, elbette çalışmayı bugün yapsaydım, çok daha değişik yapardım.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you Gülgün.

Professor Ellis, in your article “Bad Bread, Good Bread”, you gave us an example of collaborative witnessing, which was very interesting for us. Sibel now has a question about this key word. Sibel, you may ask your question.

**Sibel Taş:** Hello, Professor Ellis. My question is could you share with us the process that led you to the concept of collaborative witnessing. Thank you.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Okay, thank you. The concept came about in my work with Holocaust survivors, and I think that it is associated with some of what happened in *Fisher Folk*. I wanted to make sure that I didn't present a story that could be harmful in any way to Holocaust survivors I worked with or to Holocaust survivors in general. I wanted my work to do some good to help Holocaust survivors tell their story, help them tell the story in a way maybe they had never told it before. I also was very aware that they were telling the story to me and that I was a participant in the storytelling and that I would help with the storytelling by the questions I asked and the responses I gave. Then also the Holocaust survivors could help me with the analysis because they have understandings about their stories that I can't possibly have, and so our work together should be a collaborative kind of endeavor. I also was intrigued with how to take autoethnography to an interview situation where the focus was on the other person, not on me. I was a participant, but the focus should be on the other person's story.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Dear Ellis, may I say something to Gülgün? Gülgün, Dilek will translate now Carolyn's answer, so perhaps you can rest a little bit.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Okay. Okay, thank you.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** You are welcome. Sorry, Prof. Ellis. Yes, we are listening to you.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Thank you. I wanted to figure out a way to bring autoethnography to an interview situation where the focus was on the other person, not on my story, but I was a participant in the story. Even in the Bread story that you read, I'm a participant. Jerry, the survivor, is telling the story to me. I bring you back to the setting we are interacting in. I talk about sharing food with Jerry during the interview and bring that into the story of his experience with starvation during the Holocaust.

To me, autoethnography is also a perspective, not just a method or a story. It's a way of being in the world. Art has called it "a way of life". One of you asked about that. Autoethnography is a mindset. And so, my mindset that I brought to this interaction with Jerry was: I want to care about you. I want us to have a friendship. I want it to be a developing, trusting friendship. I want us to cooperate together to tell the best story we can possibly tell. And as our relationship develops, that story will just become deeper and richer. I want our work to help you with understanding and coping with your experience and help other survivors understand something about their situation. I used the term "collaborative witnessing" then to encompass all those ideas as something that we are doing together to reach understanding. I made sure that Jerry Rawicki, who just died a couple of months ago, by the way, at age 94, approved everything that I wrote before I published it. I also produced two films about Jerry, and I showed them to him before I showed them to anybody else. That's just the way ethically, that I now want to do research. I'm not advocating that everybody has to do it this way, but it's the way that I feel most comfortable doing it.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you. Dilek, we are listening to you.

**Dilek İşler Hayırlı:** Gülgün, it's a hard job. " 'Collaborative witnessing' kavramına sizi götüren süreci paylaşır mısınız?" diye sordu Sibel.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** "Ortaklaşa tanıklık" diye çevirebiliriz.

**Dilek İşler Hayırlı:** Tamam. "Bu süreci anlatır mısınız?" diye sordu. Fisher Folk çalışmasıyla çok bağlantılı aslında bu yöntem. "Holocaust Survivor"larıyla yaptığım çalışmayla birlikte ortaya çıktı. Çalışmanın ortaklaşa tanıklık yönteminin birilerine yardım etmesini istedim. Hem birilerine, dolayısıyla bu alanda soykırımdan hayatta kalanlar yani, bana birilerine yardım etmesini istedim, aynı zamanda beraber çalışacağım, "ortaklaşa tanıklık" yapacağım kişilere de yardım etmesini, dolayısıyla hem bana hem karşımdakine, karşılıklı bir çalışma olmasını, karşılıklı bir yarar süreci olmasını istedim. "Ortaklaşa tanıklık" süreci boyunca kendime değil, bu sefer çalıştığım diğer kişiye odaklandım ve diğerini merkeze koydum. Otoetnografiyi karşılıklı bu çalışmada, aslında kullanma sebeplerimden bir tanesi, hikayenin kahramanı olan kişinin kendisini anlamasına yardım etmeye çalışmaktı. Buraya kadar bunu söylüyor. Otoetnografi yöntemini kullanırken "interviewing" dediği mülakat ya da görüşmede kullandığım yöntemlerden bir tanesiydi. Soykırımdan hayatta kalanlarla

yaptığım çalışmada otoetnografi aslında benim için bir bakış açıydı. Amaçlarımdan bir tanesi, çalışma yaptığım kişiye bunu hissettirmek istemiş olmam. Benim bu çalışmadaki amacım sana yardım etmek. Ben senin dostunum, arkadaşınım, ve eğer söyleyebileceğimiz bir hikaye varsa bunun en iyisini anlatalım okuyucuya ve bunu otoetnografik bir yöntemle, seni merkeze koyarak yapalım. Eğer olacaksa da çalışmanın sonucunda, kendini anlamana ve senin toplumunda seninle aynı deneyimi paylaşanlara yardım etmek, kendilerini, hikayelerini anlamalarını yardım etmek aslında, “ortaklaşa tanıklığım” amacı. Bunu beraber yapıyoruz. Bu Holokost çalışmasını yaptığı kişinin adı Jerry, birkaç ay önce ölmüş. Bu çalışmayı yaptıktan sonra her şeyi göstermiş Jerry’ye ve her şekilde onun onayını almış. Bir Youtube videoları var. Orada da bir röportaj var, onu da göstermiş. Makalede yazılanları da göstermiş. Dolayısıyla bu “collaborative writing”in etik yönden nasıl yapılacağının da bir örneğiymiş diyorum. Umarım eksik çevirmemişimdir Gülgün’cüğüm, çok zormuş. Thank you.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** I think it was wonderful. Thank you. Now we have a question from Mina. Now, the personal is political, and we know that but once autoethnographic texts are read, professor, one can feel that autoethnographic texts are not something really connected, related to political power or social moments, et cetera. Mina will ask you whether autoethnography can make a difference in society, I think. Mina, you may ask your question.

**Mina Yoldaş:** Hi. Thank you. I want to quote Simon Roberts to begin my question. In his *Order and Dispute: An Introduction to Legal Anthropology* book, he says “a law should be defined by its function, not its form”. This tells us that we need to understand sociological realities and cultural mechanisms for the creation of laws. And while describing the research method of autoethnography in your book, you say it strives for social justice and to make life better. In light of all these, do you think you can make a meaningful difference in the law or in society as mass movements when doing autoethnography?

**Carolyn Ellis:** Thank you for that question. Well, I don’t want to claim more than I should. I doubt that autoethnography will change laws, and maybe it won’t change society. Although I will say autoethnographic stories get called on a lot politically. Those users may not know the term autoethnography, but in the courts, in Congress--I’m in the U.S. now, and you can talk more about what happens in Turkey--politicians almost always call on personal stories to persuade others toward a political position. Politicians love the personal story because they know how effective it is. So, I think autoethnography in that realm does a lot for social justice and social change, even though the practitioners aren’t referring to their stories as autoethnography.

Also I think autoethnography as we practice it primarily as academicians does lead to social change one story at a time. It’s not so much a social movement in those terms, but by telling the story one person at a time, the awareness and insights might lead to effective social change. For example, personal stories from transgendered people might affect how we as a society think about gender identity.

Unfortunately, I’m not sure that much of what academics do as a whole leads to great societal social change. But that never makes me stop working for change because I feel like

we all need to contribute the little bit that we can do, and hopefully that adds up to a whole lot more. For example, autoethnography just connected you in Turkey to me in the United States. That's wonderful. Autoethnography advocates this kind of collaboration, talking across boundaries, taking the role of the other, because you're never just writing about yourself, you're writing about the other. I think this kind of collaboration would help in the United States, and perhaps worldwide, for people who tend to polarize into two camps and then fight each other, whether it's the Israelis and Palestinians in Israel, or the Republicans and Democrats in the United States. So, I think autoethnographic practices are commonly used to influence social change, though the term may not always be applied.

Again, I want to do my little bit in the way that I am able to do it to effect the change I view as important. I think that when we take our autoethnographies to undergraduate classes as well as graduate classes, all those folks who read these stories might come to some understanding of people who are different from them, who think different from them. They then talk about what they read and give these pieces to their relatives and friends and it disseminates into the wider world. So, I'm hopeful that in some way autoethnography makes some small changes that are effective. What do you think?

**Mina Yoldaş:** I think you are right. *Türkçe söylesem olur mu? Dilek ya da Gülgün yardımcı olsa?*

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** *Tabii, tabii.*

**Mina Yoldaş:** *Sanırım, buna cevabım, inanmak istiyorum. Otoetnografinin buna sebep olabileceğine inanmak istiyorum.*

**Gülgün Şerefoglu Elverir:** Her answer is so simple but really great, I guess. I would love to believe that autoethnography would change something in the world.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Yes, me too. Thank you.

**Gülgün Şerefoglu Elverir:** *“Evet, ben de”, diyor Prof. Ellis. Şimdi sorunun cevabı şöyle. Aslında otoetnografi çok kullanıldı bu anlamda, ama tabii bildiğimiz adıyla değil. Mahkemelerde kullanıldı, siyasi partilerce kullanıldı, üniversitelerde kullanıldı. Hep böyle özellikle politikacılar, kişisel hikayeler anlatır, oralarda çok malzeme edildi aslında otoetnografi. Hem sosyal adalet hem sosyal değişim açısından aslında çok kullanıldı, doğrudan olmasa da dolaylı olarak ve otoetnografiye atıfta bulunan pek çok akademisyen var. Bunlar da aslında sosyal değişimin bir parçası olma görevini üstlendiler zaman içerisinde. Tabii özellikle politikacılar, akademisyenler de öyledir, genellikle her seferinde tek bir hikaye anlatırlar, tek bir hikaye ama çok etkili olabilecek bir hikaye anlatırlar bu amaçla. Bir akademisyen olarak genelde çok büyük katkılar yapıldı diyemeyeceğim ama bu beni bu konuda çalışmaktan da alıkoymuyor. Yani aslında şöyle diyebiliriz, sınırları aşmak, sınırın diğer tarafındaki şeylerle ilgili konuşmak ve düşünmek, genelde geleneksel anlamda alıştığımızın çok dışında bir bakış açısı, çünkü kendimizden bahsediyoruz, karşıımızdakinden veya ötekenden bahsetmiyoruz. Ya da ülkedeki farklı insanlar gibi düşünelim, normalde birbirleriyle dövüşen insanlardan, farklı siyasi eğilimleri olan politikacılardan bahsettiğimizi düşünelim, aslında tüm bunların arasında kendimizden*

*bahsettiğimiz bir yer otoetnografi. O nedenle ben her zaman için bir akademisyen olarak çalışmalarımı yaparken, sınıfta ders verirken, buna bir katkı sağladığımı düşünüyorum, ben kendi üzerime düşeni yapıyorum, insanların biraz daha farklı düşünmesine, zaman içinde, katkıda bulunduğumu düşünüyorum. Siz bir şeyi farklı düşünmeye başladığınızda bunu akrabalarınıza söylersiniz, arkadaşlarına söylersiniz, bu böyle ufak ufak değişimler yaratır ve yayılabilir diye düşünüyorum. İnaniyorum, küçük küçük de olsa bir değişim yaratacağına inaniyorum.*

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you Gülgün. Prof. Ellis, it's very difficult, really, to see the use of art as a research method in the mainstream social sciences or in the mainstream ethnographic studies. It is very well seen that there is art in very different forms in autoethnographic texts. We were really amazed when we read performative autoethnographic texts such as *The Accusing Body*, which was written by Tami Spry. Now, the next question is about aesthetics and autoethnography. Şenel will ask her question, but she quoted from your book *Autoethnography* (Adams, Holman Jones, and Ellis, 2015, p. 23) and she wanted me to read the quotation before she asks her question. So first I will read the quotation, then she will ask her question.

“Using narrative and storytelling to research and represent experience, autoethnographers also attend to *how* narratives and stories are constructed and told. As Craig Gingrich-Philbrook argues, autoethnographers must take seriously the epistemic (claims to knowledge) and the *aesthetic* (practices of imaginative, creative and artistic craft) characteristics of autoethnographic texts. For us, this means studying and practicing the methods and means for conducting *research*, as well as studying and practicing the mechanisms and means for making *art* (e.g., poetry, fiction, performance, music, dance, painting, photography, film.” (Adams, T., Holman Jones, S., & Ellis, C., 2015, Oxford University Press, p. 23.). Now, Şenel, I think you may ask your question.

**Şenel Vural:** Hi there. *Epistemik ve estetik bağlamda bir otoetnografi metni hazırlarken alacağımız ölçütün ne olacağını soracağım, Hocam.*

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** I think Dilek may translate it into English.

**Dilek İşler Hayırlı:** Sure. She asks, in epistemic and aesthetic terms, what are the criteria when we create an autoethnographic text?

**Carolyn Ellis:** Okay, I'm going to give a short answer to this because I see we still have three pages of questions, and you might be here till midnight. But let me refer you to a source. There was an issue of symbolic interaction where many people wrote about this topic. I wrote a piece and Art wrote a piece, as did Laurel Richardson and Norman Denzin. I'm going to refer you to that piece and then to Art's work also (Ellis, C. (2000) “Creating Criteria: An Ethnographic Short Story,” 273-277; Bochner, A (2000), “Criteria Against Ourselves,” *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 6(2),266-72.). Where he goes through the criteria, I talk more about the feelings of being a reviewer for autoethnography and what I expect to be included there and to do. What are the criteria, the artistic criteria and the writing criteria, and the contribution to understanding the social world criteria?

Your question is complicated. Now I'm going to do a 30 second summary of that response. I look for aesthetic writing. I want to feel moved in some way, to be engaged, to feel something, to want to respond intellectually, either by agreeing, disagreeing, or wanting to have a conversation about the complexities of what I'm reading. That evocative quality has to be there. You have to write at a certain level artistically in order to get your point across, or present photographs or performance or dance or any of those artistic modes in a way that opens up a conversation with the people who are the audience.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you Prof. Ellis. Dilek?

**Dilek İşler Hayırlı:** Şöyle söylüyor, "Kısa cevap vereyim çünkü üç sayfa soru var ve gece yarısına kadar *burada kalırsınız* eğer hepsine uzun cevap verirsem" diyor. "*Sembolik etkileşime bir referans yapayım burada. Aslında Dilek'e bir tane makale gönderdim, o makaleyi gönderirse Şenel'in sorusuna cevap olacak*" diyor. "*Kriterlerin hepsi orada yazılı, çok uzun, çok karmaşık kriterler. Hepsini burada sayamam ama benim için en önemlisi duygular. Duyguların uyanmış olması gerekiyor. Estetik yazmak yine benim için en önemli kriterlerden bir tanesi. Karşınızdakinde duyguların uyanması, yazdığınızı hissetmesi gerekiyor. Benim için en önemli kriterlerden bir tanesi karşınızdakinin mental olarak bir reaksiyon vermesi. Hemfikir olabilir ya da olmayabilir, karşınızdakinin reaksiyonu önemli. Çağrışımsal [evocative] olması, çağrışımsal demiştik, yine kriterlerden bir tanesi. Yazdığımız metne ya da otoetnografik çalışmaya bir fotoğraf, diyalog, resim, sanat eseri koymalısınız karşınızdaki okuyucuyla, diyalog ya da bir konuşma başlatabilmesi için.*"

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you Dilek. Now, Balım has a question. Gülgün, will you please translate Balım's question, answer into Turkish? Now, let's hear Balım's question. You may ask your question.

**Balım Yetgin:** Hi. First of all, I want to say I am really moved. I appreciate what you said and you shared your story with us. I'm really impressed. Thank you so much. As you said, there are lots of questions, and actually I think I got my answers during your conversation. We can skip this question or I can ask just this. If you want to answer a short or big answer, it's okay because most of the answer insight I got from your conversation already. I'm just wondering what is your understanding of objectivity in ethnographic encounters? And how it is different from positivist, abstract objectivity, absolute objectivity? Do you think different kinds of objectivity should be an epistemological problem in autoethnography? For example, these questions are bothering me for a long time. After I did read something from Fabian, who was suggesting something like that, to make subjectivity a condition of objectivity is an effort to save objectivity from positive subjectivity. Different from positive subjectivity, he is suggesting one kind of objectivity historical, process, not static, not just logical and accepting subjectivity. Subjectivity should be overt in this objectivity. Like two sides of medallion.

**Carolyn Ellis:** It's a great question and I love the way you posed it. I'll give you a short answer. I think in terms of radical objectivity, which means you can't claim to be objective unless you include subjectivity. If I don't tell you my background, my history, my feelings,



I'm not being that objective. I need to give you all the information I can give you so that you can figure out why I'm saying the things that I'm saying. To me, subjectivity is a vital part of objectivity. And, you know, in autoethnography, I really do think we strive to tell the truth with a small T. We try to tell what happened the best way we can, knowing that you can never be totally objective about anything, because once an experience happens, it's gone. You cannot fully capture it. You can only have a partial memory and interpretation of it. So, the best you can do is to acknowledge all of that and say, given all that, here's what I have to offer you with all of its problems and so forth. It's the best that I can do. I have tried to tell the truth with a small t, but I also have had to create because memory is fallible, of course, and my goal is not so much to accurately represent as it is to create, engage, communicate with you, be in conversation with you and see if we can come to some understanding together. Some of the other words that we sometimes use, such as generalizability and validity, I don't want to discard them, but I want to think about them differently. So, if I tell a story and nobody feels like they want to respond to it, it doesn't touch anybody, it's not very generalizable, and perhaps I need to rethink its purpose. I try to redefine these concepts so that they work for us in the kind of writing we do. Or bring in other concepts, such as resonance, which are more appropriate for the kind of work we do. We discuss resonance in our book, *Evocative Autoethnography*.

**Balım Yetgin:** Thank you, thank you so much.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** *Güzel soru. İfade etme biçiminizi gerçekten çok sevdim. Aslında şöyle diyebiliriz. Eğer herhangi bir subjektif bakışa sahip olmazsak, objektif bir bakış da ortaya koymamız mümkün değil. Çünkü subjektif olmak aslında objektifliğin ayrılmaz, hayati bir parçası. Çünkü araştırdığımız bir konuyu ifade ederken, ortaya bir şey koyarken, geçmişimiz deneyimlerimiz, bugüne kadar yaşadığımız edindiğimiz her şey bizimle birlikte oluyor. Bir şeyi objektif olarak çalışırken de, yani bu ikisini ayırt etmek aslında bu anlamda çok mümkün değil. Otoetnografi yaparken de bir gerçeği anlatmaya çalışıyoruz, bir gerçeği ortaya koymaya çalışıyoruz. Tabii ki hiçbir şeyle ilgili tamamen objektif olmamız mümkün değil. O nedenle bir kavrama, bir olguya bakarken onun hem objektif hem subjektif yanlarını, ona karşı doğrulttuğumuz subjektif ve objektif algımızı, ikisini birden kabullenmemiz gerekiyor: O nedenle de bir konuyu anlatmaya çalışırken gerçeği anlatmaya çalışıyoruz, bir şekilde hikaye etmeye çalışıyoruz. Tabii ki de zihin yanılır, zihin hataya düşebilir bir şekilde. Dediğim gibi her ikisini bir arada düşünüp ortaya koyabiliriz anlatmak istediğimiz hikayeyi. Yani illâ objektif olacağız diye çabalarken de hiç kimseye dokunmayan, hiç kimsede karşılığını bulmayan bir hikaye anlatmak da ne derece doğrudur ne derece geçerlidir onu da bilemiyorum. Belki de biz nasıl kullanabiliyorsak, nasıl ortaya koyabiliyorsak o şekilde olmalıdır diyebilirim.*

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Now I said we can quickly move on. There is another question about aesthetics and popular culture and autoethnography? Mina, you may ask your question.

**Mina Yoldaş:** Okay. Hi again. My question is, when I first saw the concept of aesthetic movements in your book, TV series like *Seinfeld* and *The Office* came into my mind. We see that observations of daily life are frequently used in different art forms. Also, video and photography content produced for ethnographic studies are very aesthetic and artistic. So,

do you think that ethnographic production can turn into artistic forms over time? And what would such a transformation mean for the social science? Thank you.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Well, I doubt very much that traditional ethnography is going to make that kind of transformation. That does not mean that we interpretive scholars can't make that kind of transformation and turn what we do into documentaries or performances or whatever. Indeed, that goes on all the time. I think that's good. I think that Seinfeld is one of the best ethnographies I've ever watched. I mean, they are tuned into the little things in everyday life, and they show them and they work with them. They work them. Good comedy in my opinion is really good ethnography. So, the possible connection between some of those things—documentaries, stand-up comedy, and autoethnography, for example—is really strong. The producers and people on Seinfeld, and good comedians may not think of themselves as ethnographers or autoethnographers, but that's what they are.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you. Dilek?

**Dilek İşler Hayırlı:** *Hemen çeviriyorum. Geleneksel etnografinin böyle bir dönüşüp yapıp yapmayacağından şüphe duyuyorum. Seinfeld bu anlamda en iyilerinden bir tanesi. Günlük hayattan küçük şeyleri alıyorlar ve bunları çok iyi işliyorlar. Zaten iyi komedi iyi etnografi demek. Kendilerinin öyle olmadığını düşünebilirler, ama bence çok iyi etnografılar.*

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Prof. Ellis, are you tired of this session? We are writing to each other here “What should we do?”. We don't know. And I would like to ask you, would you like a break or would you like to finish this session? There are questions.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Okay. I think maybe I could do two more questions and then we would finish the session. I'm sure that all of you are going to have wonderful conversations later about all this. I do think that we've touched on many of the other questions. So perhaps you might decide one or two questions that we haven't touched on or any general kind of comment you would want to make or question you want to ask me.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Okay, two more questions. Let me ask the group in Turkish. *Arkadaşlar sekiz soru falan var şu anda, onların hepsini sorabilmemiz mümkün gözüküyor, çünkü Prof. Ellis yoruldu. Dolayısıyla “İki soru daha cevaplayabilirim” diyor. Ben de seçebilirim ama hepiniz birbirinizin sorusunu biliyorsunuz, özellikle “Ben kendi sorumu sormak istiyorum” diyen var mı? Bir de şimdiye kadar konuşulardan farklı içerik getirecek soru diyelim. Bence Serap'ın sorusu öyle çünkü sinemayla ilgili and one another.*

**Carolyn Ellis:** One more suggestion. If I see a couple of questions that are related to each other, what if I just speak in general about a few of them?

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** That will be wonderful.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Okay. They're all such wonderful, wonderful questions, and I could spend ten minutes answering each one of them happily. But I know that your students, if they're like all the students I've had, they probably are ready to go home by now.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** May I say what will happen here in Turkish to the group?

**Carolyn Ellis:** Yes.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** *Arkadaşlar, Prof. Ellis diyor ki benim şöyle bir önerim olacak: soruların bazıları birbirleriyle çok ilişkili, ben soruların hepsine yönelik genel cevaplar vermeye çalışayım diyor. Ben de tamam dedim, hani kendisinin önerisi olduğu için. Bir de belki Gülgün'ü yoracağız ama sen çevirirsin değil mi? Belki Dilek de eksik olan şeyler olursa tamamlar.*

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** *Tabii ki.*

**Budem Çağıl Büyükpoyraz:** *Hocam, ufacık bir şey söyleyebilir miyim? Madem son cevaplar, o zaman herkes kamerasını açarsa bir ekran görüntüsü almak istiyorum.*

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** That will be wonderful. Professor Ellis, Budem wants to take a screenshot if all of us open their cameras. *Arkadaşlar herkes kamerasını açabilir mi Budem bir ekran resmi alsın?*

**Carolyn Ellis:** Oh, let me get Art to be in the photo.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** We are taking screenshots.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Okay, we're smiling.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you. Thank you, Professor Ellis and Bochner. But we want to listen to you for the other questions and answers. So, the question about what happens and this is a great question, like all of them are, what to do when you face, for example, racism during the field work. How should you behave in the field? What is your advice?

**Carolyn Ellis:** I don't have so much a general response, because you have to take this situation by situation and figure out what's the ethical thing to do in this case. Who are you responsible to, who do you owe loyalty to? I've had to make those decisions when I did informal field work in a community in the mountains of the United States where we have a summer home. Some of the local people there were extremely racist. When I wrote my stories of interaction with them, I included their racist remarks and symbols, and some of my responses. I made the decision that it was important that I show racism so that others in American society could see the kinds of racism that goes on in these rural communities. I felt that was more important—a greater good—than loyalty to particular people that I included in my descriptions of our life in this community.

Unlike the way I felt about the Fisher folk who had invited me into their community, I was prepared to deal with any response from anyone here who might read what I wrote. While I did not want to hurt them, I was willing to suffer the consequences of their reading my words, because I felt there were more important principles that were operating here than community loyalty—i.e. to reveal dangerous racism that threatened our diverse society. This presented an exception for me to my feelings that if you take on an ethnography, you owe much to the people that you are working with. Here, being ethical to me meant revealing racism.

Ethics is complicated. That's why they are called 'ethics'. But really you have to figure out for yourself what it means to be ethical in research, just like you figure out any ethical situation in your life, acknowledging that you have special responsibilities because you are in a power position as the teller.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** *Öncelikle soruların hepsi eşit derecede güzel. Hepsi çok iyi sorular gerçekten. Şunla ilgili olana cevap vereyim: Bir alan çalışması sırasında ırkçılığa maruz kalmak veya böyle bir olaya şahit olmakla ilgili olan soru. Aslında bu konuda özellikle bir fikrim var diyemem. Genellikle bir olayla karşılaşıncı ben de herkes gibi o olay karşısında alınabilecek etik tavrı düşünüp değerlendiriyorum. Aslında burada önemli olan kendinizi kime karşı sorumlu hissettiğiniz ya da kime sadık kalacağınızla ilgili. Mesela burada da Amerika'nın belirli bölgelerinde çok yüksek oranda ırkçılık var, ırkçı davranışa maruz kalan insan var. Alan çalışması sırasında böyle bir şeyle karşılaşırsam, burada önemli olan ne olduğunu göstermek. Amerika'da ne oluyor da insanların bir kısmı başka insanlara başka topluluklara ırkçı biçimde davranıyorlar. Mesela benim başıma böyle bir şey gelmiş olsaydı, Amerikalı olan insanlara ya da o ırkçılık yapan insanlara değil de o çalıştığım daha küçük gruptaki belirli kişilere sadık kalmak, onlardan tarafa tavır almaya yönelirdim diye düşünüyorum. Fisher Folk'taki gibi insanlarla çalışıp bir şeyler söylerken, söylediklerimin yaratacağı sonuçlara da katlanmaya, bunun bana vereceği acılara da çekmeye hazırdım aslında. Birlikte çalıştığınız insanlara bir şey borçlusunuz ve bu tür durumlarda belki onlardan yana olmak diye cevap verebilirim. Ama tabii dediğim gibi tüm etik kararları verirken yaptığımız gibi sizin o durum karşısında alacağınız ve sizin düşüncenize uygun etik tavrıla ilgilidir.*

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you Gülgün.

**Carolyn Ellis:** I'm going to combine the next two questions you submitted, which are about the effect that autoethnography has had on me, my relationships with other people, and how I might be in the world. Autoethnography has been wonderful to and for me. It has helped me get through issues in my life, and come to deeper understandings of them in so many ways. I can't even express how much it has been beneficial to me, and I see it being beneficial to other people. I learned from doing autoethnography to not jump too quickly to thinking I know what is going on, but instead to take the role of the other and ask questions about why that person is behaving the way they are or acting toward me in the way they are. I ask the same questions about myself and my actions and feelings. So, I've become much more introspective about life. I think that's a good thing, and that we all should do that before we assume something—a motive, a meaning, for example.

Unlike what happened with the Fisher Folk, I did a lot of writing about my mother before she died, and that writing enhanced our relationship in so many wonderful ways, partly because of the attention I started to pay to her. I also began to think about how she saw me. So, it wasn't just me saying, 'oh, we're so different that she could never understand me'. Instead, I tried to understand her world as well. We became very close before she died. I think that was partly through what happened in the writing process where I became more aware, I became more caring, and more understanding of her point of view and life experiences. Our closeness was also a product of my sharing my writing with her. So autoethnography has been, for the most part, extremely positive in my life.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** *Şimdi burada üç tane soru var yine birbiriyle ilişkili olabilecek. Bu hem diğer insanlarla olan ilişkilerimin hem dünyayla olan ilişkimin*

*otoetnografi aracılığıyla nasıl şekillendiğini soran sorular: Aslında otoetnografi hayatıma çok güzel şeyler kattı diyebilirim. Birincisi, dünyaya ve varoluşa karşı daha derin bir anlayış kazandım. Birçok açıdan bana çok fayda sağladı. Hem bana hem de etrafımdaki diğer insanlara diyebilirim. Yani bir şeyle ilgili bir öngörü, bir yargı geliştirmek yerine hayata daha geniş, daha farklı bir açıdan bakmamı sağladı. Mesela Fisher Folk'ta annemle ilgili yazdığım bir kısım var. Bu kısmı yazmış olmak annemle ilişkiyi çok geliştirmeme sebep oldu. Hem benim onunla daha çok ilgilenmem sonucunu doğurdu hem de onun beni daha farklı bir şekilde algılamasına sebep oldu. Annem vefat etmeden önce kendisiyle çok daha yakın bir ilişki kurmamı sağladı. O nedenle diyebilirim ki otoetnografi birçok açıdan hayatıma gerçekten çok fazla şey kattı.*

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you Gülgün. Professor Ellis?

**Carolyn Ellis:** There was one part of that question I didn't answer, and I think it's an important part, which is how it has changed the relationships with my students. Some of you will be teaching autoethnography, and so I do want to say it does definitely change relationships. You become closer to your students, and all that entails, both the positive and maybe not so positive. You become part of their life, and they become part of your life, and it's a more holistic relationship than traditional professor/student relationships. So, you're not only looking at those five dissertation pages a student gives you, you also get tuned into the difficulties that they have to deal with on a day-to-day basis if they are writing about their troubles and intimate difficulties.

Art and I have wonderful, long-term relationships with our students. Some of our former students are among the people that we are closest to in the world. We feel like we've adopted some of them even. But, you know, when you are acting as mentor, sometimes it can be difficult to know where the academic relationship ends and the personal one begins. They can get confused and fused together, and so the expectations can be pretty tough about who you are to them. Are you just a mentor? Are you a counselor? Are you a parent figure? What is your role in their life? Sometimes it then becomes difficult, for example, when you tell them to have this chapter finished by next week. Then the student might feel, why is my good friend being so hard on me? So, you have to negotiate all of that. But it's also workable, and it's wonderful. The relationships that I have with my students are very meaningful and important to me.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you Professor Ellis.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** *Bir başka soru daha var. Yine güzel ve önemli bir soru. Öğrencilerimle ilişkilerimi soran bir soru. Öğrencilerimle olan ilişkiimin otoetnografiden nasıl etkilendiğini soran bir soru. Aslında otoetnografi dersleri verirken bütün öğrencilerime çok daha yakın olduğumu söyleyebilirim. Yani ben onların hayatının yakın bir parçası oldum, onlar da benimkinin. Böyle daha bütüncül bir yaşamımız oldu hep beraber. Yani pozitif bir katkısı oldu diyebilirim, ama biraz da bazı anlarda işleri zorlaştırdı, çünkü birbirimizin hayatındaki günlük olaylara ve sorunlara da aşına hale gelmeye başladık. Gerçekten çok güzel bir ilişkimiz oldu. Hatta bazı öğrencilerim kendilerini böyle evlat edinmişim gibi hissettiklerini söylemişlerdi, ama tabii akademik ilişkilerde bunu isimlendirmek çok kolay*

değil. Sizden beklentiler biraz zorlaşabiliyor. Onların hocası mı, psikolojik danışmanı mı yoksa ebeveyni misiniz, her şey iç içe geçmiş gibi oluyor. Mesela diyorum ki “Bu bölümümüzü önümüzdeki haftaya kadar bitirip bitireceksiniz” dediğimde “Hocam, niye bana bu kadar sert davranıyorsunuz, biliyorsunuz durumu” gibi tepkiler olabiliyor. Bu arada biraz işler karışıyor ama tabii genel olarak çok güzel ve pozitif bir etkisi olduğunu söyleyebilirim.

**Carolyn Ellis:** There’s just one other question that I think I haven’t touched on.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Is it about movies?

**Carolyn Ellis:** The question was Ruhsan’s. What kind of life experience was effective in bringing literary autoethnography to life? And my quick answer is, when I put my stories out there, I couldn’t believe how many emails I got, how many messages and letters I received. People wanted to tell me their stories back. We knew then we had touched a nerve. When we used autoethnographic stories in undergraduate and graduate classes, the students just turned on. You could see it in their eyes. You didn’t have to force them to do the reading, and you could take the discussion to any level you wanted. I knew we were on to something then.

**Ruhsan İskifoğlu:** Thank you so much. Thank you. Anything else?

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Gülgün, would you please translate it?

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Yes, I guess it’s, *Ruhsan Hocamın sorusuydu sanıyorum. İnsanların kendi hikayeleri ve kendi deneyimleriyle ilgili o kadar çok posta aldım, mektup, mesajlar, o kadar fazla şey geldi ki anlatabilecek, paylaşabilecek çok fazla şey var. Bunları derste, herhangi bir seviyede tartışmak mümkün, çok fazla içerik var üzerine konuşulabilecek.*

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Professor Ellis, there is also a question about documentary and movies. It says that in your book, also in the other articles we read, movies are said to be technographic representations, which are very important when they are about the director himself, herself or the researcher himself. So, the question was, I will read it to you. “What would be your approach to the Cinematography of autoethnographic themes? Do you think there are certain forms they should be in such films?” What do you think about documentation, autoethnographic documentation and movies used in autoethnographic representations?

**Carolyn Ellis:** What do I think about autoethnographic representation in movies? We talked a little about that with *Seinfeld*.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** It was popular culture, but this question is about documentary and movies.

**Carolyn Ellis:** I wish that I had more skills doing documentaries. I felt the two that I did were just amazing because I not only had the words, but I had the bodies and the feeling and the physical presence of the speakers there. I don’t have documentary training, but I worked with someone who had video skills. I hoped to write about autoethnography and documentaries, but so far I haven’t. I think it is a wonderful form for autoethnography. If I were starting over today, I think I would want to become a documentarian and bring autoethnography and documentaries together. I don’t know if any of your students have documentary skills or not, but a lot of young people now do.



**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** There is one person, one of our master program students, works in the field of movies and she has documentaries.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Great.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** *Serap'ın sorusuydu sanıyorum belgeselle ilgili olan soru. Belgesel konusunda yetenekli olmayı çok isterdim gerçekten. Gerçekten inanılmaz, harika buluyorum onun yarattığı etkiyi. Konuları ele alış biçimini inanılmaz buluyorum ama maalesef belgesel çekecek yeteneğim yok. Belki böyle bir çalışma yapacak olursam bir belgesel yapımcısıyla çalışabilirim diye düşünüyorum ve en baştan başlasam her şeye, sanırım otoetnografiyle belgeseli bir araya getiren bir şey yapardım. Bilmiyorum böyle bir öğrenciniz var mı çalışsan ama ben bir kez daha başlasam böyle yapardım.*

**Carolyn Ellis:** One more idea, because I do see that I skipped those questions. Our friend, who we mentioned earlier, Csaba Osvath, is very versed about artificial intelligence and so he wants to do a project with me where we could actually place a Holocaust survivor and me into a setting and have us interact in the setting. So, who knows what the future of that might be? I would love to do that with him because he has all the technical skills. He's shown me some films before that place people together in these scenes and have them interact together. They're using that approach now in some Holocaust museums. That's especially important because not many survivors still are alive. I think documentarians have an important future in autoethnography. Many documentarians do autoethnography though they do not use that term.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Gülgün, are you tired also? We will finish in five minutes, I think.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** No, I am great, don't worry. *Bugünkü konuşmamızın başında bahsettiğim bir arkadaşımız vardı. Bir araştırmacı, Csaba Osvath isminde. Onun yapay zekayla ilgili çalışmaları var ve benimle yapmak istediği bir proje vardı aslında. Ben, bu arkadaşım ve soykırımdan kurtulan bir kişinin, üçümüzün oturduğu, yaratılmış belli bir mekanda oturup konuştuğu, belli şeyler paylaştığı bir yer. Hani aslında belki ileride bilmiyorum belki böyle şeyler olur. Böyle bir şeyin içinde yer alırım ve yaparım. "Yeteneğim yok" dedim ama belgesel işine belki bu şekilde katılmış olurum, çünkü biliyorsunuz bu tür konuların işlendiği müzelerde kullanılıyor yapay zeka.*

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you Gülgün. Professor Ellis, I really thank you. Your articles and your books, which we read, and today you give us courage, really, to move on. Thank you very much. Would you like to say anything like the last words to us?

**Carolyn Ellis:** Yes. I am so impressed with what you're doing in this class, and I am so impressed with you and your students and how insightful they are, how much they know about autoethnography, and the intelligence of their questions. This has just been wonderful for me. It inspires me. It reminds me to keep writing, keep working, keep talking. Thank you for the inspiration. I know that Art feels the same way. I could see it in his voice and his passion. Thank you all so very much. Keep in touch with me and let me know how you're doing and how I can help in any way. I hope to see you at one of these conferences we're planning, if only on zoom.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** I think most of us will attend your conference this year. Also, I want to thank our translators, Dilek and Gülgün very, very, very much. And I leave the floor to Dilek and Gülgün to have the last words for all of us.

**Dilek İşler Hayırlı:** Let me begin, then. Dear Professor Carolyn Ellis. I'm so happy to have you here. I'm feeling so lucky that you answered my e-mail positively. To be honest, I wasn't expecting that, so it gave me courage and motivation, actually. And I must say, my husband is here, and he's an anthropologist.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Nice to meet you.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** They are both translating English anthropological books into Turkish.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Oh, that's wonderful. Wonderful.

**Dilek İşler Hayırlı:** You, professors, are our role models. We try to collaborate in academic works and yeah.

**Carolyn Ellis:** It's been wonderful to have a partner in life and love and work altogether. It's just incredible, really.

**Dilek İşler Hayırlı:** I will be in the conference. You will see me again. And I'm sure I will keep sending you e-mails about the questions because I had several questions, but I couldn't ask them because we don't have time. But that's okay. Maybe I can e-mail them to you.

**Carolyn Ellis:** E-mail them to me and if I can help with the conference, because I do participate in organizing it, so if there are questions you have or something you'd like to do, a special session or something, let me know and I will see what I can do to help you.

**Dilek İşler Hayırlı:** Okay, thanks a lot. Thank you.

**Carolyn Ellis:** You're welcome. Thanks to everyone and go have your dinner or whatever time it is there for you or go have a nice rest at night.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** But after Gülgün's speech, yes, we will say bye bye.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Okay. I will be very short, so thank you for this day also. It's really a remarkable day in my life, both as a student and as an interpreter, actually. So it was really great to meet you and make the interpreting for you. I learned a lot. I enjoyed a lot of process. And so thank you for everything. It was great to be here with you.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Thank you. You are truly amazing in what you're doing. I really appreciate that.

**Gülgün Şerefoğlu Elverir:** Thank you. Thank you.

**Carolyn Ellis:** Alright, I wish everyone well.

**Serpil Aygün Cengiz:** Thank you. Good night.

**Carolyn Ellis:** I'm signing off.