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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hanife Aliefendiođlu (DAÜ İletişim Fakóltesi)

## **Another way of news-making: ethnographic journalism**

**Hanife Aliefendiođlu**

There are many evidences that the mainstream news making and journalism lead the growing gap between citizens, media and politics in terms of “voice”. There is no one common definition of alternative journalism; we might not identify what it is but we identify what is not. Advocacy journalism, community journalism, citizen journalism, guerilla journalism, beat reporting, cultural journalism, critical journalism, civic journalism... If there is one thing common among all those alternative options is that they are all against traditional objectivity, neutrality, impartiality and balance. Alternative news making invites us to rethinking about the relationships between reporters and news sources; it opens cracks in corporate media or is adopted by independent media. Without corporate mainstream media we would not know many facts as without independent media and alternative journalism we would not know stories of everyday people and everyday life. News is a story that makes sense. A news article makes sense in terms of its lead, approach, collecting technique or target group. Although we know for a long time that a list of facts does not make story; how to make meaning with facts has changed from traditional to new, mainstream to alternative. In fact journalism entails a larger and more diverse audience in comparison to academic research. Many special journalists are familiar with ethnography. Most journalists do not refer to in-depth feature reporting as “ethnographic”. For example their narrative and observational methods is close kin to participant observation and field notes collected over a period. Ethnographic news making challenge the traditional relation between knower and the known; journalist relations with their news source and subject based on fair sharing, careful listening to others and solidarity with the marginal groups such as the poor, migrants, drug users. Ethnographic journalist uses her/his personal network; value the kind and generous desire of people to talk; aims social change for the common good and social justice for all by relying on ordinary people’s

stories; cares a particular relation with the subject of the news. Ethnographic journalism is more time consuming since they rarely interview ones with the subjects. It contributes social integration; representation of the other's voice, recognition, understanding and sense of belonging. Many journalistic and socio ethnographic studies show that exposing people to images and representation of ethnic, cultural or national "other" can already be enough to bring about a positive change in attitude. We need to hear the stories of us for media reform and democracy in this the Internet enabled world. The Hutchins Commission, for example, advocated the "projection of a representative picture of the constituent groups in the society". One advantage of ethnographic reporting is how it portrays in a responsible manner the lives and cultures of groups that are typically marginalized through mainstream journalism practices. Inner truth is a key concept because an understanding of a group on its own terms is the very purpose of ethnography. In this regard, the ethnographic reporter values the authenticity of the group studied; a kind of immersion into the lives of marginalized groups. Creating and sustaining a healthy media landscape is an option to challenge the media monoculture dealing with important people and hard news. It seems this option is picked mostly by independent journalists who have more freedom to explore with far less financial risk than those working within the corporate structure. As media literate people get more aware both with the manipulative aspects of mainstream journalism and community based coverage. Day by day audiences of media change their interest in news and transform from 'informed citizens' to 'monitorial citizens'.