

"This is a critically important book that takes aim at how ethnographers gather their information and make their arguments. Lubet's bold critique demands attention from all ethnographers, and those who read ethnography."

—Shamus Khan, Professor and Chair, Department of Sociology, Columbia University

"In *Interrogating Ethnography*, Lubet brings a detective's eye to the stories that ethnographers tell in order to offer timely and important interventions about the relevance—indeed urgency—for credibility, reliability, and objectivity in the narratives academics craft about their research subjects."

—Michele Goodwin, Chancellor's Professor of Law, University of California-Irvine School of Law

"Despite the growth of ethnographic research as a respected methodology in the social sciences and increasingly in public policy, the standards for what constitutes findings of fact remain obscure and uncertain. Lubet has performed a vital service by describing how field researchers should think about the validity and credibility of the data that they gather. *Interrogating Ethnography* will become essential reading for anyone interested in reading or writing participant observation."

—Gary Alan Fine, James E. Johnson Professor of Sociology, Northwestern University

URBAN ETHNOGRAPHY is one of the most vibrant areas of social science inquiry, and has produced scores of classic books over the decades. Yet when Steven Lubet delved deeper into the literature, he encountered a field that relies heavily on anonymous sources, often as reported by a single investigator whose underlying data remain unseen. Upon digging into the details, he discovered too many ethnographic assertions that were dubious, exaggerated, tendentious, or just plain wrong. Employing the tools and techniques of a trial lawyer, Lubet uses original sources and contemporaneous documentation to explore the stories behind ethnographic narratives. As he shows, many classic works in the field are accurate and indeed powerful works of scholarship. However, he also found many others that relied far too much on rumors, folklore, and unreliable hearsay. *Interrogating Ethnography* explains how qualitative social science would benefit from greater attention to the quality of evidence, and provides recommendations for bringing the field more closely in line with other fact-based disciplines such as law and journalism.

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