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## Interview with Jackson

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Jackson seemed concerned with the fieldworker's attitude in relation to their project, themselves, and their informers. Within this broad category Jackson touched on a number of finer points regarding the fieldworker, such as their ability to remain open to change in their project, change in their sources, in informers, and in the final goal and outcome of their work. He writes that, "The ends perceived at the beginning of fieldwork may not be the ends to which the collected material is actually put." This is a very good point, especially for beginning workers, because it would be easy for us to get caught up in what we think we are looking for and what we might actually be finding. Which brings me to another point of Jackson's that I thought was important: "In the field seeing can be the most difficult task of all. A fieldworker is more likely to report on phenomena different from those of his own society than to report something common to both."

For instance, I was invited to an Amish wedding this past March and looking back at my record of the experience I see that I left out how the tables were set, how the gifts were wrapped, the flavor of the cake, what the bride and groom wore. Not so much in that it was similar to own life, but because I had been so submersed in the culture before that these things were very commonplace to me, they had in a sense become a part of my societal behavior also.

For myself the family farm project will require me to step outside of myself and observe as though I were an outsider. I see this as a challenge in some sense but at the same time a benefit. I think that I will come away seeing a new side to my own lifestyle and that of my peers and family. As Jackson wrote I will focus on remaining open at all times to both the positive and negative information that I gather or that the class gathers.

Jackson brought up a great many things that I believe will benefit my fieldwork experience and I would just like to touch on how some of them will directly affect my experience with the family farm project. Jackson touched on the fact that the fieldworker as a participant observer influences the information collected. They can not merely observe a context, because they are working close enough to become part of it. I see this as a problem at times for me because of my intimate familiarity with the area and the lifestyles we may be observing. I will have to make an effort to search out people I haven't met and thus avoid the hesitancy of an observer to disclose certain information to me because of our previous knowledge of one another. At the same time though Jackson states that you must have advance knowledge of your subject if you wish to benefit and retain your informants. If you go in "cold turkey" and ask a farmer, "That animal there, with the black and white spots, making that mooing noise, what is that?" You won't have his respect, nor his interest any longer. It is also important though not to intimidate your source by appearing to know everything, then they will simply wonder why you are even bothering to ask, if you already know. This could also lead to their reluctance to answer your questions fully and candidly for fear of being wrong. I won't say that this is how every person in Knox County would feel but it may be a very common reaction, just from personal experience.

I thought that Jackson's discussion of knowledge, of observing the commonalities as well as the differences in culture and his emphasis on being open to change will be the most helpful to my own work this year.