

## **Why Bacup? An explanation buried in the text?**

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*Abstract.* This paper presents an explanation for why Jeanette Edwards did anthropology fieldwork at home. The explanation latches on to her claim “Scrutiny of Western social life, albeit one version of it, has the ability to shed light on the anthropological enterprise itself...” It is presented within a mildly comical dialogue with a character called N, who has featured in my writings before. And the comedy is just to prevent an excess of coldness.

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N: Good morning, what are you doing?

Me: I’m not doing anything... And I’m not Sir.

N: What are you working on?

Me: Problems which require more love than I have.

N: You suggested there is an explanation for why Jeanette Edwards did fieldwork in Bacup buried in her text. In your paper “How much was known about Bacup beforehand?” What is the explanation?

Me: If you pay me, I will tell you.

N: Okay, how much?

A tiny amount of money, totalling above 20 pence, is exchanged.

Me: On page 10, Edwards says, “Scrutiny of Western social life, albeit one version of it, has the ability to shed light on the anthropological enterprise itself, just as a focus on premisses which inform the anthropological exercise has the ability to reveal wider preoccupations.” That’s the key sentence from pages 8 to 10, for ordinary students! Oh wait just a minute: “wider *cultural* preoccupations.”

N: What does it mean?

Me: There is this anthropological project of you go to some other place with your assumptions and they have their assumptions and you notice the difference and report their assumptions. And anthropology at home is when the anthropologist, owing to the nature of anthropology, and the people studied share the same assumptions, according to Marilyn Strathern. So if you do anthropology at home, you can reveal anthropology's assumptions apparently. It's a reflexive project: anthropology of anthropology.

N: So that is why she went to Bacup: to find anthropology's assumptions, because they are the same as Bacup people.

Me: That's what that sentence triggers in me and I presume someone who has done the homework, with the help of the text I wrote. So either that is the explanation or Jeanette Edwards is not so nice. If the former, you have to *override* a lot!

*Note: I have been encouraged to take the latter option. There is a large gap between B+ and A- in this system.*

## References

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