Challenges of fieldwork in human geography

Fieldwork as a research tool is deeply rooted in geography. Method handbooks advise us how to conduct fieldwork, but when organizing fieldwork and getting in the field, there are always surprises ahead. As researchers, we have to take care of practicalities such as getting different permits, but we also have to face ethical questions: How to gain access to communities? How to find and choose the informants? What information are the informants willing to share with us, or how to protect them in case they relate sensitive information with us? Matters get even more complicated when working abroad in a foreign society and culture. What kinds of permits are needed? Is it allowed to make observations and where? Do informants change their behavior or things they share with us, knowing that we are from another country and culture? Some of us do fieldwork in our home communities or return to countries or cities we grew up in to conduct fieldwork: How to position ourselves as researchers in these situations? How to leave the field? How to analyze, write and present our fieldwork? These are only a few examples of the many challenges that human geographers (and other scholars doing fieldwork) face. We would like to invite papers addressing challenges and joys of fieldwork in different geographical settings, in order to support scholars in their work.