

A soft-focus photograph of a winter landscape. A snow-covered path or road leads from the bottom center towards the middle ground. On either side of the path, there are snow-laden evergreen trees. The background shows a line of trees and a bright, hazy sky, possibly indicating a sunrise or sunset. The overall tone is peaceful and serene.

# Non-Participant & Direct Observation

# Observation

## Main **types of observation**:

- **Participant** observation: when the researcher takes on an existing role in the field and studies it from that perspective;
- **Non-participant** observation, when the researcher remains an outsider, not taking part in the studied organization.

# Non-Participant Observation

- **Do not embrace any roles** existing within the field
- **Avoid interpretation**
- **Avoid categorizations**
- **Never evaluate or judge!**
- **Focus**
- **Take notes**
- Be **interested** in everything (even the „boring“ things)
- Remain an **outsider**

# Non-Participant Observation

Observation as **being attentive**:

- The researcher endeavours to perceive reality as **directly** as possible, without the mediation of cultural meanings
- It is a conscious attempt to experience the **here and now**

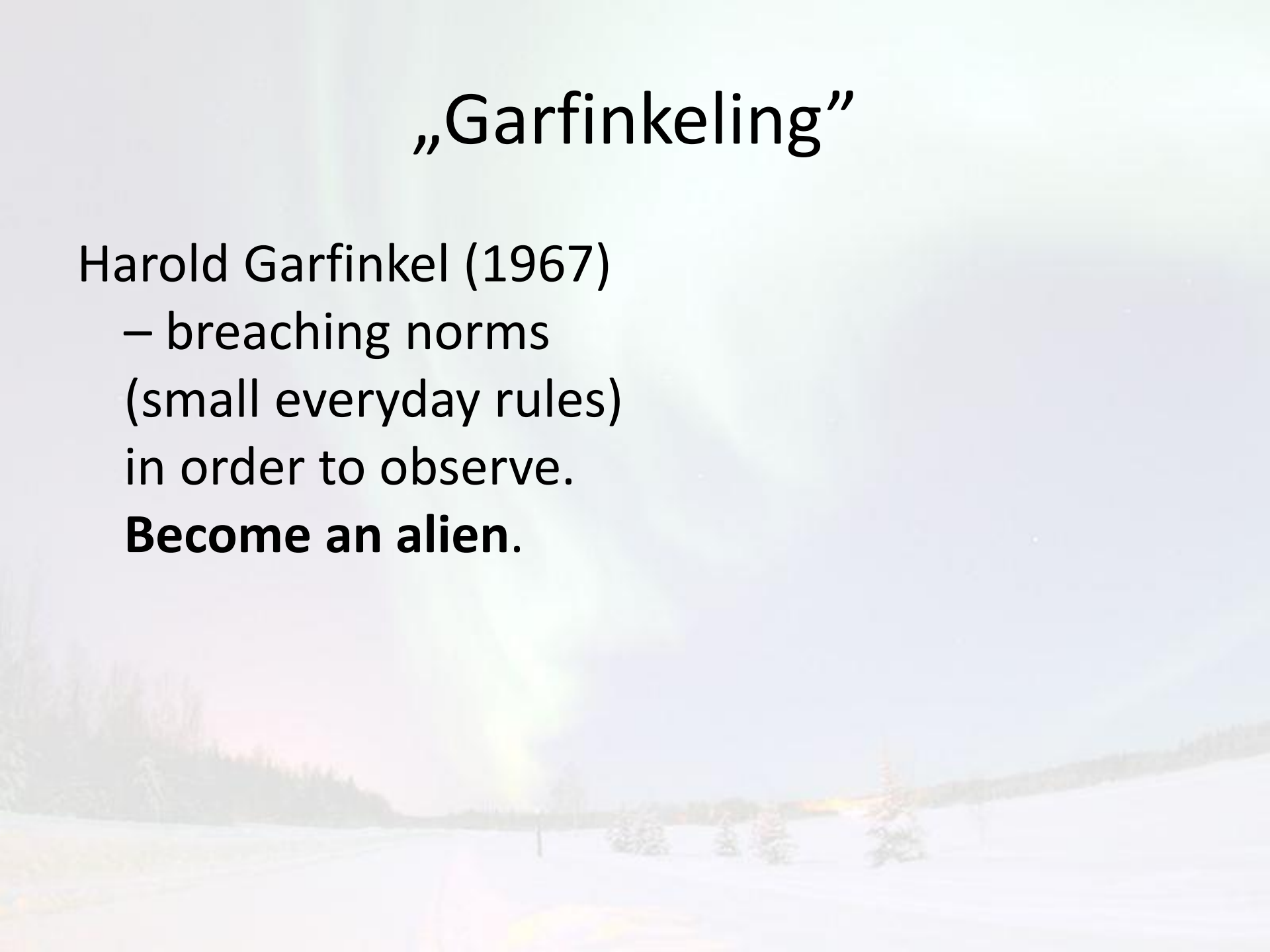


# „Garfinkeling“

Harold Garfinkel (1967)

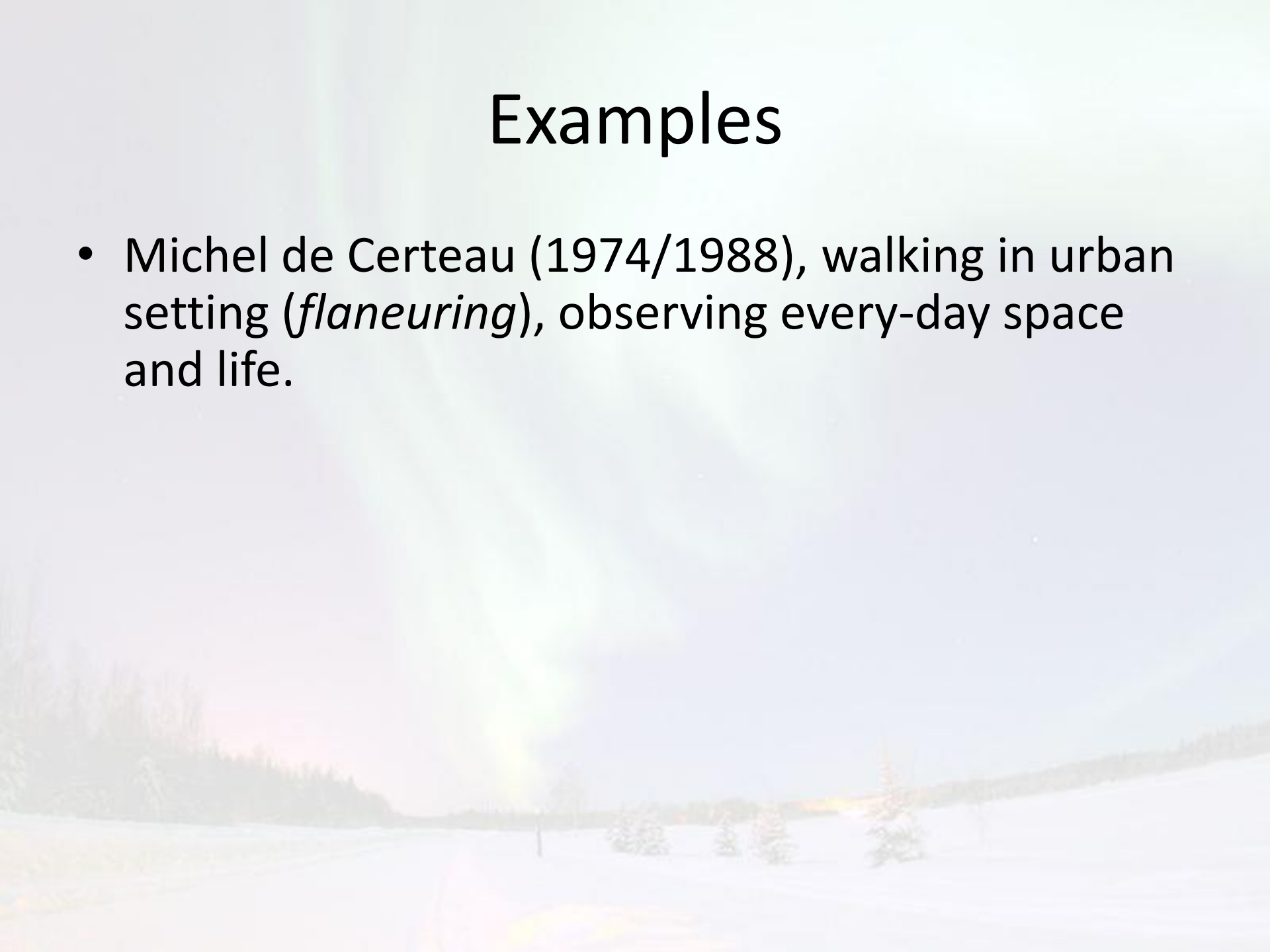
– breaching norms  
(small everyday rules)  
in order to observe.

**Become an alien.**



# Examples

- Michel de Certeau (1974/1988), walking in urban setting (*flaneuring*), observing every-day space and life.



# Examples

- Richard Rottenburg (2000), an observation of a liminal pub, located in the borderland between Poland and Germany



# Direct Observation

- A kind of observation that allows **keeping distance** and **taking part** in the activities of the field at the same time.
- The researcher as a **guest**.





# Direct Observation

An **in-between method**: in part non-participant (the researcher does not become an insider) and in part – participant (the researcher follows the customs in the field)



# Direct Observation

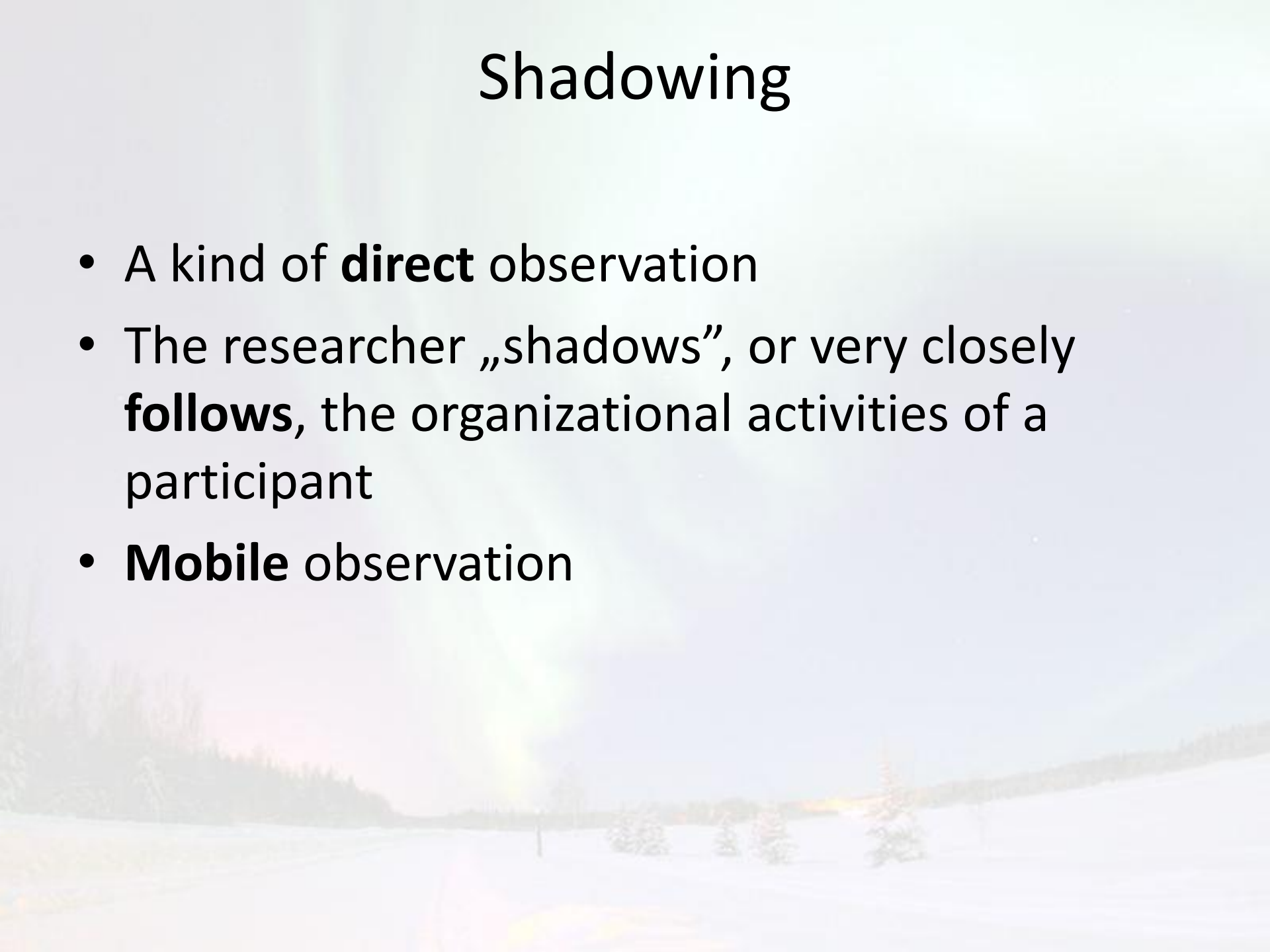
- Describe **and** interpret!
- Use categories **from within the field** for interpretation of material;
- Do **not take** upon yourself any roles existing in the field (remain a researcher);
- Have an **own schedule** of attendance;
- Take **notes**.

# Examples

Gideon Kunda, *Engineering culture* (1992) – a study of a big corporation famous for its „culture management” practices in the 1980s and early 1990s.

# Shadowing

- A kind of **direct** observation
- The researcher „shadows”, or very closely **follows**, the organizational activities of a participant
- **Mobile** observation



# Examples

Barbara Czarniawska, *A City Reframed* (2000), based in part on the shadowing of managers of the units involved in the administration of Warsaw City.