

The Ethnography Circle

Where is the Theory in my Data?

2nd Meeting Tuesday 10th December
Wolfson Research Centre 3:30-5pm

Seminar with Professor Catherine Pope on Ethnography and Theory



This month's Circle will focus on what is theorising in ethnography. We will conduct the discussion around Hammond's paper 'An interesting paper but not sufficiently theoretical': What does theorising in social research look like? <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2059799118787756> If you wish to extend your reading, you could also read Swedberg's 'Theorizing in sociology and social science: Turning to the context of discovery' <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41349133?seq=1#> which is quoted in Hammond's paper.

The first part of the Circle will 'take the temperature' of the room and capture the group's concerns, knowledge gaps and anxieties about using theory in ethnography – we will try to gauge where the group is at in relation to these topics as a foundation for our discussion. Then we will look in detail at the Hammond and Swedberg papers and discuss what made sense about the arguments presented, what we did not understand, what we disagree with or find problematic (a kind of 'critical appraisal'). Finally Catherine will explore our questions - using examples from her own ethnographic work, which spans some 30 years, undertaken in operating theatres, clinics, on ambulances and in triage call centres – and look at how we can use theory to enhance our ethnographic research. This may take in her thoughts about classic theorising from ethnography (e.g. Goffman), different levels and types of theorising, and may refer directly to her published work – eager Circle members may want to look at :Trouble in store: some thoughts on the management of waiting lists <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1467-9566.ep11340798?globalMessage=0> ; Contingency in everyday surgical work <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1467-9566.00300> ; or Using computer decision support systems in NHS emergency and urgent care: ethnographic study using normalisation process theory <https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1472-6963-13-111> if they are not familiar with the work she has done.

We look forward to a lively, interactive discussion. Please do ensure you read the Hammond paper for the session.

Bio: Catherine Pope is a Professor of Medical Sociology, based at the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Science, University of Oxford. She had championed the use of qualitative methods in health research, and played a leading role in developing qualitative evidence synthesis. Her research included studies of NHS urgent and emergency care, evaluations of health service organisation and reconfiguration, and projects about everything health care work.

Seminar will be conducted at Wolfson Research Exchange, Uni of Warwick, Library, CV4 7AL

For information and to register please contact: ethnography@wbs.ac.uk

Admission is free and open to students from other institutions

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