

# The Ethnography Circle

## Understanding the Ethnographic Journey

6th Meeting Thursday 7th April

3:00-4:30pm

Room 1.015, Warwick Business School,  
University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL



### Theorizing from ethnographic data: A 25 year journey

With Tammar B. Zilber ,  
Hebrew University, Israel

Abstract: In 1995-1996, as a graduate student, I did a 19 month ethnographic study of a rape crisis center in Israel. I chose to study this organization as I wanted to explore how an organization implements ideology in practice, and the rape crisis center declared itself to be a feminist organization. My thesis (Zilber, 1998) was about the construction of ambiguity. When I translated it into a journal paper (Zilber, AMJ 2002), it turned out to be about institutional change. The data I collected 25 years ago was so rich, that I didn't even analyze parts of it at the time. One empirical phenomenon I encountered in the rape crisis center -- the way people negotiated stories in board meetings and used them to make decisions -- stayed with me all these years. It fascinated me, but I didn't really know what to do with it, theoretically. Only recently did I realize I can use this micro-level data of narrativized-decision-making to re-think institutional logics. I will present some data and the long journey it took me to theorize it, and reflect more broadly on the relations between empirical case/data and theorizing in organizational ethnography.



Bio: Tammar B. Zilber is a full professor at the Jerusalem Business School, Hebrew University, Israel. She uses qualitative methods (e.g., organizational and field-level ethnography, narrative analysis) to explore the microfoundations of institutional dynamics, going beyond words to include multimodalities like place, space, emotions, bodies, and visuals. Tammar serves on the EGOS board and as an associate editor for qualitative papers at the Academy of Management Journal.

**Location: In Person Event, University of Warwick Campus, Gibbet Hill Road, Coventry, CV4 7AL**

Admission is  
free and open  
to students  
from other  
institutions

For information and to register please contact: [ethnography@wbs.ac.uk](mailto:ethnography@wbs.ac.uk)