Connecting Micro and Macro through Ethnography

Jane L. Collins, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Friday, August 9th, 1:30-5:30

Abstract

Connecting the “micro” to the “macro,” or the local to the global, requires us to place observable events in the context of broader and less visible processes. It sometimes also requires us to move from the study of “spaces of place” to what Manuel Castells has called “spaces of flows.” To do this well requires careful case selection and case definition as we seek to clarify how the situations we study will illuminate broader processes and trends. This course has the following learning goals: to develop an understanding of the role of theory in ethnographic research; to learn the “logic of inquiry” of case study research, including the relevance of the case under study for other instances; to learn about six different ethnographic methods that can help link micro and macro (or local and global), including: ethnographic commodity chain analysis, tracing global flows of ideas, ethnographic process-tracing, juxtaposing timelines, discourse analysis, and narrative analysis.

Course Outline

1:30–1:50 Introductions

1:50–2:30 Introduction: Research Design Issues
- The Role of Theory in Qualitative Research
- The Logic of the Case Study

2:30–3:25 Module 1: Connections
- Ethnography along the Commodity Chain
- Mapping Flows of Ideas

3:25–3:35 Break

3:35–4:30 Module 2: Processes
- Ethnographic Process-Tracing
- Juxtaposing Timelines

4:30–5:30 Module 3: Frameworks
- Discourse Analysis
- Narrative Analysis
SELECTED RESOURCES

Research Design

Part 1: The Role of Theory

Suggested Readings:


Part 2: The Logic of the Case Study


Module 1: Connections

Method 1: Ethnography along Commodity Chains

Suggested Readings


**Method 2: Mapping Flows of Ideas**

*Suggested Readings*


**Module 2: Processes**

**Method 3: Ethnographic Process-Tracing**

*Suggested Readings*


**Method 4: Juxtaposing Timelines**

*Suggested Readings*


Module 3: Narrative

Method 5: *Discourse Analysis*


Method 6: *Narrative Analysis*

*Suggested Readings*


**Additional Resources on Studying Power**


