

Abstract

Workshop on Ethnographic Methods

Ethnography is one of the most fashionable yet misunderstood of research methods; it derives from anthropology but has been used in numerous new contexts, including other areas of the social sciences (eg sociology, geography, STS) and humanities (eg practice-based research in art and music, cultural and media studies).

This workshop will introduce central issues in ethnographic research methods, from epistemological and ethical questions to practical challenges raised by doing ethnography. We ask: what does it mean to carry out ethnographic fieldwork? We examine the origins of ethnography and what are considered to be its unique and most powerful attributes. We then consider the practice of fieldwork: choosing a site, dealing with gatekeepers, creating the necessary background knowledge before fieldwork, rigour in fieldwork, the politics of fieldwork, and epistemological concerns. We move on to consider ethnography as a way of implementing what, after Deleuze, might be called 'post-positivist empiricism' (Born 2010), an empiricism with inventive conceptual effects. We examine the implications of Bourdieu's field theory and Foucault's notion of difference as a methodological principle.

You may find it helpful to look at the following:

1) One of my ethnographies:

- **On IRCAM, computer music and modernism:** G. Born, *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde*. California, 1995.

- **On art-science:** G. Born and A. Barry, 'Art-science: From public understanding to public experiment', *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 3, 1, 2010: 107-123.