

Ethnographic Theorizing In and Out of the Field

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Our Agenda

- A disclaimer
- Some clarifications
- Ethnographic Theorizing In the Field
 - Some comments
- Ethnographic Theorizing Out of the Field
 - An exercise



Melanie -

Jeff - doctorina
Student called

he has your results
back - everything is
fine

A Disclaimer: This is NOT Doctrinal

Melanie -
Jeff - doctrinal
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Some clarifications

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- Ethnographic research = research with the purpose of articulating a socio-cultural system embedded in human behavior

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- Ethnographic research = research with the purpose of articulating a socio-cultural system embedded in human behavior
- Theorizing = articulating relations between abstract categories or concepts used for organizing our understanding of socio-cultural systems
- the Field = the site of data collection

More clarification

- Context vs. Concept

Getting detailed in the clarification

■ Contexts

- The Midwestern Flea Market paper - Sherry
- The River rafting paper – Arnould and Price
- The Saab owner paper - Muñiz and O'Guinn
- The Burning Man paper – Kozinets and Sherry
- The Starbucks paper - Thompson and Arsel
- The Apple Newton paper– Schau and Muñiz



Ethnographic Theorizing In the Field

- Context vs. Concept
 - “Every context is the perfect context for studying something. The trick is in figuring out what that something is.” — Howie Becker, 1974

Ethnographic Theorizing In the Field

- Focus is Concepts through context
 - Market Animation: Midwestern flea market - Sherry
 - Choice vs. Satisfaction Drivers: River rafting – Arnould and Price
 - Brand community: Saab owners - Muñiz and O'Guinn
 - Consumer resistance: Burning Man – Kozinets and Sherry
 - The duopoly of globalization: Starbucks - Thompson and Arsel
 - Consumption as religious experience: Apple Newton – Schau and Muñiz

Ethnographic Theorizing In the Field

- Focus on Concepts through context
- Sampling, sampling, sampling

Ethnographic Theorizing In the Field

- Focus on Concepts through context
- Sampling, sampling, sampling
 - Sampling across people



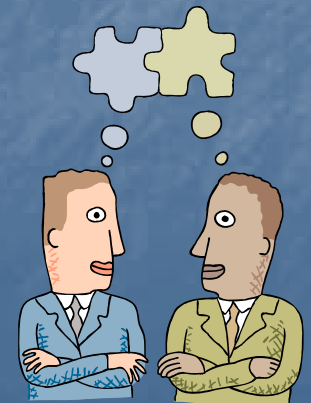
Ethnographic Theorizing In the Field

- Focus on Concepts through context
- Sampling, sampling, sampling
 - Sampling across people
 - Sampling within people across time



Ethnographic Theorizing In the Field

- Focus on Concepts through context
- Sampling, sampling, sampling
 - Sampling across people
 - Sampling within people across time
 - Sampling within people from generalization to specific instance



Ethnographic Theorizing Out of the Field

Ethnographic Theorizing Out of the Field

- Deep familiarity with the data



Ethnographic Theorizing Out of the Field

- Deep familiarity with the data
- Generating a spark of insight
 - need something to rub against the data



A story

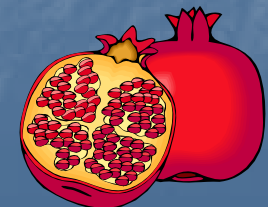
- In-class lecture on sacred and profane
 - Characteristics of the sacred: kratophany
 - Students describing items that are “special”



A story

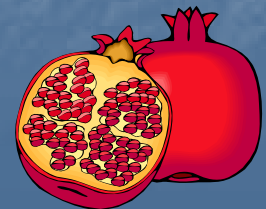
MW: "Did anybody write down something that is special to them that they feel ambivalent about?"

Jennifer (21): "Oh (a bit startled), I did. I have a pair of bobby pins with pomegranates on them. My mom gave them to me on the day that she and my dad told me they were getting a divorce. I was 12. I'll never forget that day. Its kind of strange; I don't really like pomegranates or usually wear bobby pins, but I'll always keep those, I don't really know why. I don't even really like them. But I just keep them down in the bottom of my jewelry box. Because I got them on that day, I'll always keep them."



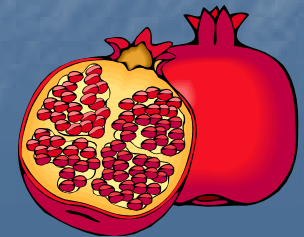
A shallow interpretation (it ain't got no etic)

- "Sacred possessions do not necessarily evoke only positive emotions. Some sacred possessions are kept even though their owners associate them with negative emotions or experiences that remind them of negative emotions."



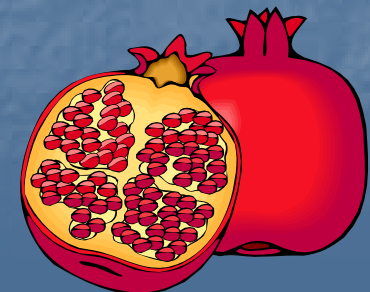
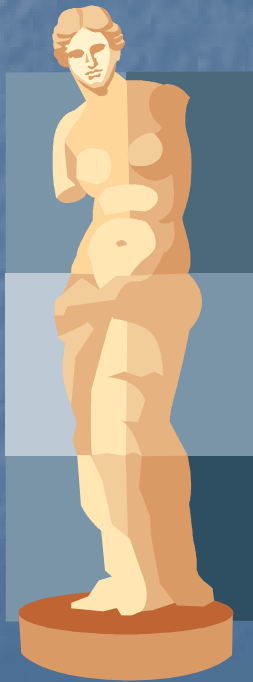
A deeper interpretation?

- What could we “rub against” this story to generate a spark of insight, some depth of interpretation beyond the emic perspective of Jennifer?



How about ...

- The Greek myth:
 - Demeter and Persephone
- Where can it take us?



How to generate a spark

- Who are your influences?



Who are your influences?



Exercise: remembering influences

- Classics Read:

- Weber, Durkheim, Freud, Simmel, Parsons, Goffman, Jung, Wallerstein

- Mentors:

- Becker, Lazarsfeld, Levy, Rogers, Zaltman (alphabetical)

- Works read deeply

- Bourdieu, Greek myths, Grimm's fairy tales, Steiner

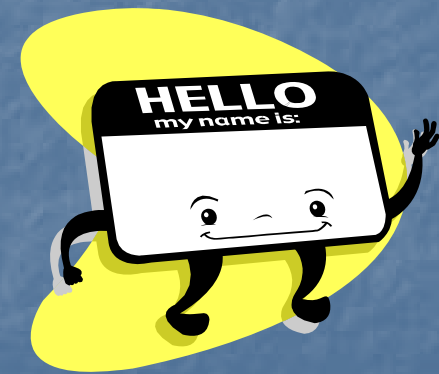
An exercise in generating (theoretical) spark

- Recall 3 - 5 influences
- In groups of 3
- Pull out some data
- Invite the influences in



Invite the influences in

- Not just application and relabeling



Invite your influences in

- Ask each influence to dialogue with you about the data passage
- To make a theoretical contribution
- OR, to explain why they are unable to comment

Lessons learned from Inviting in the Influences

Recap of Our Agenda

- A disclaimer: NOT doctrine
- Some clarifications:
 - Ethnography, Theorizing, The Field
- Ethnographic Theorizing In the Field
 - Focus on Concepts through context
 - Sampling, sampling, sampling
- Ethnographic Theorizing Out of the Field
 - Deep familiarity with the data
 - Inviting in the Influences

The End

- I'm here until Friday morning
- After that, I'm only a click away

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