Public Lecture:

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State category-making for ‘race-ethnic’ groups—the case of Netherlands’ migrant policies

Date: Monday, 08. July, 2013
Time: 16:30-18:00
Place: Institute for Advanced Studies, seminar room for Sociology, 1st floor

Short summary

Enumerating its population for various purposes, among them social justice goals such as ending discrimination, is a mark of the modern state. To develop indicators that measure policy outcomes (e.g., educational attainment, employment, housing) across time, the groups being counted need to be named and defined—i.e., states need to create categories. Category-making and -use construct and sustain shared identity within definitional borders, but in doing so, they commonly lump together, at a high level of aggregation, people who otherwise do not see themselves as sharing an identity. When such lumpy categories do not treat all of the state’s residents equivalently, they convey a sense of difference that can leave some feeling that they do not belong. The categories thereby create and reinforce the inequalities they were meant to remedy. This conundrum often lies at the heart of such category-making, between intended social justice goals and policies’ unintended, and at times perverse, impacts: state-created categories can end up institutionalizing the very discrimination they were intended to eradicate.
This talk explores this conundrum in the case of The Netherlands' creation and use of categories concerning "newcomers" [allochthons] and "oldcomers" [autochthons], as seen in the sorts of everyday registration forms the average resident is asked to fill out. The state has argued that migrants need to adopt its common norms and values, and various programs give voice to an image of "Dutch-ness" which articulates these values. The ethnicity-related categories used in these registration forms, however, work against this desired ideal of integration—of migrants' adopting "Dutch" norms and values. Analysis further shows that, despite Constitutional restrictions on the use of the word race, the forms, in asking explicitly about ethnicity and nationality and in their operational definitions of those terms, are also carrying on a race discourse, albeit largely without using that word. The detailed analysis enables a rare view of the unfolding processes of the social construction of the ideas of Dutch-ness, ethnicity, and race, with clear implications for policy-making.

Short biographical note
Dvora Yanow, Visiting Professor in Wageningen University's Faculty of Social Sciences, Communication, Philosophy, and Technology Department, is a policy/political and organizational ethnographer and interpretive methodologist whose research and teaching are shaped by an overall interest in questions of the generation and communication of knowing and meaning in organizational and policy settings. Research topics include state-created categories for race-ethnic identity, immigrant integration policies and citizen-making practices, research regulation (ethics board) policies, practice studies, science/technology museums and the idea of science, and built space/place analysis. Her most recent book, Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes (Routledge 2012), with Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, is the first volume in their co-edited Routledge Series on Interpretive Methods. The second edition of their co-edited Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn (ME Sharpe) is due out in April 2013.

Research and teaching interests
Ways of knowing and doing: methods and meaning (interpretive philosophies and methodologies/methods); organizational and political/policy ethnography; metaphor, category, framing, and built space analyses; comparative analysis; the meaning of evidence in policies and practices; science museums and the meaning of ‘science’
Practice studies: reflective practice; collective organizational learning; organizational culture, identity, image; organizational metaphors
Interpretive policy analysis: the communication of public policy meanings and social change; policy implementation; research regulatory policies; immigrant integration policies and
practices; state creation and use of race-ethnic and nationality categories; ‘science’ and ‘racial’ differences

**Books** ([co-]authored and co-edited)


*Organizational culture, 2 volumes.* Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2011, co-edited with Sierk Ybema and Ida Sabelis.

**Book series and edited special issues**

Founding co-director/editor, *Routledge Series on Interpretive Methods* (with Peregrine Schwartz-Shea; 2009—).


“Linguistic approaches to analysing policies and the political.” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 16/2 (2013): 167-310 (co-edited with Alan Cienki).


“Public administration in ‘translation’: Non-Western and other administrative practices.” *Administrative Theory & Praxis* 27 (2005), 81 ff.

Journal articles and book chapters


“A hitchhiker’s guide to the public administration research universe: Surviving conversations on methodologies and methods.” *Public Administration Review* 72/3: 401-8 (with Markus Haverland).

2011 “Studying culture and symbolism in organizations.” In Sierk Ybema, Dvora Yanow, and Ida Sabelis, eds., *Organizational culture*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar (with Sierk Ybema).

“Allochtoon als metafoor en categorie. Over de handelingsimplicaties van beleidstaal” [“Allochtoon” as metaphor and category: On the action implications of policy language]. *Beleid en Maatschappij* 38/2: 160-78 (with Marleen van der Haar).


2010 “Hoe overleef ik discussies over bestuurskundig onderzoek?” [How do I survive discussions about administrative research?] *Bestuurskunde* 4: 87-95 (with Markus Haverland).
“Giving voice to space: Academic practices and the material world.” In Alfons van Marrewijk and Dvora Yanow, eds., Organizational spaces: Rematerializing the workaday world. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.


“Organizational ethnography and methodological angst: Myths and challenges in the field.” Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management 4/2, 186-99.


“Methodology by metaphor: Ways of seeing in painting and research.” *Organization Studies* 29, 23-44 (with Mary Jo Hatch).


“Doing social science in a humanistic manner.” In Dvora Yanow and Peregrine


“Jewish administrative practice and a philosophy of public administration.” *Administrative Theory & Praxis* 27, 134-158.


"Can you see an organization learn?" *Comportamento Organizacional e Gestao* 5/2, 55-67.


"Space stories; Or, Studying museum buildings as organizational spaces, while reflecting on interpretive methods and their narration." *Journal of Management Inquiry* 7, 215-239.


1990 "Tackling the implementation problem: Epistemological issues in policy


"Ontological and interpretive logics in organizational studies." *Methods* 1, 73-89.