



**UNIVERSITÀ
DI TRENTO**

**Dipartimento di
Sociologia e Ricerca Sociale**

Where do research questions come from? 'Abductive' reasoning from puzzles to research questions to systematic data generation.

Tuesday, 17 February

Meeting Room 1 - Mezzanine Floor

Starts at 11:00 a.m.

Speaker

Dvora Yanow, Guest Professor, Knowledge/Technology/Innovation Group, Wageningen University
Emerita, California State University, East Bay

Discussant

Alicia Chiodi, Università di Trento

Abstract

The subtitle of this talk makes the process of designing a research project look much more linear than it actually is, at least when it comes to interpretive-qualitative research. In fact, the process is typically much more interactive, following iterative and recursive motion—a process of reasoning known as abduction in (pragmatist) philosophy which has been adopted by methodologists.

Abductive reasoning commonly begins with a puzzle, which the researcher then seeks to make less puzzling through efforts to explain it. In this presentation, I will talk about the "puzzles" that were the start of my current research—looking at state created categories for im/migrants and how that category-making racializes them. I will reconstruct (as best I can) the route of my thinking and inquiry, and retrace my search for evidence (data) that would resolve the puzzling aspects and offer explanations. The abductive process meant moving back and forth between puzzles and evidence (the iterative dimension) and constantly reconsidering the framing of the research questions (the recursive part).

Contacts

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