Ethnographies - Interactive workshop

Jo Hickman Dunne

Ethnography is more than a method, it is a practice - a specialized form of fieldwork which draws on a family of methods. It is a means of immersing ourselves in a research context in order to gain understanding through our involvement in the ‘day-to-day’. In this presentation, I will describe the key processes which underpin this methodological approach and its application in contemporary research practices, not least because ethnographic methods are deemed to be particularly useful when trying to reproduce children’s knowledges and experiences. Perhaps most importantly, I will also explore some of the potential pitfalls of ethnographic practices and some key considerations for adopting this approach in research with children and young people.

I am a University Teacher at Loughborough University, where my teaching focuses broadly on social and cultural geography. I am also a Research Assistant at The Centre for Youth Impact, a charity who seek to progress thinking around practice in impact measurement for youth work. My research interests encompass the geographies of education, learning and youth, with a focus on informal educational initiatives. I am concerned with the ways in which these informal practices both merge and conflict with mainstream education practice, and how experiences of these overlapping spaces are shaped by axes of social difference.