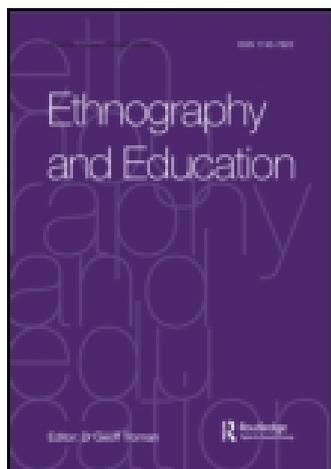


This article was downloaded by: [134.117.10.200]

On: 04 May 2015, At: 20:14

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Ethnography and Education

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/reae20>

Ethnography: problems and prospects

Martyn Hammersley^a

^a The Open University, UK

Published online: 22 Aug 2006.

To cite this article: Martyn Hammersley (2006) Ethnography: problems and prospects, *Ethnography and Education*, 1:1, 3-14, DOI: [10.1080/17457820500512697](https://doi.org/10.1080/17457820500512697)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17457820500512697>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

Ethnography: problems and prospects

Martyn Hammersley^{*}
The Open University, UK

This article reviews a range of difficult issues that currently face ethnographic research, and offers some reflections on them. These issues include: how ethnographers define the spatial and temporal boundaries of what they study; how they determine the context that is appropriate for understanding it; in what senses ethnography can be—or is—virtual rather than actual; the role of interviews as a data source; the relationship between ethnography and discourse analysis; the tempting parallel with imaginative writing; and, finally, whether ethnography should have, or can avoid having, political or practical commitments of some kind, beyond its aim of producing value-relevant knowledge.

In this article I want to review some aspects of the current state of ethnography, focusing on areas of tension and conflict. While the selection of issues, and especially the comments made about them, reflect my own commitments, the problems identified are common ones. Their importance would be hard to deny, even though there is little consensus about how to deal with them.

Of course, debate begins with what the term ‘ethnography’ actually means. The problem is that, like many other methodological terms used by social scientists, ‘ethnography’ does not form part of a clear and systematic taxonomy. And, as a result, it is used in different ways on different occasions to mark off work of one kind from that of another. There is probably not much point in trying to draw tight boundaries around its meaning, but we do need to recognise the range of variation involved, and on each occasion of use it is necessary to give some indication of how the term is being used.

Obviously, a key dimension relates to the kind of *methods* employed. Ethnography is often seen as a specific form of qualitative inquiry, to be compared or contrasted with others, for example, with life history work or discourse analysis; though even the boundaries with these neighbours are somewhat fuzzy. Yet ethnographic work sometimes includes the use of quantitative data and analysis, so that it may not be purely qualitative in character. This was true within anthropology during much of the twentieth century. Similarly, Chicago School sociologists often combined ‘case study’ with quantitative data, and so did early ethnographic work on schools in the UK (see Hargreaves, 1967; Lacey, 1970; Woods, 1979; Ball, 1981). This indicates a

^{*}Faculty of Education and Language Studies, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA, UK. Email: m.hammersley@open.ac.uk

degree of eclecticism on the part of many who call themselves ethnographers. Indeed, some commentators have emphasised the use of multiple data collection methods as a key feature of ethnography.

Despite all this, we can identify a methodological orientation that can reasonably be treated as central to ethnography, and for the purposes of this discussion I will take the term to refer to a form of social and educational research that emphasises the importance of studying *at first hand* what people do and say in particular contexts. This usually involves fairly lengthy contact, through participant observation in relevant settings, and/or through relatively open-ended interviews designed to understand people's perspectives, perhaps complemented by the study of various sorts of document—official, publicly available, or personal.

Also crucial to ethnography, it seems to me, is a tension between what we might call participant and analytic perspectives. As ethnographers, we typically insist on the importance of coming to understand the perspectives of the people being studied if we are to explain, or even to describe accurately, the activities they engage in and the courses of action they adopt. At the same time, there is usually an equal emphasis on developing an *analytic* understanding of perspectives, activities and actions, one that is likely to be different from, perhaps even in conflict with, how the people themselves see the world. As I will suggest later, some of the current debates arise from this tension, with differential emphasis being placed on one side or the other.

The view from anthropology

The origins of ethnography lie in anthropology, so a good place to begin is with the criticisms that some anthropologists have made of what they see as other social scientists' misuse of the term 'ethnography'.¹ For most anthropologists, from the early twentieth century at least until fairly recently, ethnography involved actually living in the communities of the people being studied, more or less round the clock, participating in their activities to one degree or another as well as interviewing them, collecting genealogies, drawing maps of the locale, collecting artefacts, and so on. Moreover, this fieldwork took place over a long period of time, at least a year and often several years.

By contrast, much of what is referred to as ethnography in the other social sciences today, including educational research, does not meet one or more of the criteria built into this anthropological definition. Most ethnographers do not actually live with the people they study, for example, residing in the same place and spending time with them most of the day, most of the week, month in and month out. Instead, many sociological ethnographers focus on what happens in a particular work locale or social institution when it is in operation, so that in this sense their participant observation is part-time. This is true even of some Western anthropologists, where they study 'at home' or in other large complex societies. In fact, this restriction on the character of ethnography largely reflects the nature of such societies, where people do

not both live and work together in a single place: activities are segmented in diverse geographical and social locales.

Equally important, the fieldwork carried out by many ethnographers today is, at best, likely to last months rather than years. This reflects, no doubt, the intensification of work in universities, the increasing pressure on academics for productivity, and the shortening of contracts for researchers employed on particular projects. However, it probably also arises from the use of portable audio- and video-recording devices, which can produce very large amounts of data quite rapidly; and the more intensive, micro-focused forms of analysis that have been developed to deal with data of these kinds.²

These changes in the practice of ethnography raise some issues that are quite important, but which have not always been given the attention they deserve. We sometimes tend to treat people as if their behaviour in the situations we study is entirely a product of those situations, rather than of who they are and what they do elsewhere—simply because we do not have observational data about the rest of their lives. For example, whereas anthropologists have generally insisted on locating what goes on inside schools within the context of the local community in which the children, and perhaps even the teachers, live, psychologists and sociologists have tended to focus almost entirely on what happens within school buildings (see Delamont & Atkinson, 1980). And this has been true even when there have been attempts to locate the perspectives and patterns of action found there in a wider, macro context.³

Much the same point can be made in temporal terms. The shortness of much contemporary fieldwork can encourage a rather ahistorical perspective, one which neglects the local and wider history of the institution being studied as well as the biographies of the participants.⁴ Furthermore, some ethnographers tend to treat what they observe in the situations they study as if this can be assumed to be typical of what *always* happens there. And there are several reasons why this may not be the case. An obvious one is the danger of reactivity, that our own behaviour affects what we are studying, and that this will lead us to misunderstand what normally happens in the setting. This is especially likely if we only spend a relatively small amount of time there. But it is also important to remember that what goes on in any situation changes over time. Some of these changes are cyclical, in shorter- and/or longer-term patterns.

The importance of these temporal cycles can be illustrated by a case from the 1960s. At that time, many US educationists came to England in order to learn from what was happening in its world-renowned progressive primary schools. Very often they spent only a day or two in the schools before going back with the message that these schools allowed children complete control over their own learning. However, one research team adopted a rather more systematic approach to time sampling (Berlak *et al.*, 1975). They found that the typical pattern was for the teacher to set up the work for the week with the children on Monday mornings, and to evaluate what had been achieved on Friday afternoons. Anyone visiting only on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays might well come to the conclusion that the teacher had

played no role in organising what was to be learned, and did not evaluate it. But this was a misconception resulting from a failure to take account of the cyclical patterns that often operate within settings: from assuming that what happens on one day of the week is much the same as what occurs on other days. Equally important is to take account of longer-term trends affecting the situations being studied. It is often argued that the pace of change is more rapid today than in the past; but, even so, there is a danger that if fieldwork is relatively brief we may not detect such trends.⁵

So, what I am suggesting is that we need to bear in mind the consequences of moving from the older anthropological model of ethnographic fieldwork to its more recent forms, in which we study only parts of people's lives over relatively short time periods, perhaps only being in the field a few days each week. There are problems of sampling and generalisation here, and a danger of failing to recognise both cyclical variability and fundamental patterns of change. Of course, I am not suggesting that *all* ethnographic research has suffered from these problems. Nor am I proposing that we can or should return to the older form of ethnographic work characteristic of anthropology, only that we must recognise the dangers involved in the shift that has taken place.

The problem of context: micro or macro, discovered or constructed?

Another area of disagreement, again sometimes framed in terms of debates about what is and is not ethnography, concerns whether the researcher must locate what is being studied in the context of the wider society, or whether instead he or she should concentrate on studying in great detail what people do in particular *local* contexts. In other words, some ethnographers have insisted that ethnography be holistic, whereas others have promoted what is sometimes called micro-ethnography.⁶ As already noted, partly as a result of the increasing use of audio- and video-recording devices, there has been a growing tendency for ethnographers to carry out detailed micro analysis of what was actually said and done on particular occasions. Nevertheless, there are still those who insist on the old ideal of holism, arguing that we cannot understand what goes on within particular situations unless we can locate these within a larger picture.

Most of us feel the pull of holism to some extent. However, there are at least two problems. First, how are we to determine what is the appropriate wider context in which to situate what we are studying? Second, how are we to gain the knowledge we need about that context? Neither of these issues is straightforward.

As regards the first, we perhaps ought to ask whether context is discovered or constructed; and, if it is constructed, whether it is constructed by the participants or by the analyst. One approach to context is to argue that it is generated by the people being studied, so that the analyst must discover and document context as this is constituted in and through particular processes of social interaction. In other words, it is suggested that participants in social activities effectively 'context' those activities in the course of carrying them out, by indicating to one another what is and is not

relevant. This is an argument developed by conversation analysts, but now also employed by many discourse analysts and some ethnographers. From this point of view, any attempt by an analyst to place actors and their activities in a different, 'external', context can only be an imposition, a matter of analytic act, perhaps even an act of symbolic violence.

I would not want to dismiss this argument out of hand as there is some truth in it, but we must ask whether it is the case that people always explicitly indicate the context in which they see themselves as operating. And we must also consider whether it is right to assume that people know the context in which their activities can best be understood for the purposes of social science explanation.⁷

By contrast, some Marxists and others have charged ethnography with only documenting the surface of events in particular local settings, rather than seeking to understand the deeper social forces that shape the whole society, and that operate even within those settings (see, for example, Sharp, 1981). More recently, a similar kind of argument has been developed by Michael Burawoy and his colleagues, to the effect that we can only properly comprehend what is going on in any site today against the background of a world-wide process of globalisation (Burawoy *et al.*, 2000). Of course, this illustrates that there can be disagreement among analysts committed to holism about the nature of the larger, macro context in which any ethnographic investigation must be located.

This leads into the second question, concerning how we are to acquire the information about the wider world needed in order to situate the local phenomena we are studying. Must we find some way of studying that wider context ethnographically? And, if so, how can this be done, since it covers such a large number of diverse contexts? Or, for this purpose, does ethnography need to be integrated into or combined with other kinds of social science research that are better suited to studying whole institutional domains, national societies, and global forces? If so, this may have very significant implications for the practice of ethnographic research—for instance, it may constrain the generation of grounded theory. Or, finally, should we simply rely on existing social theory to define what the context is? This solution also raises difficult issues. One concerns how we are to select from among the various theories available. Do we do this according to evidence, and if so what evidence is available that would allow us to choose soundly? Or do we choose on the basis of our value commitments? If the latter, does this introduce bias into our ethnography? There are some fundamental questions here to do with whether ethnography is, as it were, theoretically neutral, or whether it has an essential affinity with particular theoretical orientations; we should note that at various times it has been closely associated with several quite different approaches, including functionalism, structuralism, interactionism, and Marxism.

A rather different point of view is that the choice of context by ethnographers is necessarily arbitrary, in the sense that a host of different stories could be told about any situation, each one placing it in a different temporal and spatial context. From this perspective, ethnography is simply one means among others for telling stories about the social world, stories that need not be seen as competitive in epistemic

terms. Of course, given this orientation, there would be a puzzle as to why anyone would go to the trouble of engaging in ethnographic fieldwork. Why not just write fiction in the manner of novelists and short story writers?

Context as virtual?

Let me turn now to an apparently more specific issue: whether there can be such a thing as internet or virtual ethnography. I am not going to discuss this in detail, but it links back in an interesting way to the issue of context and raises some further questions as well. As we saw, the original form of anthropological ethnography placed great emphasis on the researcher's participation in, and first-hand observation of, the culture being investigated. And that emphasis was also central to sociological research by members of the Chicago School. By contrast, in the case of internet ethnography all the data are usually collected online without meeting the people concerned face-to-face. The question that arises here is: does ethnography depend upon the physical presence of the ethnographer in the midst of the people being studied? Or does the assumption that an ethnographer must be physically present involve an outdated conception of what is required for ethnographic work? Perhaps it even implies a false notion of personhood in a postmodern world? Mark Poster, amongst others, has argued that postmodernity de-centres and disperses identities, and blurs the boundaries between humans and machines (Poster, 1990).

This is not just a methodological but also a theoretical issue: are there online cultures that can be studied by internet ethnographers? Or can we only understand what happens online in the context of the ordinary—offline—lives of the people who produce blogs, put messages on message boards, participate in chat rooms, set up their own websites, and so on? We need to remember here that, with the availability of mobile phones and portable computers, electronic virtuality is now embedded within actuality in a more dispersed and active way than ever before. Moreover, the cultures that ordinary ethnography studies are also 'virtual', in a certain sense: they are not objects that we can see or touch.

So, on the one hand, there are severe limits to internet data from a traditional ethnographic point of view: we do not know who the writers of the online contributions are, what their purposes were, what their circumstances are, etc. *beyond what they tell us*. And we should perhaps be cautious about accepting what they say at face value.⁸ However, from another point of view, it can be argued that, since for the most part online interaction operates in an orderly fashion, participants obviously display enough about themselves through their contributions for them to be able to understand one another. And it might be argued that an ethnographer should need no more than this in studying online practices.

What conclusions we draw about these matters will clearly have major implications for how we take account of the increasing role of electronically-mediated communication of all kinds in the lives of the people we study. Furthermore, this debate

highlights one of the most significant fracture lines within ethnography today. In crude terms, this is between more traditional kinds of ethnography, of both anthropological and sociological sorts, and forms of ethnography that draw on discourse and narrative analysis. And this division is also displayed in other areas too, for example, in arguments about the uses of interviews.

On the uses and limitations of interviews

As I indicated at the beginning of the article, interviewing has always been a part of what ethnographers do. However, in recent times an increasing amount of work, self-labelled as ethnographic or as qualitative, has relied very heavily, or even *entirely*, on interviews. And this has stimulated questions about whether such work can be called ethnographic, and even more importantly about whether it is methodologically sound.

As regards the first issue, there are those who insist that ethnography must involve, should perhaps even be primarily based on, participant observation. In these terms, exclusive reliance on interview data cannot be ethnographic, even if the interviews are relatively open-ended ones. Others, however, insist that what is essential to ethnography is a concern with capturing participant perspectives, or even giving voice to the people studied. And they argue that interviews are a peculiarly effective means for realising this ethnographic principle. Furthermore, emphasis is often placed upon the importance of interpreting what people say in the context of their distinctive biographical experiences, which can probably only be accessed through interviews or elicited documents.

More recently, though, some radical doubts have been expressed about the two standard uses to which interview data have been put by ethnographers and other social researchers. These doubts are central to what has been labelled 'the radical critique of interviews'.⁹ The standard uses of interviews are as follows:

1. as a source of witness accounts about settings and events in the social world, that the ethnographer may or may not have been able to observe her or himself; and
2. as supplying evidence about informants' general perspectives or attitudes: inferences being made about these from what people say and do in the interview situation.

These traditional uses are declared illegitimate by the radical critique, on the grounds that they make questionable inferences from what is said in particular interview contexts to events, attitudes and/or behaviour beyond those contexts. Also denied is that interviews display the genuine, individual voices of informants. Instead, it is argued that what informants say in interview contexts is always socio-discursively constructed in a context-sensitive fashion, and indeed that it is only through such local processes of social construction that informants are themselves constituted, or positioned, as having particular identities.

Interestingly, this radical critique of interviews can lead off in at least two rather different directions. One is that research should be restricted to observational data collected in naturally occurring situations, ruling out the use of interviews completely. An example is conversation analysis. Alternatively, interviews may be used as sources of data, but only in order to explore the discursive strategies and resources deployed there, perhaps on the assumption that these will be used in other contexts as well. This orientation is characteristic of much discourse analysis, especially that influenced by Potter and Wetherell (1987).

Now, neither of these two options is true to the spirit of ethnography, it seems to me. The first either ignores the traditional ethnographic commitment to understanding people's perspectives, or assumes that these can be inferred from observed behaviour. The second strategy abandons the sorts of inference usually applied to interview data by ethnographers, and undermines the links that ethnographers typically make between interview and observational data, for example, in terms of a contrast between what people say and what they actually do.

Some of the arguments that underpin the radical critique of interviews also carry implications for how ethnographers analyse data and write up their work. This is particularly obvious if one pushes the scepticism that is a key element of the radical critique to its logical conclusion. This would mean that the task of the ethnographer becomes either to try to represent the incommensurable discourses that are circulating within the situation studied; or, alternatively, to produce a research report that continually subverts its own claim to knowledge, in much the same way that some modern literature subverts its own pretence of realism. The second of these strategies is encouraged by some of the literature on the discursive or rhetorical strategies used by ethnographers that emerged during the 1980s and 1990s, and is exemplified by a few of the so-called 'experimental' ethnographic texts that have appeared.¹⁰ This amounts to what we might call a literary turn in ethnographic writing. However, in my view, while it is important to be aware of the rhetorical devices we employ as ethnographers (see Atkinson, 1991), and while we should use whatever means of expression serve our purposes best, the redefinition of ethnography as a form of imaginative literature amounts to an abandonment of the task of inquiry (Hammersley, 1993, 1999). But, of course, there are many who would disagree with this judgment.

Ethnography as political

Mixed into recent discussions of ethnographic writing have been arguments about politics as well as poetics. In recent decades many ethnographers have come to see their work as involving political or practical commitments of some sort, these going beyond a commitment to the production of value-relevant knowledge. This links back to an issue I mentioned earlier: how far ethnography is a theoretically neutral technique or involves epistemological and ontological assumptions which may be tied to particular political or ethical commitments. Rejection of neutrality is most obvious

in the case of critical and feminist ethnography, but it is also involved where ethnographers want to make their work serve the requirements of policymaking or professional practice.¹¹

For me, the ethnographer must neither be in the service of some political establishment or profession nor an organic intellectual seeking to further the interests of marginalised, exploited, or dominated groups. Both of these orientations greatly increase the danger of systematic bias. Furthermore, understanding people does not require sharing their beliefs, or being obliged to offer them support; if it did, this would considerably reduce the range of people that could be studied. Nor does it mean assuming that what they say is true, and restraining oneself from assessing its validity, any more than it means subjecting them to moral evaluation. There is a strong tendency among some qualitative researchers today to treat informants differentially, according to whether they belong to dominant or subordinate groups (see Hammersley, 1998). Thus, the accounts provided by those judged as belonging to or representing dominant interests are immediately subjected to ideology critique. By contrast, ethnographers sometimes insist that what informants from subordinate groups say, or at least *some* parts of what they say, must be accepted at face value, implying that any failure to do this infringes their rights or indicates bias on the part of the researcher (see, for instance, Connolly, 1992). Yet, once again, both these strategies seem likely to lead to systematic error.

As I indicated at the beginning, in my view the essence of ethnography is the tension between trying to understand people's perspectives from the inside while also viewing them and their behaviour more distantly, in ways that may be alien (and perhaps even objectionable) to them. Some recent developments in ethnographic work seem to have lost that tension, and the dynamic it supplies.

Conclusion

In this article I have outlined a number of important and difficult issues that currently face ethnographers.¹² These concern the spatial and temporal parameters of data collection and the nature of socio-cultural phenomena, how context should be taken into account, what can and cannot be inferred from particular sorts of data, and indeed issues about the very purpose of ethnographic work. Many fellow ethnographers will disagree with at least some of the views I have expressed here. However, we can probably all agree that being an ethnographer today is neither an unproblematic nor a very comfortable role. The very character of ethnography has come to be contested. I have outlined here some of the debates that are taking place, and the issues involved.

Acknowledgements

An earlier version of this paper was given at a seminar in January 2005, which formed part of a Qualitative Research Methodology Series organised by the School of

Nursing and Midwifery and the School of Education, University of Southampton, and sponsored by the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods.

Notes

1. For these anthropological criticisms see, for example, Wolcott (1982, 1999, Chapter 9).
2. Jeffrey and Troman (2004) consider the sources of change in the length of time spent in the field, emphasising the role of external constraints, and how its consequences should be addressed.
3. Of course, we can always collect data about the rest of people's lives via interviews, but there are problems with this, and with the use of interviews generally, which I will come to later.
4. There are examples of longitudinal ethnography designed to overcome this problem: in the field of education see Smith *et al.* (1987) and Pollard (1999).
5. For a useful discussion of the importance of time sampling in ethnographic research see Ball (1983). Jeffrey and Troman (2004) outline some different modes of temporal engagement with the field, illustrating these from their own research.
6. For contrasting views see, for example, Lutz (1981) and Erickson (1992).
7. Some of those who adopt this conception of context, for example, those influenced by ethnomethodology, reject the idea that the goal of social research can be explanation; they see its task as description.
8. For useful discussion of many of the issues involved in 'virtual' or 'internet' ethnography see Paccagnella (1997), Hine (2000), Mann and Stewart (2000), and Markham (2005).
9. See Murphy *et al.* (1998), and for a more recent example of this radical critique: Atkinson and Coffey (2002). For a more developed response to the arguments making up the critique than can be provided here see Hammersley (2003) or Hammersley and Gomm (2005).
10. See, for example, Ashmore (1989). On issues to do with ethnographic writing, a seminal text is Clifford and Marcus (1986). For further references see Hammersley (1994). For an illuminating application of discourse analysis to both education and educational research see MacLure (2003).
11. For a discussion of this issue contrasting older and newer perspectives among ethnographers and qualitative researchers see Atkinson *et al.* (2003). For some interesting reflections on this issue in the context of the potential contribution of interpretive perspectives to policy analysis see Jennings (1983, pp. 27–35). Elsewhere, I have outlined my own views on the issue of the role of politics in social research in some detail; see Hammersley (1995, 2000, 2004).
12. I have not been able to cover every issue here, of course. One particularly noticeable absence is the effect of attempts to restructure educational research so as to serve evidence-based policymaking and practice. For some discussion of this see Hodkinson (2004) and Hammersley (2005). Another, not unrelated, one concerns the increased difficulties in gaining access to educational institutions, on which see Troman (1996). A third relates to ethics and the increasing role of ethics committees in universities and other institutions.

References

- Ashmore, M. (1989) *The reflexive thesis* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press).
- Atkinson, P. (1991) *The ethnographic imagination* (London, Routledge).
- Atkinson, P. & Coffey, A. (2002) Revisiting the relationship between participant observation and interviewing, in: J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds) *Handbook of interview research* (Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage).

- Atkinson, P., Coffey, A. & Delamont, S. (2003) *Key themes in qualitative research: continuities and change* (Walnut Creek, CA, Altamira).
- Ball, S. J. (1981) *Beachside comprehensive* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).
- Ball, S. J. (1983) Case study research in education: some notes and problems, in: M. Hammersley (Ed.) *The ethnography of schooling* (Driffield, Nafferton Books).
- Berlak, A. C., Berlak, H., Bagenstos, N. T. & Mikel, E. R. (1975) Teaching and learning in English primary schools, *School Review*, 83(2), 215–243 [Reprinted in M. Hammersley & P. Woods (Eds) (1976) *The process of schooling* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul)].
- Burawoy, M., Blum, J. A., George, S., Gille, Z., Gowan, T., Haney, L., Klawiter, M., Lopez, S. H., Riain, S. & Thayer, M. (2000) *Global ethnography: forces, connections, and imaginations in a postmodern world* (Berkeley, University of California Press).
- Clifford, J. & Marcus, G. (Eds) (1986) *Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography* (Berkeley, CA, University of California Press).
- Connolly, P. (1992) Playing if by the rules: the politics of research in ‘race’ and education, *British Educational Research Journal*, 18(2), 133–148.
- Delamont, S. & Atkinson, P. (1980) The two traditions in educational ethnography: sociology and anthropology compared, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 1(2), 139–152.
- Erickson, F. (1992) Ethnographic microanalysis of interaction, in: M. LeCompte, W. Millroy & J. Preissle (Eds) *Handbook of qualitative research in education* (San Diego, CA, Academic Press).
- Hammersley, M. (1993) The rhetorical turn in ethnography, *Social Science Information*, 32(1), 23–37.
- Hammersley, M. (1994) Ethnographic writing, *Social Research Update*, 5.
- Hammersley, M. (1995) *The politics of social research* (London, Sage).
- Hammersley, M. (1998) Partisanship and credibility: the case of anti-racist educational research, in: P. Connolly & B. Troyna (Eds) *Researching ‘race’ in educational settings* (Buckingham, Open University Press).
- Hammersley, M. (1999) Not bricolage but boatbuilding: exploring two metaphors for thinking about ethnography, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 28(6), 574–585.
- Hammersley, M. (2000) *Taking sides in social research* (London, Routledge).
- Hammersley, M. (2003) Recent radical criticism of interview studies: any implications for the sociology of education? *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 24(1), 119–126.
- Hammersley, M. (2004) Should ethnographers be against inequality? On Becker, value neutrality and researcher partisanship, in: B. Jeffrey & G. Walford (Eds) *Ethnographies of educational and cultural conflicts: strategies and resolutions* (Oxford, Elsevier).
- Hammersley, M. (2005) Countering the ‘new orthodoxy’ in educational research: a response to Phil Hodgkinson, *British Educational Research Journal*, 31(2), 139–155.
- Hammersley, M. & Gomm, R. (2005) Recent radical criticism of the interview in qualitative inquiry, in: M. Holborn & M. Haralambos (Eds) *Developments in sociology*, vol. 20 (Ormskirk, Causeway Press/Edinburgh, Pearson Education).
- Hargreaves, D. H. (1967) *Social relations in a secondary school* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).
- Hine, C. (2000) *Virtual ethnography* (London, Sage).
- Hodkinson, P. (2004) Research as a form of work: expertise, community and methodological objectivity, *British Educational Research Journal*, 30(1), 9–26.
- Jeffrey, B. & Troman, G. (2004) Time for ethnography, *British Educational Research Journal*, 30(4), 535–548.
- Jennings, B. (1983) Interpretive social science and policy analysis, in: D. Callahan & B. Jennings (Eds) *Ethics, the social sciences and policy analysis* (New York, Plenum Press).
- Lacey, C. (1970) *Hightown grammar* (Manchester, Manchester University Press).
- Lutz, F. (1981) Ethnography: the holistic approach to understanding schooling, in: J. Green & C. Wallat (Eds) *Ethnography and language in educational settings* (Norwood, NJ, Ablex).

- MacLure, M. (2003) *Discourse in educational and social research* (Buckingham, Open University Press).
- Mann, C. & Stewart, F. (2000) *Internet communication and qualitative research: a handbook for researching online* (London, Sage).
- Markham, A. N. (2005) The methods, politics and ethics of representation in online ethnography, in: N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds) *Handbook of qualitative research* (Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage).
- Murphy, E., Dingwall, R., Greatbatch, D., Parker, S. & Watson, P. (1998) Qualitative research methods in health technology assessment: a review of the literature, *Health Technology Assessment*, 2(16), 1–260. Available online at: <http://www.hta.nhsweb.nhs.uk/execsumm/summ216.htm> (accessed 14 August 2002).
- Paccagnella, L. (1997) Getting the seats of your pants dirty: strategies for ethnographic research on virtual communities, *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, 3(1). Available online at: <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol3/issue1/paccagnella.html> (accessed 30 October 2005).
- Pollard, A. with Filer, A. (1999) *The social world of pupil careers* (London, Cassell).
- Poster, M. (1990) *The mode of information* (Cambridge, Polity).
- Potter, J. & Wetherell, M. (1987) *Discourse and social psychology* (London, Sage).
- Sharp, R. (1981) Self-contained ethnography or a science of phenomenal forms and inner relations, *Boston University Journal of Education*, 164(1), 48–63 [Reprinted in Hammersley, M. (Ed.) (1993) *Controversies in classroom research*, 2nd ed. (Buckingham, Open University Press)].
- Smith, L., Prunty, J. J., Dwyer, D. C. & Kleine, P. F. (1987) *The fate of an innovative school: the history and present status of the Kensington School* (London, Falmer).
- Thorne, B. (1993) *Gender play: girls and boys in school* (Buckingham, Open University Press).
- Troman, G. (1996) No entry signs: educational change and some problems encountered in negotiating entry to educational settings, *British Educational Research Journal*, 22(2), 71–88.
- Wolcott, H. (1982) Mirrors, models and monitors: educator adaptations of the ethnographic innovation, in: G. Spindler (Ed.) *Doing the ethnography of schooling* (New York, Holt Rinehart and Winston).
- Wolcott, H. (1999) *Ethnography: a way of seeing* (Walnut Creek, CA, Altamira).
- Woods, P. (1979) *The divided school* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).