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The importance of social science theory in building a program of research on social inequalities in smoking

The objective of the presentation is to discuss, using the example of a programme of research on social inequalities in smoking, a few current and crucial issues in the area of social inequities in health that could benefit from the contribution of social scientific theory. The programme of research to be presented has both an etiological as well as a practice-based focus. Regarding the former, research using Pierre Bourdieu's practice theory and Anthony Giddens' structuration theory aims to better understand how smoking comes to be socially differentiated across geographical areas. In the latter project, social theory is being used to help explore the discourses used by tobacco control practitioners when describing youth smokers and the role that these discourses may inadvertently play in deepening social inequalities in smoking. Using the work of Michel Foucault to describe the role of governmentality in tobacco control, I will discuss the ways in which the Canadian tobacco control discourse on youth smoking is both "constituting and producing the smoker" as a poor, marginalized person.

Biography

Katherine Frohlich is Full Professor at the Département de médecine sociale et préventive, ESPUM, Université de Montréal and Research Associate with the Institut de Recherche en Santé Publique, Université de Montréal (IRSPUM). Invited professor at the Institut de médecine sociale et préventive de l'Université de LausanneLausanne for the academic year 2016-2017, her research focuses on social inequalities in health-related practices, social theory in social epidemiology and health promotion and the sociology of smoking.
http://www.medsp.umontreal.ca/IRSPUM_DB/bottin.asp?no=849

Discutant

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