Drs. Frank and Dietz explore the theory of how a person’s use of natural resources is affected by the social relations in which the person is embedded. The result, they argue, is that even the most compelling and ubiquitous of global forces will be filtered by one’s immediate social network. As a corollary, global forces will become overwhelming when they not only change individual incentives but when they change the very networks in which people are embedded. They then turn to a theoretical exploration of the venues that create opportunities for interaction. But because change agents can affect the occurrence and participation in these venues, the venues define meso-level structures that mediate between global forces and individual networks.

Dr. Frank received his Ph.D. in measurement, evaluation and statistical analysis from the School of Education at the University of Chicago in 1993. His substantive interests include the study of schools as organizations, social structures of students and teachers and school decision-making, and social capital. His substantive areas are linked to several methodological interests: social network analysis, causal inference and multi-level models. His publications include quantitative methods for representing relations among actors in a social network, robustness indices for inferences, and the effects of social capital in schools and other social contexts. Dr. Frank’s current projects include studies of how schools respond to increases in core curricular requirements, cognitive linkages among how aspects of knowledge, how adolescents respond to their social contexts in schools, the diffusion of knowledge about climate change, and how the decisions about natural resource use in small communities are embedded in social contexts.