

Experiment as Anthropological Critique

Pluralistic Tales from Two Collaborative Events

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This lecture is concerned with the role of experimentation in anthropology's ontological turn (OT). Drawing on my role in two recent collaborative experiments - *The Comedy of Things* and *The Social Fabric* - I explore how new forms of pluralistic thinking and doing emerge when different disciplines and disparate fields of practice are brought together within an explicitly experimental design. On this basis I argue that, rather than a rapturous new beginning, OT pursues anthropology's inherently self-experimental impulse to its necessary conclusion. This involves not just experimenting with what ethnographic fieldwork and field sites may be, or with what a fieldworker and an interlocutor might be. It also - and above all - experiments with what an anthropological concept and an anthropological theory might be. Ideally, this is what allows the ethnographic contingencies that emerge from fieldwork to transform perpetually the very concepts that one uses to describe and analyse these ethnographic materials anthropologically - self-experimentation, that is, all the way down.

1st of December 2016
4.30-6.30pm

Prof Stuart Hall Building (PSH) 302
Goldsmiths, University of London
Lewisham Way
London SE14 6NW

Pluralistic Variations Lecture Series

Discussant:
Professor Daniel Neyland (Sociology)

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