



Critique In/Of Anthropology?

Subseries of the Wednesday Seminars

Richard Rottenburg

Critique, post-foundationalism and the need to do the right thing



Richard Rottenburg is professor of anthropology at the University in Halle, where he has founded a research network focusing on the anthropology of "Law, Organization, Science and Technology" (LOST). In January 2019 he will join the WITS Institute for Social and Economic Research as Distinguished Professor of Science and Technology Studies. Inspired by social studies of science and technology and renditions of pragmatist social theory, the emergence of material-semiotic orderings and their institutionalizations are at the heart of his current work.

For more information on the series see:
http://ksa.univie.ac.at/wednesday_seminars

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(HS C, NIG, Universitätsstraße 7, 4th Floor)

Robust critique stands on firm ground, is based on confirmed evidence and boldly claims to see something that others can't see. Post-foundational critique is sceptical of its own foundation, mainly promoting critical reflexivity and emphasizing that others can probably see something else. The social study of critique asserts that critique is a necessary condition of possibility for institutions, since rule-following presupposes the possibility of disobeying the rule. Following these three iterations of critique, the question still remains – how we can know what the right thing to do is, and how could we ever agree on it? This is the burning question of translation that is even more compelling when we consider that the number of issues that permit relativist answers is diminishing in our time. This theoretical argument will be presented with the help of empirical examples.

...upcoming next

12.12.2018 Jeanette Edwards

The body, beauty and botox: revisiting the 'awkward relationship' between feminism and anthropology