

SPRING 2018 COLLOQUIUM SERIES

Date: Wednesday, May 2

Time: 3:15 – 5PM

Location: Social Sciences 1, room 261

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Relations of Resistance: Tuberculosis as Multispecies Engagement

Apart from occasional visits to diagnostic facilities and regular visits to receive treatment, active tuberculosis disease in India is largely managed with outpatient ambulatory treatment and home care, based on the assumption that a well-treated TB disease is relatively quickly rendered non-infectious. In a context where initial treatment is often pursued in a largely commercial healthcare sector, where sporadic, insufficient and wrong treatment is common, rather than becoming non-infectious the disease may become resistant to first-line treatment and remain infectious. In this presentation, I will explore how a multispecies ethnography approach to the anthropological study of the development of drug-resistant tuberculosis may allow for a focus on multilayered and interrelated resistances across traditional species barriers. Forms of resistance at intracellular levels interact dynamically with resistances to pharmaco-toxicity, commercial exploitation and intersubjective rejection linked to diagnostic and treatment practices; all interlinked with the progression of disease/cure. In my current book project, I am exploring the relevance of multispecies ethnography for the study of the rise of drug resistant tuberculosis amidst intensified global health governance, while aiming to contribute to the ongoing development of the notion of 'biosocial'. The empirically informed part of my talk presents insights from ethnographic work-in-progress based on dialogues and other exchanges with people suffering from drug-resistant tuberculosis in India.

