



The School of Critical Studies in Education, invites you to a Seminar by

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Her research interests include: anthropology of policy and globalization; internationalization and commercialization of higher education, human capital thinking, new forms of student participation. Her Ph.D. focused on recent reforms of Danish universities and the changing notions of students

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Room: N636

12.30pm-1.30pm

**Faculty of Education,
74 Epsom Ave, Epsom**

Explorations into the Anthropology of Policy

With the point of departure in a study of Danish university reform and shifting conditions for student participation, this paper explores different anthropological approaches to the study of policy processes. It takes a critical stance towards two seemingly opposed, but nevertheless intimately connected approaches which are often deployed in anthropologies of policy. The first is the Foucauldian governmentality approach which – despite claims to the contrary – tends to view policy as a more or less straightforward execution of political programmes. The second one is the ethnographic insistence on 'appropriation', which in its critique of 'implementation' studies attempts to assign agency and creativity to the people towards whom a policy is directed. This entails sensitivity towards emic perspectives and recognition that actors can influence their own circumstances. While sympathising with this latter ambition, I argue that the notion of appropriation implicitly presents policy as a 'thing' for someone to re-act to and thereby tacitly presupposes a pre-given character of political programmes. As an alternative to these two approaches, the paper explores an approach it calls 'figuration work' and argues that anthropological analysis of competing figuration processes may work to open up spaces for alternative visions of both subjectivity and of policy-making.

All are welcome