

- Theme: Design as future making, design as shaping futures.

What can design contribute to anticipation studies?

Anticipation studies is an emerging research field where diverging disciplines, multiple theories and methodologies meet. In general anticipation has been connected to the relation between the universal and the particular and problems of abstraction (de Vrijner 2000), of the capacity of the human mind of designating things by a universal vocabulary, while having experience only with particular instances of those things (ibid). On the one side, the broad interest in anticipation brings multiple concepts related to anticipation studies on the table. On the other side, it brings different perspectives *on* and conceptions *of* anticipation. In this presentation, we focus on conceptions of anticipation and future-making within the field of design anthropology and ask what conceptualizations and methodologies this field brings to the discussion about anticipation.

We find anticipation studies based on the performative ways of actively orienting oneself temporally (Granjou et al. 2017), as a regime of being in time (Adams et al. 2009), or as a mode of researching by projecting trends from facts into future states or as modalities by which the environmental future is anticipated and prepared for (Granjou et al. 2017), especially including the “more than human” futures, which has to be included in environmental futures. In studies about policymaking, another aspect of anticipation is discussed, namely that anticipation is seen as contrast to reactive policymaking. While reactive policymaking relates to existing problems, anticipation represent a mode that tunes into emerging hazards and other threats and uncertain risks (DeLeo 2017). Anticipatory policy emphasizes planning and preparedness and represents the binary opposite from psychological anticipation, where focus is on the emotional rehearsal needed to handle diverging feelings that come when having to wait for an experience, and involves cognitive schemata that enables the “organism to actually perceive the expected information” (Riegler, 2003 in Poli 2010:5).

The theme *Design as future making, design as shaping futures*, in this year’s call for conference, brings yet another set of conceptions and approaches to anticipation. That is, design is deeply identified as a profession highly skilled in taking actions in the present in order to construct a desired future reality (Simon 1969; Buchanan 2001; Krippendorf 2006). Design is an interventionist approach to research on the future, where interventions are explored in both practical and conceptual senses (Akama et al. 2018). Impacts of interventions are often imperceptible, fuzzy, vague and dispersed (Akama 2015), whereby design interventions, more recently, have been discussed as tools that further dialogues “about possibility” that “relate to people’s concerns, aspirations and imaginative horizons” (Halse and Boffi 2016:101). The focus on interventions, come to frame design as ways of taking actions by focusing on the process as well as the product. This opens for understanding design efforts as a process of future making that gives us a space to understand different conceptions of anticipation, which come to play in making futures.

In Design anthropology, the perspective on future making “point to a new wave of critical reflection on the place of design and scholarship and the need to align this to understandings of futures as ongoingly emergent, contingent and indeterminate” (Akama et al 2018: 10). The major relationship between Design and Anthropology has been understood to be through ethnographic methods, but its affinity goes beyond methods. That is, the relation between

design and anthropology is also related to the processes of inquiry and discovery that “includes the iterative way process and product are interconnected and the reflexive involvement by researchers and designers” (Otto & Smith 2016:3). In this way design anthropology is a distinct style of knowing (ibid) that focuses on multiplicities of ideas, critiques, potentialities, situated possibilities, formations and actions at the intersection of design and everyday life (Kjærsgaard, Halse, Smith, Vangkilde, Binder, Otto 2016). Design anthropology is especially concerned about futures as non-linear, plural and experiential, that is “shaped through uncertainty, experimentation, collaboration and contestation at specific sites of design anthropological engagement”(ibid).

In this presentation we explore established concepts and methods of future-making within design anthropology and discuss how such approach and its methods supports anticipatory exercises and dialogues. With a theoretical gesture to Science and Technology Studies (e.g. Felt 2015), we find such discussion important in an effort to elevate sociotechnical issues, which are both negotiated and formed with reference to the particular (e.g. local practices and actions) and the general (e.g. policies).

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