



INTERVENTIONS IN CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

2023 SEMINAR SERIES

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'Evidence Building in Ethnographic Research (But the Data is Dubious)



This paper draws on two ethnographic stories obtained during fieldwork in Nairobi, Kenya in 2019. The first story describes an event that participants claim will happen. A second story is an event that participants maintain did not happen. How should researchers treat interview data that contradict truthfulness and destabilise the trustworthiness of the speaker? These stories show that while ethnographic tools cannot predict what might happen or uncover what 'really' happened, researchers can no less observe how people organise and manage their lives around these stories. The stories in this paper provide an occasion to critically examine the assumption we, as researchers, place on participants to speak the truth when they 'speak for themselves'.



Thursday 2 March, 13:00-14:30 (SAST)
Room 401, Arts and Social Sciences Building, SU
Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology

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