Repeat! The Logics of Exercises, Trainings, Tests and Rehearsals

November Wednesday 5th – Friday 7th, 2014
Goldsmiths, University of London
The Orangery, 80 Lewisham way, SE14 6PB (entrance Shardeloes Road)

Wednesday 5th November
12.45 Registration
13.15 Welcome

Michael Guggenheim | Department of Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London
Repetition, Repetition, Repetition

13.45-15.00 The Dis-unity of Time: Creation and Repetition
Gay McAuley | Department of Performance Studies, University of Sydney
Rehearsal Practice in the Age of the Director
Anna Bull | Department of Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London
Rehearsing Restraint: Time, Unity and Subjectivity in the Socio-musical Logics of Youth Classical Music Ensembles

15.00-15.20 Break
15.20-16.35 Improvisation and Flexibility
Tim Fitzpatrick | Department of Performance Studies, University of Sydney
Chaos, Cowardice, Authority and Role-Play on Singapore Airlines Flight 006
Sonja Schmid | Department of Science & Technology in Society, Virginia Tech
Improvisation in Nuclear Emergency Preparedness and Response

16.35-16.45 Break
16.45 Keynote Lecture
Joerg Potthast | Institut für Soziologie, Technische Universität Berlin
Ecologies of Trial: Why Testing has become Stressful

Commentator: (to be confirmed)

Thursday, 6th November
9.30-10.50 Between Rehearsal and Performance
Svetlana Bardina | The Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences
Seduction as a Learning Process. When Does the Process of Learning End?

Mark R. Johnson | Science & Technology Studies Unit, University of York
Predicting Play: The Expectations of Game Playtesting

11.10-12.30 Scenarios and Simulations

Elizabeth Reddy | Department of Anthropology, University of California, Irvine
Experts and Earthquake Drills: Producing Affective Causality

Biswanath Dash | Tata Centre for Disaster Management, Tata Institute of Social Science, Mumbai
Imagination of Disaster and its Response: Simulation Scenarios, Training and Drills

12.30-13.30 Lunch

13.30-14.50 Between the Bodies and Worlds

Elisa Rieger | Department of Cultural Anthropology, University of Graz
Don’t Panic – You’re Heading for Catastrophe Every Day!

Thomas Vangebeergen | LASC / CSI, Liege University / Ecole des Mines
All that Fuss for Nothing! Eating Carrots to Test their Colour

15.10-16.30 Making Things and Bodies

Marcos Silbermann | State University of Campinas
Who Can be a Top Athlete? An Ethnographic Study of the Formation of Swimmers in Search of High Performance

Zuzana Hrdličková | Department of Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London
Three Images of the Same: Portraying the Body in the Disaster Management Exercise

16.30-16.45 Break

16.45 Keynote Lecture

Tracy C. Davis | Department of English, Northwestern University
The Witness Security Program: Navigating the Relocation Matrix

Commentator: Austin Zeiderman | London School of Economics

Friday, 7th November

9.30-10.50 The Governmental Logics of Exercises

Nathaniel O’Grady | Department of Geography and Environment, University of Southampton
Joe Deville | Department of Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London
Repeating Repetition: The Promise of Practice, Preparation and Preparedness in Swiss Disaster Response

10.50-11.10 Break

11.10-12.30 The Organisational Logics of Exercises

Francisca Grommé | Department of Anthropology, University of Amsterdam
Exercise and Training as Interventions in the Future of Dutch Crime Control

Nils Ellebrecht | Institut für Soziologie, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität, Freiburg
Large-Scale Exercises: Public Ceremony of Effectiveness Training? On the Challenge of Being a High Reliability Organisation
Repeat! The Logics of Exercises, Trainings, Tests and Rehearsals
Conference Abstracts

KEYNOTE LECTURES

Jörg Potthast | Ecologies of Trial: Why Testing Has Become Stressful

This contribution adds to research program known as the sociology of critique, conventions and testing. It proceeds by systematically exploring how testing relates to rehearsing. Following this line of research, critical capacity is key to understanding social order. Hence, testing cannot be conceived of as a mechanism determining society from outside. On the contrary, testing is subject worth of sociological inquiry as a variety of forms and modes of testing are constantly put on trial themselves (Boltanski 2012; Eymard-Duvernay & Marchal 1997; Desrosières 2014). As a recent ear-mark for this shift towards a society critical of its ways of testing, one can refer to the arrival of “Stressstest”, chosen “word of the year” in 2011.

While attention to the phenomena covered by this term may differ, there are various sociological approaches seeking to understand why testing has become stressful both beyond national borders and domains of expertise. The present contribution does not deal with the technicalities of re-assessing the risk of nuclear energy, complex infrastructural projects or financial markets. It does not engage in uncovering flaws in testing is carried out. Instead, it suggests disentangling three hypotheses that cut across these fields.

For certain, the field of Science and Technology Studies has closely analysed testing in various fields (Barthe 2012, Downer 2007; Epstein 2007; Hirschauer 2010; Leonardi 2010; MacKenzie 2001/Heintz 2003; Teil 2012). It has early on established practice-based view, focusing on how laboratory testing relates to (other mundane practices of) rehearsing, training and exercising (Collins 1985; Pickering 1992). Yet there is still a need for clarifying why “testing” should be considered as a “test case” (Pinch 1993) for the sake of theoretical discussion.

In order to fill this gap, the following underlying hypotheses are further elaborated. According to the first hypothesis, established ways of testing which have co-evolved with their respective fields over considerable periods of time will cease to be effective once they have been contaminated by “Stressstest” (cf. Vollmer 2011). The second hypothesis is based on a pragmatic understanding of testing. Rather than attributing uncertainty to an exogenous contamination, it is conceived of as a constituent any testing procedure, oscillating back and forth between oppositely poled positions, either giving primacy to testing or to rehearsing, exercising and training (cf. Sloterdijk 2009). In times of “Stressstest”, however, this feature is particularly highlighted and brought to reflexive attention. Finally, there is a third hypothesis which is more common the literature on professions. Contrary to the “contamination” and “oscillation”, it finds “Stressstest” to be a new buzzword for a more familiar process of refining testing arrangements. According to this view, this process may give rise to controversy (and considerable stress), but stay within the range of experts and organization in charge.

Drawing on Bourdieu, the sociology of critique, conventions and testing has inherited its preoccupation for testing. While Bourdieu has shaped his critical view on testing in the field of higher education (Bourdieu & Passeron 1971), it has resulted in a sociological critique that has been brought to many other fields. Against this view, sociology of critique, conventions and
testing has suggested a research program that takes a purely pragmatic view on testing (Boltanski 2012). While the present contribution admits that this pragmatic reformulation has been a decisive step, contrasting three views on the future ecologies of trial brings up topics for subsequent debate.

**Tracy C. Davis | Navigating the Relocation Matrix**

Relocated witnesses in the US federal witness security program "hide in plain sight" as an urgent matter of life and death. How are they equipped to do so, and what sustains their pretense within a new community so that they are untraceable by former associates? Unlike felons on the run, or any other class of person illegitimately circulating in the public realm, Witsec participants have new state-sanctioned identities; unlike refugees, they can take no consolation in the familiarity of likeminded compatriots. Two models of social identity combine to account for this -- social role play (Goffman) and performativity (Butler, Barad, Braidotti) -- as an immanent process of "becoming-imperceptible."

**CONFERENCE PAPERS**

**Gay McAuley | Rehearsal Practice in the Age of the Director**

Rehearsal, as we know it today in the west, is substantially an invention of the twentieth century, and it is inextricably bound up with the emergence and development of the role of the director. Starting with a historical perspective that facilitates appreciation of the range of practices in use in contemporary theatre-making, this paper explores the double function of the rehearsal process, which is both original creation (the production that emerges from the intensive work of the artists, craftspeople and technicians is absolutely unique even when based on a text that has been performed countless times before) and preparation for performance (the elements of the performance, once elaborated, have to be learned, internalised, co-ordinated and repeated until the work can be shown to audiences safely and effectively). The words for rehearsal in major European languages (Probe, prova, ensayo, répétition, repetitsia) reflect aspects of this double function, but the etymology of the English word “rehearsal” contains a number of other associations that reveal further aspects of the practice.

Drawing on extensive and intensive observations of rehearsal process (see Gay McAuley, *Not Magic But Work: an Ethnographic Account of a Rehearsal Process*, University of Manchester Press, 2012), the paper concludes that contemporary rehearsal practice constitutes a highly effective model of group creativity that could be applied in different institutional contexts.

**Anna Bull | Rehearsing Restraint: Time, Unity and Subjectivity in the Socio-musical Logics of Youth Classical Music Ensembles**

This paper draws on an ethnographic study of youth orchestra and youth choir rehearsals in order to theorise the content of form of classical music rehearsals. The standard logic of classical music rehearsals can be summarised as follows. Phase one: the piece of music is played all the way through without (intentionally) stopping. Phase two: the conductor gives detailed criticism to the players about exactly how to play particular parts, ‘fixing’ short passages of the music until the players get it right. Phase three (usually the performance): the piece is put back together and played all the way through. The form is therefore whole/parts/whole (parts/whole/parts/whole, ad infinitum, depending on how many rehearsals take place). This is also a process of unity/fragmentation/unity; or coherence/incoherence/coherence; or
organising time/chopping up time/organising time.

This process becomes particularly interesting when we contrast it with ideas of coherence, unity and time in ideologies of classical music. There is an overwhelming preoccupation in musicological writing on the organic unity of a musical work (Green, 1990; Taylor: 2007, Goehr, 1991). This is the concept of the structure of a piece of music as forming a complex but logical, interconnected whole, where all the fragments are subsumed into a larger structure. However, as Christopher Small suggests, these formal structures of classical music are a way of making sure that we never get ‘lost in time’ (1977). We always know where we have come from and where we are going, and roughly what will happen in order to get there. Similarly, Susan McClary (2000) describes the development of these tonal structures in the 17th century as occurring in parallel with the development of a ‘centered subjectivity’ which has developed into contemporary ideas of the self (see also Charles Taylor, 1989). This posits a subject who draws on the past to plan for the future. If the capacity to imagine possible future(s) and invest in their unfolding is a classed resource, as Skeggs (2004) suggests, then tonality and its formal structures could be seen as one way of learning or practising this ability.

What, then, is being ‘rehearsed’ in these settings? If we turn away from the musical text to examine instead the social relations of rehearsals, a different but related logic emerges. This process of stopping and starting requires a high level of embodied restraint from participants, intensified by the powerful affective states which were being cultivated through the (usually) Romantic repertoire. This is enforced through the authority of the white male conductor, who not only ‘plays’ the orchestra or choir as his instrument, but constantly corrects individual players to match the perfect vision of the musical work which he alone has access to. The young musicians in these groups, therefore, are not only learning musical skills, but also rehearsing embodied discipline and restraint - attributes which, similarly to the ability to draw on the past to plan for the future, have long been attributed to a bourgeois subjectivity.

Tim Fitzpatrick | Chaos, Cowardice, Authority and Role-play on Singapore Airlines flight 006

In October 2000, late at night and in the teeth of a typhoon, Singapore Airlines flight 006 crashed on take-off from Taiwan International Airport: it broke up after striking construction machinery because it was on the wrong runway. This paper will draw on accounts and reports of the disaster and on interviews conducted with a survivor, Steven Courtney. Courtney, in the absence of meaningful leadership by panicked cabin crew, led a group of passengers to safety from the rear part of the broken fuselage by self-consciously using ‘theatrical’ techniques. My interviews with him focus on how he might have developed such techniques (in a sort of life-long rehearsal), and what factors might have enabled him to deploy them consciously in a brief and intense period of extreme stress.

His actions will be analysed in terms of a performance theory derived from anthropologist Richard Bauman that focuses on flexibility (a better term than the much-misunderstood ‘improvisation’) in the moment of performance, and in particular on two aspects of such flexibility: the importance of ‘role’ in such an economy; and the advantages and importance of ‘distributed cognition’ in any decentralised mode of creating complex performance.

The two relevant theatrical examples to be discussed will be: the non-scripted (but by no means ‘improvised’) performance of the Italian commedia dell’arte; and Elizabethan performance, where actors had access only to their ‘parts’ rather than to the whole script of the play. These ways of making performance both exemplify what was standard practice until the invention of the ‘director’ in the mid-19th century: for hundreds of years complex theatrical performance was worked up with very limited rehearsal and without any central dominating and organising authority-figure. Such a process, based on decentralised decision-making and ‘distributed’
authority-taking, might have implications for training for and managing chaotic disaster situations.

No matter how well trained for, an aircraft evacuation can go wrong due to unexpected factors (gale-force winds affected deployment of SIA 006’s escape chutes, for example). How can cabin personnel be prepared so as to respond adequately in a situation that is inherently chaotic and disorienting? How can they be trained to deploy flexible, resilient responses to deal with random factors? But – going back a step – how can such skills be developed in the first place?

What skills did Steven Courtney draw on, and what characteristics of his background and history equipped him with those skills and enabled him to deploy them? A highly-developed understanding of rhetoric and a capacity to ‘read’ a context and the other participants’ states of mind seem to have been key elements, and these are two significant skills that actors (and teachers) learn.

Distributed cognition is a feature too of CRM (Cabin [or Crew] Resource Management), a participatory process developed to help avoid some of the sorts of the mistakes made on the flight deck of SIA 006. It involves assertiveness training – but how is ‘assertiveness’ achieved and communicated? What skills enable participants in complex processes to make their contributions in effective and impactful manners? The sorts of presentational and rhetorical skills which actors use in performance (emphasis, redundancy, overcoding) are potentially relevant.

Sonja Schmid | Improvisation in Nuclear Emergency Preparedness and Response

Planning for nuclear emergency response has taken on a new urgency after the Fukushima accident in 2011. The long-standing emphasis on prevention of accidents has since been complemented by national and international discussions about how to improve and facilitate more effective strategies of responding to a worst-case scenario, in the industry’s parlance “a beyond design basis accident.” While emergency response is organized differently around the world, the emphasis on rules, training, and rehearsing is a pervasive feature: trusting the authority of expert knowledge, the routinization of approved practices through exercises and drills is a standard element of nuclear emergency response protocols around the world (and at the international level).

Scholarship on disasters has repeatedly shown the significance of improvised action in emergency response. While often missing from official accounts, improvisation features prominently in oral histories and personal memoirs of disaster responders. This paper is part of a research project on “Globalizing Nuclear Emergency Response” that aims at identifying and documenting what constitutes desirable global expertise in nuclear emergency response, and at developing the idea of expert improvisation as analytical instrument and practical resource.

Drawing on the interdisciplinary tool-kit of Science and Technology Studies (STS), this contribution will focus on improvisation as a central characteristic of emergency response. Rather than attempting to “de-rehearsing the world,” however, the paper will (a) chart a map of how improvisation could be understood as an ever-present element of rehearsing and performing, and (b) develop a more nuanced concept of “expert improvisation” that is necessary in the aftermath of socio-technical disasters. Building on routines of rehearsing, practicing, and holding “drills,” then, this approach focuses on the central role of expertise in improvisation: in unprecedented situations that require instantaneous decisions and that prohibit failure, what kind of tacit knowledge, level of skill, and ability to make judgments is required to make improvisation succeed, and when and why does it nevertheless fail? Can we
extend the musical and theatrical metaphor to developing ways of learning, teaching, and practicing improvisation?

**Svetlana Bardina | Seduction as a Learning Process: When Does the Process of Learning End?**

As a general rule, ‘acquainted persons in a social situation require a reason not to enter into a face engagement with each other, while unacquainted persons require a reason to do so’ [Goffman, 1963, p. 124]. Therefore communication with an unacquainted person must be quite a challenging task. It is well known that there exists a group of people concerned with this task, namely men who are trying to pick up a girl. It is also well known that there are special courses and trainings where one can learn how to manage this task.

Peculiarity of this practice arises from the fact that it is very hard to distinguish training and actual accomplishment here. The data I have analyzed shows that for most of men involved in this practice every encounter with a girl is perceived as a lesson rather than as a real event. That looks quite remarkable, since it is almost impossible to observe the difference between actual and training acquaintance. The order of operations does not change depending on this difference. Nonetheless, the testing character of this activity still might be revealed through a more deep and attentive observation and interviewing. This fragment shows how training task affects the practice:

> Girl is sitting on a bench near my home… Skateboard, a pack… A young child, 19, good-looking.
> - Hi, waiting for anyone?
> - (casts a fearful glance at me) Yes
> - Well, have a nice day!
> I felt … I feared of being pushy… No, I acted as though I wanted to run away. My aim was to speak to at least five girls, but I did like only two of them.

On the contrary, communication with these two ‘more attractive’ girls was much further from training and closer to acting according to his real aims. That is why this practice differs from rehearsals in a theatre and many other types of training, for instance, in sport. There are no visible boundaries between rehearsal and performance, but they still exist.

The data analyzed includes videos, interviews and posts in special blogs and forums. The methods of analysis are mixed, containing qualitative video analysis [Heath et al, 2010], and discourse analysis, as well as certain methods adopted from ethnomethodological studies of work [Garfinkel, 2002]. The main aim of the analysis is to elucidate the mentioned difference between training and acting. Moreover, challenges arising from the fact that such practice considered to be socially inappropriate are also examined.

**Mark R. Johnson | Predicting Play: The Expectations of Game Playtesting**

This paper examines the concept of “playtesting” within video game development. It considers the ways in which particular competences and skills are assigned to hypothetical players in order to predict the ways in which the game world will be interacted with, asks to what extent these future actions can be predicted, and considers what may be done to subvert or undermine these assumptions. Playtesting is used within the video game industry to prepare games for release by trying to mimic how future players will play the game. If it is predicted the players will struggle with one particular aspect of the game, for example, attempts may be made before the game’s release to alter this aspect and make it easier to understand. However, in order to do so assumptions must be constructed about how players will view the game and what their objectives within the game. Many of these objectives may be codified within the game itself –
to complete certain objectives, compete with other players in a ranked system, gain “Achievements”, and the like – whilst other objectives may be created anew by players, especially in “sandbox” games, and this uncertainty over what form of play a player will choose is at the core of playtesting practice.

In keeping with the call’s questions of how the future reality is created within the exercise, the paper first examines how playtesting attempts to deduce what forms of play will be carried out within the confines of the game. Designers of all technologies assign “tastes, competences, motives, aspirations [and] political prejudices” to the users they expect to use their technology (Akrich, 1997:208). In the case of games the aspirations may be a range of motivations – will players be “completionists” who seek to complete every aspect of the game, explorers who want to uncover everything the game has to offer, competitive players who want to deduce the most “optimal” strategies for victory, or some combination of the above?

However, there are many differences between a playtesting session and “real play”. Just as the call for papers questions the rehearsal/performance difference, playtesting may see a number of investigator effects that emphasize the divide between these two forms of play. Those playtesting will either be explicitly monitored or instructed by developers about what to test, or if not, will at least remain aware that they are being monitored. Longer-term forms of play may rarely occur within this specific and time-limited setting, whilst they may focus more on attempting to predict what they think the game developers “want” to see, raising issues about the legitimacy and applicability of playtesting results.

The paper will lastly explore some “subversive” techniques that undermine the perceived value of playtesting. This includes the concept of “modding”, which modifies the game’s code in order to add or remove content and create effects that were not just unplanned by the developers, but *could not have been planned*, the pursuit of discovering glitches and exploits within the game which are segments of the game’s code which do not function as intended and may cause humorous, unusual or detrimental effects to the game’s play and the predictability of this play; and the role of game guides and help websites which circumvent a player’s discovery and understanding of the game mechanics themselves, and replaces this organic development of understanding with an “official” version of how the game should be played. The paper will conclude by summarized the challenges in producing a meaningful or accurate playtesting experience, and consider to what extent forms of play can ever be researched without being observed *in situ* by players after the game’s release.

**Elizabeth Reddy** | *Experts and Earthquake Drills: Producing Affective Causality*

In Mexico City, an earthquake drill that some organizers and participants consider a success, others regard as a misfire, an activity that effectively undermines emergency preparedness. Some might go so far as to consider a single event to be both, and in this paper, I explore how.

Mexico City is sensitive to earthquakes from all over Mexico; unusually so, due to the fine particulate on which it was built. The city shakes often, and after the 1985 earthquake that killed tens of thousands, it is well understood by those who live there, particularly emergency prevention and preparation organizers, that the next quake could be a mild tremor or a vicious one that could, possibly, tear apart even the safest reinforced buildings. In this context, earthquake drills, or *simulacros*, have become important safety strategies, especially for schools, government agencies, and tenants of large office buildings.

The stakes are high and the means by which they are to be achieved remain unclear. Their promise: a pluripotent affective response to emergency (Stewart 2007) entailing a contagious calm and readiness applicable to anything from earthquakes to fires to plane crashes.
The practices deployed in service of this promise and may incorporate many different agents in many kinds of performance. The earthquake drills regularly undertaken in Mexico City under the guidance of Protección Civil, the nation-wide emergency preparation and management organization, may involve sheltering in place or quick exits, forewarning or surprises, jam-as-blood, sirens of all descriptions, social media use, high- and low-tech surveillance, and both eager and reluctant participants playing dead, playing doctor, or simply taking breaks.

While these simulacros are evaluated as successful or not in terms of evacuation time and participation, effective preparation is also perceived from within a sort of nervous system (as conceived by Knorr Cetina 1999 among many others). Without a real hazard to test responses against, participants understand success or misfire terms of their own orientations toward their city, their fellow citizens, and the histories and ideas they share.

Successful simulacros promote correct pluripotent affective response, but misfires undermine it with desensitization, habituation, undermined trust in emergency alarms and alerts. In a city with diverse methods of practice and evaluation for its simulacros, experts assess “misfires” and “successes” in the service of trained affective response in ways that are not always mutually exclusive.

Drawing on over a year of participant observation, interviews, and archival research on the technology and techniques of seismic safety in Mexico City, I address the simulacro as a practice understood by security experts to hold certain very powerful protective promises that can be activated and taken into the self through a variety of methods, which may contain at once failures and successes. By engaging with the ways that simulacros come to be understood as successes and/or misfires, this paper addresses the emergency drill as an important site for experts in emergency preparedness to produce and debate theories of affective response and causality.

Biswanath Dash | Imagination of Disaster and its Response: Simulation scenarios, training and drills

A key approach to disaster response is ‘scenario building’ in which scientific/ vulnerability assessment are some of the founding elements. Scenarios for likely disaster, often are elaborated explicitly for training and drills while at other times they remain in the background shaping organizational structures, operating procedures and communication practices for various emergency situation. How these scenarios are conceptualized, how do they take form, packaged and evolve in changing context? How do cultural, political and institutional factors come into play in the process of ‘scenario building’ and what underlies negotiation of diverse agendas? What role such ‘scenario building’ projects seek to perform and how are such means legitimized? Similarly how do they reflect scientific knowledge claims and how gaps in relevant knowledge are presented? Training and mock drills, complementary to such simulation scenario building exercises while on one hand institutionalizes its form of rationale, on the other, there are occasions when they reshape ‘construction’ through the process of feedback. This paper seeks to engage with above questions, and aims to bring into light how ‘scenario building’ is an active construction, reflecting societal values and goals, and characterized by negotiated nature of imagination and imposing through it a framework for stabilizing uncertainty and disorder.

The study context is India where disaster response received unprecedented attention in the last fifteen years. A host of initiatives were undertaken which related largely to planning, drills and training. While scenario building played an important role in each of them, its elaboration is more detailed in the so called ‘table top exercise’ developed for emergency functionaries. These exercises conceptualized around specific disaster situation such as earthquake, cyclone,
industrial accidents etc. provide scope to examine how a largely unknown problem of future is captured within specific representations, the way through which such representations take a life of their own and how they become frame of reference for other such problem and their management approaches. Based on author’s participation in these exercises over several years e.g. adaptation and formulation of simulation scenarios, related training and planning, this paper analyses contents of such scenarios to explicate its salient features, organizing principles and its implication for studying how particular approach is promoted and sustained.

Elisa Rieger | Don’t Panic - You’re Heading for Catastrophe Every Day!

Don’t panic – you’re heading for catastrophe every day! - motivates and encourages participants in my field of study, that is Buddhist meditation and the associated experiences of emptiness by the actors in Graz, Austria. Actors in the Buddhist field are confronted with different meditation techniques introducing meditation on emptiness, vipassana, mindful based stress reduction (MBSR) techniques or yoga elements that should help to train for understanding the catastrophe people have faced, before becoming participants in the field. Namely a life changing disruptive event has occurred in almost every case occurred.

In my contribution, the training for emptiness, as aim of meditation techniques and stable states of enlightenment, shall be questioned. On the one hand I will focus on the Buddhist dharma of the ‘seven point mind training’ to achieve Bodhicitta (state of mind of enlightenment in the Mahayana tradition). On the other hand it shall become evident how the social and cultural embodiment of a so called conventional reality of the 21st century adopts the traditional Buddhist knowledge of training the mind, and how the mediated absence of inherent existence is explained, tested and exercised in the field. A certain amount of discipline, every day practice and special time-experiences - i.e. deliberately chosen time-outs or disrupted life biographies, situations of strong felt delusion or the incorporation of a fragmented society - seem to give rise in the contemplative setting to something that my interview partners claim not to be representable by language or other ways of passing on this special knowledge. According to Maurice Blanchots L’ecriture du desastre (1980), neither emptiness can exist, nor does repetition lead to power over chaotic situations.

However, in approaching the absent catastrophe, on the contrary, people experience the appearing of states of stability and calmness. The body technique of observing the mind and the constant training of not identifying with what arises from the ‘outside’, rather identifying with non-authenticity and dependent arising seem to fulfil, at least ideally, the contemporary needs of a neoliberal society. Meditation techniques have spread over the last 30 years, completing in the meantime even management practices to strengthen focus, concentration or mindfulness - often in the sense of longing for an optimum of efficiency of mind.

However, the found states of mind recreate, train and highlight an absence of order, power and therefore efficiency instead. One could connect this paradox to the ambiguity of the dominant economic system. Furthermore the deconstructivist figure of thought - death - in postmodernist contributions might be seen in a similar tradition supporting paradox logics, that connect certain understandings of emptiness with representing the world. While in the field the training finally should lead to a twofold reality in this specific religious cosmology, the gap between the preparation and performance can be huge. In the Buddhist field fleeing (inner and outer) power seems to afford tremendous and vast affordances of time, of (body)tension and of resistances concerning patterns of the social play inhabited. The logic of the ‘seven point mind training’ in contrast to my findings of the fieldwork shall finally help understanding one of today’s de-rehearsing practices.

Thomas Vangeez Bergen | All that Fuss for Nothing! Eating Carrots to Test their Colour
During long-term fieldworks, I accompanied several types of sensory expert panels, particularly on food products, which had the mission to discriminate different sorts of products and define their respective sensory profile. Their quest to an object practically exploitable in an industrial and commercial context is the center of my PhD thesis. The specificity of expert panels is to search to avoid all kind of idiosyncratic experiences to create a common perception by testing “objectively”.

I was interested to observe the period of training to understand how those people had acquired their expertise, and how their attention toward their own sensations were entangled to scientific infrastructures. I assisted to the emergence of a particular world, in which the classical categories for science practices and taste perception were completely blurred. To establish a common truth, through sturdy and stable categories, appears to be compatible with personal moods and dispositions, singular and hedonic judgments, sociocultural grounded sensorium, contingent elements, and indeterminate parameters. Resorting to standard tests, educated and coached judges, statistical treatments, specific vocabulary, comparisons to physic-chemical analysis and various other apparatuses, these labs tempt to define and assess some food products.

Sensory analyses present interesting opportunities to challenge the activity of testing. This very particular professional activity has to show us numerous lighting perspectives on daily practices in this modern world: about industry, sciences and economy.

First, because this proper word of “test” is often ambiguous and equivocal. It could be used to refer to a large space of activity. The goal of those examinations could be multiple: to outline consumers’ feelings and choices, to check the quality of production, to search new applications, or to improve a current array. In other occasions, “test” is also used to for searching good descriptions, to elaborate an efficient classification for a specific domain of activity, or even to document an unknown object. At the same time, various other expressions are employed as synonym, to name the same single session. By confronting test to other close concepts, as judgment, assessment, analysis, experience or exam, to cite a few of them, I would outline some specificity, but also multiplicity of testing.

Second, members of sensory panels (and moreover their supervisors) have to interact with entities difficult to seize and to handle with accuracy (e.g. perception, language, memory…). They cope with sophisticated methodologies and specific infrastructures, often obstacles rather solutions, in mode to test correctly their products. Because that complexity, the protocol of the test is regularly built with the members of the panel, who are at the same time the objects of the test and the “tool” of measure to approach the perception of the objects. Collaboration and coordination to organize tests is another relevant question.

Finally, test is also an opportunity to open out the legitimacy of professionals: marketers, scientists, managers, producers and many other do not hesitate to rely on sensory analysis to prove their efficiency and to enforce their actions. Test is thus also an apparatus of justification.

**Marcos Silbermann** | *Who Can be a Top Athlete? An Ethnographic Study of the Formation of Swimmers in Search of High Performance*

The question raised in the title was brought into a debate about doping in 2002, in that episode it is used to give rise to a series of responses and discourses on the nature of the athlete’s body and, consequently, on the human body, as opposed to risky doping effects. Under the performances of the body of a top athlete would be represented the ideas of the human body and its limits potential. Thus, to put this question, we are led to question the limits of this
assemblage of tissues, bones and organs, which we call the human body, to respond to who can be an athlete involves defining what can a body. The present work aims to bring these issues to their practical sense and approach them ethnographically. Describe how the knowledge and practices of sports training involved in training elite athletes simultaneously formulate and articulate the object upon which they act, i.e., the body of the athletes. For this, I intend to present an ethnography conducted in a club in Porto Alegre, Brazil, where I could follow the extensive work by one of the most experienced coaches with a trajectory of significant results on the national level, including directing the Brazilian national swimming team during the 2003 Pan American Games. Responsible for training some of the young swimmers with the best performance in the scenario of the current Brazilian swimming. To make the achievement of a performance edge is necessary to draw a thin line between athlete and water through the development of a variety of sociotechnical mediations. Articulated with knowledge of biomechanical principles, Olympic lifting workout weight, numerous dietary care and neurolinguistic programming. My intention is to describe how is developed and articulated by the coach, this diversity of techniques undertaken daily to shape the bodies of his athletes, in view of the particular performances of each. The idea is that each athlete in their quest for a particular performance engages himself in a different socio-technical collective in the quest to achieve a new performance and thus a new body is produced. In this sense, athletic performance shall be understood in its heterogeneous aspects, conceptual and material artifacts involved in its creation aspect. In this perspective, the daily practices of training and the continuous search for new tools and techniques are understood as the formulation of a possible body only through the creation of this particular routine. Finally, tensing the anthropos as a conceptual figure, both ethically questioning what we know and understand as human, as disciplinary, highlighting the methodological limits of anthropological analysis, when it happens as disciplinary project, that intend to understand the Human.

Zuzana Hrdličková | Three Images of the Same: Portraying the Body in the Disaster Management Exercise

Since 2005, when new legislation was passed, India has subscribed to a new disaster management framework which improves its disaster preparedness as well as its responding capacities. As a part of this process, multiple entities began to conduct disaster preparedness exercises which all operate with different images of the body.

During my fieldwork in South India, I observed disaster exercise conducted in three different settings: The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) – a multi-skilled, high-tech force of ten battalions of policemen trained to respond to “any kind” of catastrophe – use a particular imaginary of the population as largely passive and/or troublemaking. On the other hand, the emergency and disaster exercise of the Apollo hospital in Chennai operated with quite different image of people – as bodies displaying physical symptoms and injuries. Finally, in the disaster exercise conducted by a female community group in a fishing village in South India, the bodies of the participants were the very objects of exercise – displaying agency as well as victimhood.

How are these differences in portraying of human bodies in the disaster exercise to be accounted for? What are the motives for such presentations on the part of exercise organizers? What tools or props are being used to support such imaginaries? In my paper, I will answer these questions drawing on my fieldwork and long-term research in disaster management in India and on perspectives from organizational theory, social anthropology and Science and Technology Studies.

Strategies of preparedness, of perfecting response before an event unfolds, have a long lineage in British emergency response. Training and drilling have been ever-present technologies in fire governance, for instance, at least since the nineteenth century. What was called drilling appears in a new incarnation as training exercises in the contemporary Fire and Rescue Service (FRS). The shift is not one in terminology alone. Rather, the deployment of drilling in the past and the enactment of exercises in the here and now contrast strikingly. The crux of disparity between these two forms of training is instantiated by, and performed within, a broader shift in the rationality that underpins fire securitisation whereby fire is governed as a risk of the future. In its affect on exercises, this re-problematisation of fire governance is best expressed as a move from rehearsal to anticipation.

In this paper, I examine the deployment of exercises in their conditioning and facilitation of a broader shift towards anticipatory modes of governance in the FRS. With resemblance to Davis’ seminal work, I trace the deployment of exercises in the contemporary FRS in their various stages; from their envisioning through digital technologies to their performance within a specific site. Conceptually, I argue that these exercises tell us much not just about changes to emergency response but to the enactment of anticipatory power in the security apparatus. I claim that anticipatory governance is fostered through the harnessing of uncertainty in risk assessment through the performance of space, time and affect and that the exercise forces a reappraisal of what we mean by protocol.

Joe Deville | Repeating Repetition: The Promise of Practice, Preparation and Preparedness in Swiss disaster Response

Exercises are designed to recreate their absent objects. But what about the repetition of exercises themselves? This paper looks at this question through the case of disaster preparedness in Switzerland. On the one hand, this is a country that is arguably one of the most disaster-ready countries in the world but, on the other, suffers a seemingly paradoxical relative absence of disasters. Despite this latter inconvenience the preparedness is exercise is a form of social and material organisation that is uncritically repeated over … and over … and over again. This paper takes one particular type of exercises as a case study: the exercise designed to test the nationwide response to a radiation leak at one of the four Swiss nuclear power stations. The repetition of such exercises is constitutionally enshrined: they should occur on a bi-annual basis. They involve a wide range of actors, from the power stations themselves, to the army, to the state organisational apparatus, to the autonomous civil protection force. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork surrounding the most recent instance of such an exercise, including material both from the exercise itself and the organisation of and follow-up from the exercise, the paper asks questions including: how do different modalities of repetition interact in such cases – for instance the repetition invited within an exercise and that of the exercise itself? What are the differential promises of repetition that are being invoked and responded to? What tensions in the power and authority of repetition emerge?

Francisca Grommé | Exercise and Training as Interventions in the Future of Dutch Crime Control

Tests, exercises and trainings can be understood as modes of anticipation by which actors prepare for threat, be it international terrorism or problem youth (Adams et al, 2009). These activities can therefore be regarded as technoscientific forms of life (Haraway, 1997). They are part of a practice and culture by which we organize ourselves for the future.
In this paper I focus on tests, exercises and trainings in the context of pilot studies. Pilot studies are used in policy to test a method or technology before implementation. Their general aims are commonly future-oriented; pilot studies produce knowledge for future usage or fine-tune a technology to local circumstances. The actual activities undertaken in the pilot, however, are often better described as testing, rehearsing and training than knowledge production or fine-tuning. This is shown for three cases in Dutch municipal crime control. The cases concern a pilot with ‘intelligent’ camera supervision; a pilot with data mining; and a pilot with a spray for marking suspects. Ethnographic data point out that testing and training were central activities in these three cases.

My aim is to develop an understanding of testing and training as interventions in future practice. I am specifically interested in how the underlying techniques, routines and knowledges of training and project management introduce temporal dynamics. Examples of temporal dynamics are ‘iteration’, ‘exception’ and ‘implementation’. Moreover, I am interested in how performances of these temporal dynamics vary as a consequence of changing constellations of actors.

To illustrate, policy officers were trained to use analytical software in the case of data mining. The training focused on solving a current policy problem: young children that develop into ‘problem youth’. Data mining training techniques introduced a temporal dynamics of iteration. I argue that these dynamics transformed the pilot study from an activity oriented to potential problem-solving in the future to problem-solving in the present. The policy makers were no longer future customers, but current users. Accordingly, a future problem (problem youth) was transferred to the present.

Yet, the policy makers employed counter-techniques. They drew on the knowledges and techniques of the (experimental) pilot study to perform their activities as an exception to their everyday routines. This temporal dynamic allowed them to distance themselves from the problems and technological solutions performed as part of the training. The policy makers did create a future policy practice, but it was the future of practitioners elsewhere. Future practice was therefore constituted by frictions between a logic of training and a logic of experimenting.

Nils Ellebrecht | Large-scale Exercises: Public Ceremony or Effectiveness Training? On the Challenge of Being a High Reliable Organisation

The lecture addresses the “high reliability” of rescue organisations such as fire brigades, emergency medical services, and disaster units. Using the example of large-scale exercises, it asks in how far rescue organisations use these exercises to strengthen their “reliability”, and in how far these exercises are public ceremonies which portray “high reliability”. The lecture shows, how the ambivalent alignment of large-scale exercises being rehearsal and performance at once is arranged. It gives empirical examples of problems occurring when the public audience comes to close to scene.

Like many formal organisations rescue organisations are confronted with the problem of being efficient (“doing things right”) and effective (“doing the right things”) at the same time. While efficiency oftentimes is tantamount to routine, effectiveness means finding the right strategy in and/or for a certain situation. High reliability theory is teaching us that rescue organisations are efficient and effective at the same time, and therefore: high reliable. This ability is considered to stem from a typical organisational culture. High reliability organisations are not only equipped with routines for recurrent tasks, but also with a “culture of mindfulness” enabling them to break away from routines at the right moment.

Todd La Porte, a sociological voice in the context of high reliability research, has highlighted
that high reliability organisations (HRO) typically attract rigorous public and political attention. This intensive interest from the organisational environment in ‘proper working’ might have pushed the organisation to function in a highly reliable way. However, if one would look from a neo-institutional perspective, one might additionally ask, in how far the high reliability of these organisations is only a myth. Considering this, the question is, in how far high reliability is an organisational characteristic or a veneer?

Large-scale exercises serve as a good example for the high internal and external demands on rescue organisations and how these organisations normally deal with these. A look back into history clearly shows us that the genealogy of exercises is strongly linked to the idea of their trust gaining function. Today, especially large-scale exercises often lie somewhere between public show and flaw detection. Following a distinction by Trevor Pinch one might say that they are conceptualised as an experiment testing concepts and competencies as well as that they are designed as a public demonstration of preparedness, strength, and safety. Both strategies are observable before, in, and after an exercise. In my lecture, I show some empirical examples which demonstrate that these strategies do not necessarily conflict with one another. First, there is an effort from the side of the organisation to make them compatible. In large-scale exercises the public audience is situated in special areas (on stands) and accompanied with presenters explaining what’s going on at the scene. Second, when the audience leaves its place and appears in the scene – like VIPs, social scientists or strenuous journalists sometimes do – problems occur: the arranged boundary between theatre and rehearsal erodes, (formal) rules of behavioral become unclear, and different expectations conflict with another.