



Department of Anthropology

Job Talk

Anthropology of Race, Racisms and Racialization
All faculty and students are welcome

Emily Avera

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Blood Has No Colour

Racialized histories, Civic virtue, and the Risky Politics of Donor
In/Ex-clusion in South African Blood Services

South Africa's blood transfusion services are world-class. They have ensured the safety and sustainability of the blood supply in a society beset with high disease prevalence, limited resources, government corruption, and racialized inequality. They manage the "national resource" of blood with an array of technologies, but are bedeviled by a history of categorically profiling blood donors by race and sexuality, even post-apartheid. Drawing from her ethnographic fieldwork in 2017-2018, Avera examines how and degree to which the South African National Blood Service (SANBS) has dealt with the recent past of racially profiling the use of donor's blood until the mid 2000s. They have subsequently turned from racialized exclusion criteria toward working to actively increase numbers of black donors who are underrepresented in the blood supply and are now seen as central to its sustainability. Avera connects the racialization of donor recruitment to confluences of race and biology, analyzing the consequences of such confluences. In particular, this talk attends to outreach campaigns intended to appeal to specific communities, parsing out the ramifications of racializing blood donation and the transitional dynamics of these communities. As a counterpoint, the talk also provides ethnographic accounts of how donors and potential donors perceive these changes in the racial logics of donor recruitment and exclusion. Building from this analysis of the blood services' present donor and community outreach strategies in relation to reckoning with its exclusionary histories, the talk further suggests a way forward in utilizing the blood services' potential to negotiate and enact social change.

Friday January 31, 2020

12:00-1:30pm

2043 VARI HALL, Department of Anthropology

Light refreshments will be served