

ENGLISH SUMMARIES

Mia Krogager Mathiasen and Kasper Tang Vangkilde: The Politics of Innovation. On Infant Simulators, Vulnerable Youth and the Dream of Having a Child

This article focuses attention on “the politics of innovation” based on the argument that any innovative effort is inherently political and raises moral and ethical questions. The authors of the article argue that innovation essentially constitutes an attempt to shape and guide the future in novel directions that differ from the present in desirable ways. Thus, innovation entails a kind of deconstruction or critique of established perceptions and practices – and, as such, cannot escape being political. Based on fieldwork in a Danish municipality which has introduced caregiving courses with technological infant simulators to young vulnerable people who dream of having a child, the article demonstrates how the politics of innovation is particularly pertinent in innovative initiatives that are characterized by “someone seeking something from someone.” In the article, it is described how municipal advisers use the infant simulators as a tool to make the young vulnerable people see and understand how life as a parent would be in reality. In this process, the young people are guided towards particular experiences and perceptions, which ultimately produce particular kinds of humans: young “normal” subjects with a “new”, “correct” and “healthy” understanding of the realities of parenthood in accordance with the rationalities of the municipality. In this sense, innovation is never innocent but always a political and ethical matter.

Keywords: innovation, technology, infant simulator, young vulnerable people, policy, futures

Laura Berivan Nilsson: Improvising Tradition. A Study of Preservation and Innovation among Folk Music Artists in Istanbul

Since the 1990s there has been a great interest in reinterpreting local folk music traditions among musicians situated in Istanbul. The revival of local music traditions can be considered as a part of a broader identity-political movement that celebrates diversity and hereby challenges the idea of Turkey as an ethnically homogeneous nation. The reinterpretations of the local music traditions can also be considered as a reaction against the censorship and standardization of local folk music, which was launched during the establishment of the Turkish Republic in

1923. Based on fieldwork among musicians, which took place in Istanbul during the spring of 2014, this article examines how the musicians through creative and improvisational practices reinterpret local music traditions. The article explores the wayn which the music groups Kardes Türküler and Telvin work with reinterpreting local music traditions as well as the author's own experience of learning to play the Turkish instrument saz. The article discusses how the musicians orient themselves towards past musical practices with the intention of both renewing and preserving the musical traditions for the future. The central argument of the article is that preservation and renewal do not have to be opposites – but can be two sides of the same coin. In a general discussion of innovative practices this article contributes by arguing that novelty not only is created as an attempt to colonize the future and what is yet unknown. Innovation can also be created as part of a rediscovery and renewal of past practices and the forgotten.

Keywords: music, Istanbul, tradition, innovation, creativity, improvisation

Sofie Thordal and Kirsten Engholm Jensen: Why Settle for Half? Anthropological Method in Public Sector Innovation

This article discusses challenges and possibilities encountered in the authors' anthropologically informed work with Danish public sector innovation, notably in the health care sector. Drawing on their fieldwork experiences in this area and their participation in a training programme, which introduces public sector professionals to basic anthropological methods, they suggest that public sector innovation projects in this field have tended to instrumentally reduce anthropology to fieldwork method. Sharing examples from their work with analytical translation and shaping of field data, the authors show how everyday problems in the health care sector may be approached in more explorative manner to further anthropologically informed innovation. They conclude that public sector challenges may find new solutions by the consultation of anthropological approaches beyond positivism, engaging both induction and deduction, the concrete and the conceptual, methods of observation as well as critical idea generation.

Keywords: innovation, health care, medical anthropology, methodology, applied anthropology, translation

Nana Vaaben: Double Talk. Myths of Creation and Ritualised Practices around an Innovation Project

This article is about an innovation project in a nursing home. It argues that project descriptions connected to the project can be seen as myths of creation and as ritu-

alized practices. Project descriptions in applications, Power Point presentations, reports, and evaluations tell myths about the creation of innovation, and present innovation as a man-made and controllable achievement. Innovation is pictured as the valuable and measurable outcome of particular actions taken, whereas the daily work of the staff at the nursing home is made invisible and reduced to the static and insignificant point of departure, from which the innovative outcomes stand out. But parallel to these presentations of the project, myriads of other, more critical, stories circulate – often told by the same people. They depict the project as a “paper construct”, that has little to do with reality, and they do it by shifting back and forth between being “in-game” and “off-game”. Precisely because the project descriptions are being framed or ritualized and thereby made special and loaded with importance, it becomes possible to use the exact same framing or ritualization as resistance. By distancing themselves and telling about the project descriptions as “games”, it becomes possible for the participants to partly resolve their dilemmas. But only partly, because they still fear that the many written accounts will confirm the belief that innovation of new value can be planned and controlled, thereby eventually drawing away attention from the value that the nursing staff creates by their continuous struggle against decline and death.

Keywords: innovation, continuity, change, narratives, ritualized practice, public sector

