



PEOPLE

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**PEOPLE at this year's
Why the World Needs
Anthropologists symposium
in Durham (UK)**

Interview:

Maja Hojer Bruun

**»We need to know more about
technologised human interaction.«**

**PEOPLE partner and
the Why the World Needs
Anthropologists organiser**

Dan Podjed

PEOPLE brings together interdisciplinary groups of students, faculty educators and industry professionals to solve real-life business challenges in the field of sustainable living and energy. PEOPLE helps industry professionals to integrate social science expertise in their practice, allows social science students to develop additional practical competences towards employability and enables faculty educators to develop better-engaged social science learning in Higher Education.

PEOPLE PROJECT AT THIS YEAR'S WHY THE WORLD NEEDS ANTHROPOLOGISTS SYMPOSIUM IN DURHAM (UK)

WHY
THE WORLD NEEDS
ANTHROPOLOGISTS
POWERING
THE PLANET

Why the World Needs Anthropologists was first organised in 2013. The symposium was a result of a collaboration between Slovenian, Dutch, and international institutions of which several are in the current PEOPLE consortium. The organisers' original intent was to convey the added value of anthropologists outside academia. Their intent now is to connect anthropologists and non-anthropologists to collaboratively tackle urgent global matters. During this year's edition, energy professionals and anthropologists collaborate to design and deploy energy innovations that alter the world for the better. As such, this year's symposium is an early result of the PEOPLE project.

PEOPLE, co-funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Programme, aims to bridge the gap between higher education and industry partners in the field of sustainable living and energy. PEOPLE helps industry professionals to integrate social science expertise in their practice and allows social science students to develop practical competences towards employability. Furthermore, it enables faculty educators to develop better-engaged social science learning in Higher Education. Run by a consortium of industry representatives and Higher Education Institutions in Slovenia, Czech Republic, the UK and the Netherlands, PEOPLE unites interdisciplinary groups of students, faculty educators and industry professionals to solve real-life challenges similar to this year's event attendees. Representatives of the PEOPLE partners are present at the event and interested in sharing ideas and experiences.



Durham
University

Durham Energy Institute

Ranked as 5th university in the UK according to The Times & Sunday Times Good University Guide 2018, Durham University strives to be a socially responsible institution that actively contributes to economic and social development. Durham University establishes partnerships that facilitate translation of knowledge and understanding to a wider benefit, as in the PEOPLE project. As one of the organisers of this year's WTWNA symposium, Durham University is well represented as PEOPLE partner. You can find Dr Sandra Bell at the opening of the symposium and in the workshop 'Mining History'. Dr Simone A. Abram can be found at the Energy Hotspot.

Kemuri

UK's other PEOPLE partner was founded with a vision of helping elderly people to live independently by daily unobtrusive monitoring without changing their daily routines. Kemuri uses artificial intelligence to integrate data from multi-sensor power sockets to monitor the wellbeing of these elderly people. *"In the domestic environment, control of use of electrical power happens at a micro-level via power sockets. Knowledge of power consumption by itself is insufficient; it is influenced by the number of people in a room, the ambient temperature, the humidity and the time of day. We therefore rely on anthropologists for they can determine the need for power, how it can be used, when it should be used and what has to be done to change behaviour for personal and public benefit."* You can find Kemuri's CEO Leonard Anderson at the Energy Hotspot.



The Institute for Innovation and Development of the University of Ljubljana (IRI UL) is the leading research institute in the Ljubljana region of Slovenia. IRI UL operates as intermediary organisation between the University of Ljubljana and Slovenian industry. Gregor Cerinsek, researcher at IRI UL and project manager of PEOPLE is present at Why the World Needs Anthropologists: *"I consider the event to be as a great opportunity to connect with different researchers working in the field of applied anthropology, with a special focus on energy efficiency and sustainable living. My specific interest is to identify good practices of university- business cooperation that involve anthropologists and other field of social sciences. Exciting times ahead...!"*

METRONIK

Slovenia's other PEOPLE partner Metronik is the leading regional system integrator for process control and automation, and a recognised provider of IT solutions for production management and analysis, including solutions for energy management in industry, infrastructure facilities and buildings. Dr Sara Arko, Metronik's in-house anthropologist and a member of its research group on Sustainable Development is present at Why the World Needs Anthropologists. She promotes PEOPLE project's goals and shares Metronik's experience in industry and higher education partnerships for energy efficiency. *"If you want to find out more about Metronik, the value of ethnography in industry, and Metronik's role in the PEOPLE project, come and find me at the event's Energy Hotspot!"*



The Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VUA) ranks among the top 50 universities worldwide in the social sciences (2015 & 2016 Shanghai Ranking) and offers the highest ranked teaching in Anthropology (National Student Evaluation 2016) in the Netherlands. Alliander, as a network company, is responsible for the distribution of energy such as electricity, (bio)gas and heat in one third of the Netherlands. The company has over 7000 employees and 5, 6 million customer connections. Dr. Ellen Bal, dr. Giulia Sinatti and Marrije Prins MSc from VUA will attend Why the World Needs Anthropologists together with Alliander's Gerriette Mollink MSc. Dr. Ellen Bal: *"At the event we hope to connect with energy professionals and anthropologists working on Sustainability for we are in search of inspiration on ways in which we can integrate knowledge and experiences on Sustainability in our research and teaching."* If you want to connect with the people of VUA and Alliander, do visit them at the Energy Hotspot, in the workshop 'Building corporate cultures of sustainability' by Walter Faaij and in the workshop 'Insightful jobs' by Joachim Room.

Interview MAJA HOJER BRUUN:



»We need to know more about technologised human interaction.«

To provide insight into the everyday practice of an anthropologist engaging with technology, we talked with Maja Hojer Bruun. Maja is an associate professor in the Department of Learning and Philosophy of Aalborg University (Denmark) where she is associated with the Techno-Anthropology research group. Maja explores technological communities and questions of sociality, democracy, ethics and societal interests in relation to emergent technologies such as robots, drones, smart energy technologies and telecommunication devices.

Why is it important for anthropologists to engage with technology?

I think technology is part of the human condition - all interactions, all communications are somehow mediated by technology. Now there is an enormous focus on new technologies, but we could also study some of the old technologies to compare what happens when you go from paper and pen to the iPad - another kind of technological mediation. We need to teach our students ethical and social issues around technologies, because a lot of them get jobs working with user insights and communication and even product development; but also implementation of new technologies. A lot of Danish anthropology students work in municipalities and public agencies where technology is implemented: for example, in schools, workplaces, hospitals. They need to have a critical understanding of it, because there's a lot of Hallelujah around new technologies - with electronic patient journals, integration of data systems, and so on. We need to know a little bit more about 'technologised' human interaction.

So it is useful for anthropologists, but also useful for technology ...

Yes. I think there is also a growing interest among technology developers to get anthropologists and social scientists on board, next to their developers. They are used to working with designers - many of the engineers I talk to know user-experience from design programs - but they don't get deep into understanding technology use or the ethical aspects of it. And they have really fundamental questions - 'What does it mean to trust a system?', for example, and these are not questions that you can 'design' yourself. If you want to have people deliver data into new data systems for smart technologies and so on, they just ask us - 'how can we program/ operate an optimal this or that for incentives for people to trust the system?' 'Under which conditions do they trust the system and do they want to give their personal data about their use, their mobility patterns and so on?' So what is trust? What does it depend on? They simply don't have the tools and the concepts to understand these kinds of questions. So I think that there is a genuine interest and real job opportunities for anthropologists.

Do you want to say a little bit about your own experience with Techno-Anthropology? Specifically, what are the goals of the Techno-Anthropology group at Aalborg?

The overall goal is to equip students to participate in producing socially-robust and environmentally sustainable technologies. So there's both strong commitment to green transitions/ environmentally-friendly technologies and health technology systems: socially sustainable systems for the health sector and for socially sustainable transitions for green energy.

This is also to support regional industries. Aalborg is really a regional university, far from the capital (even for a small country). So there is a lot of industry interest in the region - the university was founded because local industries wanted to have more academic and they couldn't get academics to move from Copenhagen to the North (Nordjylland), so they decided to start a university. From the very beginning, there was a PBL learning philosophy [Problem Based Learning]. But then they added more and more humanities. And over the years the university expanded and added more and more disciplines.

How do you deal with some of the challenges of interdisciplinarity, or with working with industry? What kinds of problems do you encounter and how do you deal with them?

To be honest, I think our students are often frustrated, because they learn in so many different genres. It's very openly stated in the board regulations that they have to read the literature and know the methods from different scientific fields. So in the case of anthropology, they have to learn how to write ethnography. But when I start teaching ethnography and we read monographs, they have just completed a semester in which they worked more with product development where they are not allowed to write in their report 'I do' and 'I did' and 'I learn'; they cannot use the first person. So they ask 'In this report can we write about ourselves in the first person?' 'Yes. You have to. You have to reflect on that learning process. You have to reflect on how you generated the data.' So for them it's a big eye opener: how differently these disciplines work, how they write and how different the outcome of their work is. So it must be a frustrating experience, also because many of the teachers are disciplinary. We have philosophers, anthropologists, different kinds of engineers - teaching their own subject.

It sounds like you're very explicitly teaching them to reflect on those issues and to become more aware of different epistemologies ...

Yes. We try to do that. And we also have integrated theory of science courses now, where we teach together. We decided to have discussions, for example on questions like, What is quality? What is good research? What is knowledge? And then we have three teachers in a roundtable or a panel debate, and our students listen in to our conversations. Or we take a concept like 'intervention' seen through these different perspectives, and bring those together. Of course it's a lot of work to bring these people together and have these discussions. We are not trained in doing that, so it is actually difficult - you never know what will happen! When I did it the first time, I was scared! New kinds of questions come up.

So what kind of higher education environment do you think enables that kind of learning? What kinds of things should be put in place to facilitate that?

First, the PBL teaching philosophy [Problem Based Learning] is really helpful, because students start out with real world problems and not disciplinary problems. They don't start out with a theory and then what is lacking in that theory to understand the world. They start out with a real world problem and then they see what kinds of theories could be helpful, what kinds of methods could be helpful for understanding that problem, for analysing it and finding a solution. So I think that the education environment is interdisciplinary from the very beginning, although teachers are often from different disciplines. So problem-based learning and project work is really helpful. Second, there is time set aside to do project work. I have been reflecting on how many institutions have to be in place in order to do this kind of work. For example, the funding that students can apply for to go somewhere for fieldwork or to buy materials. It's just a small pot (maximum €350 each) - but even a little money is helpful, because it signals to students that we really prioritise this. And then there are lots of agreements and regulations prepared in advance - the students can go online and there are various templates that you can fill in for agreements with companies and so on. So that's also really helpful.

What advice would you have about building and managing partnerships between higher education and industry?

I think the institutions have to think through these things and not leave them up to individual teachers. What I would really like, and I don't think we have it, is a database of all the companies our students have worked with, for example. We can then say 'Oh, you are interested in waste management. We already had people working with this company and this municipality and so on.' We don't collect this information, but it would be really useful. What we did do was have a whole-day event to which we invited companies and municipalities, where we presented the new study programme of Techno-Anthropology. And we also invited some people to be on the advisory board for it. That was a nice thing.

And how did you encourage these potential partners to come?

Well, we were asking "What kinds of competencies do you need in your company?" - that was actually the question, so they talked about that. The companies that came typically had somebody from the social sciences or humanities working for them already, and they sent this person, who said 'Ok, this is what I experienced.' So in that sense, we already have a lot of 'ambassadors' from the social sciences and humanities in companies. So it wasn't difficult to get people to come. I am really surprised with companies willing to take students. It may be because we're in the North of the country and there is not such a big distance between the university and the rest of society, but this isn't a problem for us.

LEARNING CYCLE 1 IS A GO

Read All About the Cases Our PEOPLE Teams Will Be Working On

PEOPLE aims to bridge the gap between education and industry by implementing People-centred Learning Cycles. These Learning Cycles bring together interdisciplinary groups of students, faculty educators and industry professionals to solve real-life business challenges. In each of the four PEOPLE countries two consecutive Learning Cycles are

1) developed via the co-creation of a national case study and

2) implemented within the existing curriculum of the participating higher education institute.

The first Learning Cycle is about to commence, enabling our interdisciplinary teams to start their research process. What is the focus of the Learning Cycle in our four countries?

UNITED KINGDOM

At Durham the PEOPLE students will address research questions relating to the design and operation of telecare products and services from UK based PEOPLE partner Kemuri. The products are smart power sockets with sensors for movement, power use and temperature. They are installed in the homes of elderly residents living independently in properties owned and managed by two housing associations. Sensor data is analysed by artificial intelligence algorithms that learn patterns of daily activity and alert families or carers if they detect significant changes in residents' daily routines. The PEOPLE students will study how housing managers with a duty of care for their residents need and use this service.

SLOVENIA

Students involved in the 1st Learning Cycle in Slovenia will work on Metronik's energy information system (EIS) for energy management. MePIS Energy is customised and designed for managing – monitoring, analysing, and planning – energy consumption in industry, infrastructure facilities, and buildings and is implemented at the University of Ljubljana as a part of its energy strategy.

With guidance from both academic mentors (ZRC SAZU, University of Ljubljana) and industry mentors (Metronik), our interdisciplinary team of students from the fields of anthropology, psychology, fine arts and design, computing and IT will learn to combine qualitative and quantitative research methods and use people-centred development approaches to:

- a) analyse how the information system is used in one of the buildings of the University of Ljubljana
- b) analyse how MePIS Energy is influencing energy consumption and energy-related costs and
- c) to provide guidelines and suggest modifications of the existing system (interface, displays etc.), or develop upgrades.

NETHERLANDS

The PEOPLE students in the Netherlands will focus on a bottom-up, neighbourhood-oriented approach in the transition to natural gas-free living in the Netherlands. Alliander has initiated a 'natural gas-transition programme' to address the challenges that this entails in multidisciplinary teams. Students will contribute to this by tackling concrete issues and tasks within these teams. For example, students will map local dynamics at a neighbourhood level and will be asked to translate these into visualisations and reports for teams within Alliander. Analysing, identifying and applying local dynamics is still a missing link in the overall strategic environment management of energy companies such as Alliander. PEOPLE students will help to bridge this gap and, in doing so, make a significant contribution to a people friendly transition to a natural gas-free future in the Netherlands.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Researchers at Charles University in Prague and their industry partner VÚPS launched a study on efficiency of conservation interventions in administrative buildings. The study has three objectives:

- i) to decrease energy consumption in administrative buildings;
- ii) to employ social science knowledge about people's behaviour in policies aiming at a higher efficiency of public buildings and
- iii) to engage students of social science in a practice oriented research.

The intervention will motivate city (and state) office workers to regulate temperature in their offices in order to conserve energy. The efficiency of the intervention that will employ a combination of feedback and goal setting will be evaluated on the basis of real changes in energy consumption as well as changes in behavioural intention to conserve energy. The PEOPLE students (master's students of sociology and related fields) will participate in all the stages of the study. They will prepare interventions and evaluation questionnaires, analyse data and draw conclusions with both practical and scientific relevance.



PEOPLE partner and Why the World Needs Anthropologists organiser



DAN PODJED

- An Introduction -

Dan Podjed, applied anthropologist from the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, has led several interdisciplinary and industry-oriented projects, and has been involved in the development of various ethnography-based IT solutions for promoting sustainable lifestyles. Dan is also the initiator of the international symposium *Why the World Needs Anthropologists*, annually organised since 2013. We asked Dan to share his thoughts on the application of social sciences and the use of people-centered design and development approaches in the field of sustainable living and energy.

“Anthropologists are experts on different lifestyles. They are able to tune into wants, needs, barriers and people’s everyday practices. With regards to sustainable living and energy, we need a people-centred approach for developing better and more responsible products and services. If we do not include people’s perspectives and take into account their social and cultural diversity, we end up with one-size-fits-all ‘innovations’, which are by definition unsustainable. He have to keep in mind that people around the world live in different circumstances, with varying needs and access to energy. Anthropologists should be able to take into account these cultural contexts and interpret them in search of new energy solutions.

A nice example in this regard is a smartphone app we developed in a joint effort between anthropologists and engineers in the DriveGreen project. We set out to develop the app for promoting sustainable living. Initially, we assumed we could promote sustainable mobility by providing people with an app that showed them how eco-friendly their driving was.

However, based on ethnographic research in five European cities, we realised that we were on the wrong track. People get quickly bored of smartphone apps, which try to motivate them and change their habits by buzzing, beeping and flashing. Moreover, such apps can be very dangerous when used in traffic. On the basis of ethnographic findings from the field we made a shift in development and created an app that awards users for ‘good’ non-driving activities they undertake on a daily basis: walking, running, cycling and using public transport. These activities are coupled with a system we called ‘indirect micro donations’ – the city is competing against an individual, for example a mayor, who has to pay a certain amount of money for improvement of local infrastructure if she or he loses in the competition in which even a small step counts. We know now this approach works, because people like to compete. However, they also like to collaborate with each other, especially when their common goal is clearly defined and locally relevant.

My personal ambition is to inspire other anthropologists to be more than an add-on to interdisciplinary research projects and development teams. We should be able to influence and direct the design of solutions, products and services, and thus make a much bigger impact in the world. How can we do this? Let’s be assertive, take initiative and show our added value, not only as researchers but also as leaders in the design of a sustainable future. This is what I hope to show to our PEOPLE students. If we better train our students for being able to take responsibility and become project leaders, and if we share our knowledge, skills and perspective with industry professionals, we will be able to support global change. Of course, we cannot win alone. First of all, we have to learn how to cooperate among ourselves and with other professionals, which is often not an easy task.”



WHAT IS HAPPENING WITHIN SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND LIVING?

An Overview of Events, Websites and Books



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY HELD THIS SEPTEMBER

The first International Conference on Environmental Psychology was held last September in La Coruna (Spain). Organised by the International Association of Applied Psychology, the conference is a successor of the Biannual Conferences on Environmental Psychology series. It offered a venue for a meeting of environmental psychologists and all social researchers interested in environmental topics such as sustainable lifestyles and sustainable consumption, cognitive restoration in natural environments, perception and attitude to environmental risks and determinants of pro-environmental behaviour. Many of the sessions focused specifically on energy use in the transit sector, residential sector, and in public buildings or on closely related psychological phenomena such as thermal comfort. The conference also offered a digest of new trends related to energy use and climate change including acceptance of large-scale energy infrastructure and attitudes to carbon capture, storage and utilisation.

Want to know more? Go to <http://www.icep2017.org/>

WEBSITES / PLATFORMS / NETWORKS

- ENERGISE is an innovative pan-European research initiative to achieve a greater scientific understanding of the social and cultural influences on energy consumption.
Visit <http://energise-project.eu/>
- SHAPE-ENERGY represents a new European platform for energy-related social sciences and humanities.
Visit <https://shapeenergy.eu/index.php/about/>
- EASA Energy Anthropology Network aims to bring together anthropologists concerned with energy research, to coordinate and consolidate debates about energies and to support new anthropological approaches to energy questions.
Visit <https://www.easaonline.org/networks/ean/>
- An overview of other energy institutes and research groups can be found here <https://ean.hypotheses.org/resources-useful-links>

EVENTS

- World Sustainable Energy Days, 28 Feb - 2 Mar 2018, Austria
Visit <http://www.wsed.at/en/world-sustainable-energy-days.html>

BOOKS

- In this anthology, Imre Szeman and Dominic Boyer have brought together a selection of the best and most influential work in energy humanities. <https://jhupbooks.press.jhu.edu/content/energy-humanities>
- 'Overheating', by Thomas Hylland Eriksen, offers a new way of looking at the problems of the Anthropocene, exploring crises of the environment, economy, and identity through an anthropological lens. <http://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/distributed/O/bo25051909.html>
- Based on his work at some of the world's largest companies, including Ford, Adidas, and Chanel, Christian Madsbjerg's 'Sensemaking' is a provocative stand against the tyranny of big data and scientism, and a defence of human intelligence.
Visit <https://www.amazon.com/Sensemaking-Power-Humanities-Age-Algorithm/dp/031639324X>
- EPIC is dedicated to providing practitioners, businesses, and partner organisations with access to the best practical ethnographic expertise from around the world. One EPIC series is dedicated to Sustainability & Ethnography.
Visit <https://www.epicpeople.org/tag/sustainability-ethnography-in-business-series/>



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PEOPLE

People-Centred Development Approaches in Practical and Learning Environments

PEOPLE PROJECT PARTNERS:

Slovenia



Innovation Research Institute of the University of Ljubljana
(IRI UL; project coordinator) <http://iri.uni-lj.si/en/home/>



Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
(ZRC SAZU) <https://www.zrc-sazu.si/en/node>



Metronik <http://www.metronik.net>

United Kingdom



Durham
University
Durham Energy Institute

Durham University <https://www.dur.ac.uk>



Kemuri <http://www.kemurisense.com>

The Netherlands



Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU) <https://www.vu.nl/en/>



Alliander <https://www.alliander.com/en>

Czech Republic



Charles University
Environment Centre

Charles University in Prague (CUNI) <http://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-1.html>



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