The Department of Anthropology
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presents a seminar

by

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on

Noticing and Raising Troubles in a Performative Control Room

Friday, 14 Sept 2018
1:00 – 2:30 pm
Room 12 Humanities Building
New Asia College, CUHK
A light lunch will be served at 12:30 pm. First come first served.
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Dealing with troubles is one of the most pervasive features in life. We 'repair' troubles that occur when talking to each other and we 'recruit' people to help us with troubles that occur when engaged in everyday activities, This talk investigates troubles in a particular setting: a control room designed to support Blast Theory's mixed-reality game/performance "I'd Hide You", in which 'monitors' are tasked with watching and assessing live video streams from 'runners' performing on the street for an online audience, while the 'director/stage manager' communicates (through a walkie talkie) with these runners. The talk focuses on two aspects of how the control room deals with trouble. First, it looks at how troubles are brought to the director's attention, i.e., how the director can get *access* to troubles. I show that there are differences between *who* notices a trouble (e.g., the director herself or a monitor), *when* the trouble can be observed (e.g., in the here and now or only over time), and indeed *whether* something constitutes a trouble. Secondly, I investigate how the director communicates that trouble to the performers outside the control room. Here I focus on the various verbal transformations that occur between someone in the control room informing the director of a trouble and the director subsequently announcing that trouble to the performer. These transformations include a shift from talking about the trouble to talking about the solution, a shift from mentioning a particular performer to addressing all performers, and from mentioning a particular fault to formulating a generic reminder.

Christian Greiffenhagen is Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Prior to coming to Hong Kong, he was Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the Department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University, UK. He gained his D.Phil. from the Computing Laboratory at the University of Oxford, UK. His research is focused on science and technology studies (STS), where he has studied professional mathematical research practice, and on human-computer interaction (HCI).

ALL INTERESTED ARE WELCOME