

ANT - Actor-Network Theory

Berg (1997): *On Distribution, Drift and the Electronic Medical Record*

Aarnestad (2003): *The Camera as an Actor: Design-in-Use of Telemedicine...*

Hanseth & Monteiro (1997): *Inscribing behaviour in information infrastructure...*

Technological determinism

Social constructionism

Socio-technical webs

Humans, non-humans

Cooperation - work

How are we to talk about the social and the technical? Are there any other languages to describe these constituents and their relationship(s) than that of technological determinism and / or social constructionism? The theory of Actor-Network talks from a third position, a position in which the technical and the social are inserted in a social-technical language that seeks to break down *a priori* understandings. The focus is on how heterogeneous networks (of humans and non-humans) are interwoven and mad up by relations and connections of institutional arrangements, textual descriptions, work, practices, bodies, technical artifacts....

The three texts for to day are situated within 'medical studies' and emphasize the importance of understanding and mapping out "the concrete mechanisms at work, which glue the network together – without being distracted by means, technical or non-technical, of actually achieving this." (Hanseth & Monteiro p. 3).

Concepts often used within ANT:

- **Actor-network:** a heterogeneous web of humans and non-humans
- **Inscribe:** Relations / use patterns / visions embedded in artifacts
- **Translation:** re-represent, reformulation, modification, change of something into more generally agreeable expressions (supported / agreed upon by several actors).
- **Agency:** capacity for action / capacity for influence

DISCUSS AND DESCRIBE THE FOLLOWING CONCEPTS (Aanestad p. 6-8 / Hanset & Monteiro p. 2-4):

- **Program / anti-program:**
- **Actor / Actant:**
- **Delegate:**

Berg refers to AT (p. 145) by briefly pointing out similarities and differences between AT and ANT. What is he highlighting as a difference between the two theories?

Berg also refers to Strauss' work (lecture next week 03.03.09) – which concept is he drawing on? What is he explaining with this concept?

DISCUSSION:

- * In what way is Aanestad and Berg's texts CSCW-material?
- * How does ANT offer a new take on development of CSCWs / studies of work?
- * What is *work* within this ANT-CSCW setting?