The Medical Anthropology Forum presents

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Self-Medicating with Research Chemicals: An Anthropological Exploration of an Online Drug Forum

Research chemicals are psychoactive drugs which have not been approved for human consumption. Mostly formulated in analogy to well-known recreational drugs in order to bypass drug regulations, they circulate online in grey and black markets. Because of their novelty, there is little if any scientific research about them. What is known about the effects, dosage, and possible risks of research chemicals is based mainly on information produced by the users themselves, who exchange information about their recreational, therapeutic, and cognitive enhancement use in online drug forums.

This talk will introduce the audience to such an online forum and will frame this exploration within a discussion of emerging subjectivities. Taking Andreas Reckwitz’ (2019) examination of the paradoxes of emotional culture and Nikolas Rose’s (2007) cartography of “the politics of life itself” as points of reference, I will address the question: what can the study of self-medication with research chemicals tell us -in broad terms- about the human condition in our age? By focusing on the problematic distinction between self-medication and enhancement, I will propose a programmatic approach for the medical anthropological study of research chemicals.

All are cordially invited
Tuesday, February 4
CATS, Room 010.01.05
17:15–18:45