

Future Is Now: Anticipatory Anthropology

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The fourth panel from the international conference "Togetherness, Solidarity, Relational Knowledge. Towards a Convivial Anthropology" celebrating the 90th anniversary of ethnology and anthropology at the University of Warsaw, June 9-11, 2025.

Presenting are: [Anna Horolets](#) [3] (University of Warsaw) and **Alexandra Schwell** (Klagenfurt University)

Anthropologists' interest in the future has gained momentum in the context of multiple crises and catastrophes ranging from financial to refugee crises, from ecological breakdown to the global backlash of the far right. Future surfaces in anthropological writing as both threatening and hopeful (Appadurai 2013; Bryant & Knight 2019). As 'a cultural fact' it can be driving force for fearmongering or 'ethics of possibility', depending on the local context, actions and values. In this panel we focus on the two ethnographic cases that bring to the fore the intricacies of the future and affective work of anticipation. [Anna Horolets](#) [3] looks at the 'reification of the future' during the refugee crisis of 2015-16 in Europe (based on Mica et al. 2021). Alexandra Schwell takes state agencies' precaution measures for a Europe-wide power outage as a starting point to delve into the affective dimension of urgency politics, focusing on the power of fantasies and a blackout imaginary.

00:00 Introduction

05:57 Reification of the future, by [Anna Horolets](#) [3]

15:19 Waiting for the lights to go out. Reflections on uncertainty and the urgent uncanny, by Alexandra Schwell

Source URL: <https://etnologia.uw.edu.pl/en/multimedia/future-now-anticipatory-anthropology>

Links

[1] <https://etnologia.uw.edu.pl/en/file/future-now-anticipatory-anthropology>

[2] <https://youtu.be/4-tpbk--w8I?si=TTIHEgfrPiGctmC0>

[3] <https://etnologia.uw.edu.pl/instytut/ludzie/pracownicy/anna-horolets>