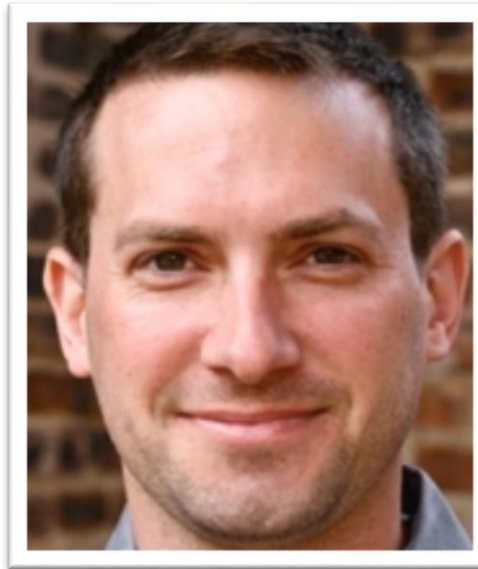


THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY PRESENTS

Nicholas Harkness, John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Social Sciences Department of Anthropology, Harvard University



Monday, Mar. 13, 2017 @ 3:30pm
Social Sciences Building, Dean's Conference Room 107

“Discerning the Spirits of South Korean Glossolalia”

In Christian traditions of glossolalia ("speaking in tongues"), speech-like behavior without discernible denotation can be an explicitly linguistic form of involvement with the deity. In South Korea, glossolalia is practiced widely across Protestant denominations and congregations, from Pentecostals to Presbyterians. This paper focuses on the problem of spiritual discernment, when South Korean Christians doubt the work of the deity and speculate on the source and character of the forms, forces, and feelings that they confront when they speak in tongues. I link this problem of discernment to the processes through which glossolalia suppresses "normal" linguistic functions while reinforcing ideological commitments to language itself.