

Against Humanity: Lessons from the Lord's Resistance Army

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This talk is not about crimes against humanity. Rather, it is an account of the prospects for an indictment of 'humanity' itself, the concept that lies at the heart of human rights and humanitarian missions. Based on fieldwork in northern Uganda with former rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), an insurgent group accused of rape, forced conscription of children, and inhumane acts of violence, Sam Dubal examines how 'humanity' conceptualizes the LRA as a set of problems rather than a set of possibilities, as inhuman enemies needing reform. Humanity hegemonizes what counts as good in ways that are difficult to question or challenge. It relies on very specific notions of the good – shaped in modern, racist ideals of violence, technology, and reason, among others – in ways that often contribute to injustice. What emerges from this ethnography is an unorthodox question – what would it mean to be 'against humanity'? And how can a particular form of anti-humanism foster alternative, more radical efforts at social and racial justice in the realms of medicine, humanitarianism, and politics?

Sam Dubal earned his Ph.D. in medical anthropology from the joint program at UC-San Francisco and UC-Berkeley in 2015, and his M.D. from Harvard Medical School in 2017. He is currently a visiting scholar at the Center for Social Medicine at UC-Berkeley. He will be speaking about his book, *Against Humanity: Lessons from the Lord's Resistance Army* (University of California Press, 2018). He has previously studied democratic social movements among soccer fans in England and Brazil, as well as social factors influencing HIV transmission in northern Uganda. His new ethnographic project examines practices of sports betting in Uganda, critically examining discourses of psychopathology ascribed to young men who gamble as a source of livelihood in precarious postcolonial economies.

Dr. Dubal is a candidate for a faculty position in the Department of Anthropology.