

**How to Study Technoscientific Networks: Actor Network Theory
ADM+S Summer School**

**Wednesday 12 February 2025, 1pm – 2:30 pm
Prof Janet Roitman, RMIT**

**Please read these two short texts (below).
Write out bullet point responses to the prompts.**

**Most importantly, BRING YOUR QUESTIONS TO OUR WORKSHOP.
All questions are good questions.**

Bruno Latour, 1991. “The Berlin Key or How to Do Things with Words” in Graves-Brown, *Matter, Materiality and Modern Culture*, London: Routledge, pp. 10-21.

- 1) What is Latour’s main point about “social relations”?
- 2) Latour wants to undermine the “social” versus “technical” distinction. Is this useful?
- 3) Write out some ideas about how his socio-technical network might relate to your own research project. These can just be thoughts, ideas, fragments for discussion.

John Law, 2009. “Actor Network Theory and Material Semiotics” in B. Turner, ed. *The New Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*. London, Blackwell. pp. 141-158.

- 1) Law says, “Actor Network Theory is not a theory.” What does that mean?
- 2) What is the main focus of study for ANT?
- 3) Write out three take-away points from this article.
Think about how those points might relate to your research project.

Recommended Readings: [for your future reference]

Bruno Latour. 1990. “Technology is Society made Durable,” *The Sociological Review*, 38: 1, pp. 103-131.

Reviews the problem of “the social” vs. “the material” and illustrates the importance of overcoming the technology versus society divide. Reviews the notions of assemblage, stabilization; very good presentation of Actor-Network Theory and the concept of mediations.

Bruno Latour. 2005. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*, Sage.

John Law. 2006. “Making a Mess with Method”, version of 19th January 2006, available at: <http://www.heterogeneities.net/publications/Law2006MakingaMesswithMethod.pdf>.

John Law. 2011. “What’s Wrong with A One-World View?” Heterogeneities.net [09/25/2011: <http://www.heterogeneities.net/publications/Law2011WhatsWrongWithAOneWorldWorld.pdf>]

John Law. 1992. "Notes on the Theory of the Actor Network: Ordering, Strategy, and Heterogeneity," *Systems Practice*, 5: 4.

Michel Callon. 1986. "Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation. Domestication of the Scallops and the Fisherman of St. Brieuc Bay," in J. Law, ed. *Power, Action, and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge*, London, Routledge.

[republished in *The Science Studies Reader*, New York, Routledge.]

One of the original texts that gave rise to ANT; reviews translations, *actants*, controversies.

Paul Rabinow. 1986. "Representations are Social Facts" in J. Clifford and G. Marcus, eds. *Writing Culture. The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, University of California Press.

This is a classic text about the grounds for truth: what constitutes and is recognized as a true proposition. Note: it assumes familiarity with anthropology and is mostly about ethnographic writing (the problem of representing "the Other"). For those interested in ethnography, note that Rabinow is concerned with the problem of writing as a form of representation.

