

**TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, GUWAHATI
AND
COTTON COLLEGE STATE UNIVERSITY, GUWAHATI**

invite you to

**FRONTIERS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
WINTER PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES 01**

TOPIC

**Bonnie Guest House: Fieldwork and
friendship across borders**

by

Bengt G. Karlsson

04 December 2014

1530 hours

**Conference Hall, MCB Building, Cotton College State University,
Panbazar, Guwahati**

Abstract

In anthropology, then, we go to study *with* people.
And we hope to learn from them.

Tim Ingold, 2013

In this talk I will take the opportunity to recollect my personal ramblings relating to the part of the world we know as Northeast India. This is still an unfolding story, one that goes back at least twenty-five years in time. Anthropology and ethnographic fieldwork is the underlining frame for my entanglements with the region and one question I ask is what prolonged fieldwork does to yourself and how you come to see and engage with the world. My contention is simple: as you bring experiences, connections and imaginings from the field along, it spills over into how you seek your bearings in life more generally. I will ponder about the significance of this in relation to my research and writings on indigenous peoples' struggles. Among the many people you interact with during fieldwork, some become friends and what friendship might entail in the anthropological encounter is another issue I will grapple with in the talk.

Speaker

Prof. Bengt G. Karlsson teaches social anthropology at Stockholm University, where he was until recently the Head of the Department. His main research interest relate to the larger issue of society-environment interface, with particular focus on the politics of ethnicity and environment in India. Having taught in London, Chicago and Shillong, he has also authored several books and articles and has edited special issues of academic journals. His book, *Unruly Hills: A Political Ecology of India's Northeast*, was released in 2011.