

Keynote

1 Artfulness: Emergent Collectivities and Processes of Individuation | Keynote by Erin Manning, Faculty of Fine Arts at Concordia University (Montreal, Canada)

Much of my recent writing has been concerned with how the artist can create open and generative lures for a participatory process to begin to take form – the art of the event, or what I have also called the art of time. I have been engaged with questions of how conditions can be activated from within the work which invite a complexity of engagement, expanding it to its elastic potential. Openness as an ethos of event-based hospitality rather than as a meltingpot of common denominators. As I have suggested in my exploration of choreography as mobile architecture, or with my concept of the dance of attention, it is not about creating an “easy” space, but about crafting an ease of entry into a complex environment itself always under modulation. Following the exhibition of *Stitching Time* (Sydney Biennale 2012) and leading up to its continuation at the Moscow Biennale (fall 2013), I would like to collectively explore "the art of participation" in connection to the concept of "artfulness" I am currently developing. My proposition is that the art of participation is not a question of subject and object, of artist and participant, but a question of how the work calls forth its own potential evolution.

Propositions:

A work's potential evolution depends on the relational field the work is capable of creating. The relational field touches on an ecology which is more than human. The work participates in a worlding that potentially redefines the limits of existence. How a constellation evolves – an artwork-human

constellation, or an artwork- environment-artwork constellation – always has an effect, and this effect cannot be abstracted from the question of participation.

The art of participation takes the notion of modes of existence as its starting point, asking how techniques of encounter modify or modulate how art can make a difference, opening up the existing fields of relation toward new forms of perception, accountability, experience and collectivity. This aspect of the art of participation cannot be thought separately from the political, despite the fact that its political force is not in its content. This is not about making the form of art political. It is about asking how the field of relation activated by art can affect the complex ecologies of which it is part.

Panel 1 – Arts and Media

Chair: Samantha Schramm, University Konstanz

2 ‘Choir of Minds’ | Media-Enthusiasm and Theories of Collaborative Creation (18th-19th century) | By Eva Axer (University of Nottingham)

The paper analyses the enthusiasm of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for folksong and ballad in order to explore historic notions of participation and connectivity that were related to the genres. The so-called broadside ballad was a very popular genre from the sixteenth century onwards as it employed not only text but images and tunes and was performed by sellers on the streets. This allowed that even illiterate people could receive and distribute its news. Today the genre receives attention as part of cheap print culture that facilitated the establishment of a public sphere and thus of democratic culture in early modern England. In the eighteenth

and nineteenth centuries, however, as historic studies were only about to develop the ballad was seen either as a political tool to shape public opinion or as the 'voice of the people'.

The paper will focus on the latter fiction of a medium that was able to unite people regardless of class, age and gender. This belief took shape in the discussion on supposedly oral ballads and was related to the idea of collaborative creation. The paper will outline the history of this concept, starting with Herder's notion of the folk song and including W. and J. Grimm's and L. Uhland's remarks on the topic. The paper will show how the idea of a medium that was able to address everyone and allowed everyone to take part in a collaborative creation or communal re-creation advanced political notions of participation and connectivity. In the early twentieth century F. B. Gummere eventually related these practices of poetic collaboration to democracy.

The paper will also trace the notions of simplicity, immediacy and authenticity of the medium and discuss the related vision of an (illiterate) homogenous and non-hierarchical community. This community was thought to have created poetry in a spontaneous and improvised way other than the (modern) individual artist who deliberately produces his works. This implicates a naive partaking in communal practices with medium and practices given. Similar to the essentialist idea of a 'Volksgeist' (spirit of the people) these models are on the one hand supposed to constitute and stabilise national identity in the 19th century. On the other hand were these visions of a harmonious and sympathetic community directed against the acme of the violent crowd – the revolutionary mob in France in 1789.

The paper will show how these ideas of collaborative creation functioned from the eighteenth to the twentieth century as an 'other space' (Foucault) which allowed to reflect on preconditions, effects and (political) implications of

collaborative practices. These ideas on collaborative creation will be presented as a historic example of media-enthusiasm which is comparable with today's praise of web 2.0-media as notions of participation, social justice and democratic values were linked to this medium.

3 Design as social collaborative praxis | Engineering the utopian community or the implosion of a techno-aesthetic reason | By Maria Teresa Cruz (NOVA University Lisbon)

The idea of «social design» has become one of the central claims of today's participatory culture. It envisions the building of innovative, inclusive and sustainable communities through new a kind of design practice, i.e., co-design or collaborative design taking place among different actors within the community itself. This calls for individuals to actively and creatively engage in questions regarding their own daily life, their neighborhood and local community, as well as global issues concerning economy, ecology and other collective and central issues of our time.

The idea that creative collaborative praxis contains in itself a kind of political productivity is a claim that has been widely present within avant-garde art, especially in the second half of the XXst century, marking the emergence of a related set of new art practices such as: performance, happenings, participatory art, relational aesthetics, etc...

A general shift from poiesis to praxis and from contemplation to active reception, embracing the overall consequences of the new aesthetics of the "open work" are clearly present in all of these art forms. But the fusion of art and life, has also translated, as we know, as a major debate about the virtuous

or dangerous relation between politics and aesthetics. None of these claims or criticism has however produced a clear outcome until today, under the present ideology of participatory culture, which has embraced all of the political utopian values of a aesthetical or creative general economy.

The reason of this outcome is not due to the fact that we have solved some of the central issues of modern and contemporary cultural debates, such as the ones about the autonomy of art, about the essence of politics or about the value of aesthetical experience, although we had trusted them the possibility of a response to the general technological mobilization of experience. Surprisingly or not, the divide between a technological utopia and a aesthetical contra-utopia has imploded into a general ideology which still bears several different names: «creative economy», «participatory culture», «interactive art» «net-activism», etc... Somehow, the possibility for political participation and for the dissemination of creativity seem to have required certain media conditions for their effectiveness other than the political modern state or the work of art. This paper proposes to critically examine this ideological implosion through the subject of design and of its radical expansion in our time, not only viewed as its widespread presence in multiple fields activity, but also viewed as a fundamental apparatus or strategic arrangement of art, technique and praxis.

4 Web Memes and Mobilisation | The Contagious Socio-Aesthetics of Participation | By Sascha Simons (Univesity of Lüneburg, Germany)

Participation has often been described as the pragmatic core of the web 2.0 (cf. Münker 2009). According to this

hypotheses social media reveal a historically new merging of aesthetic forms and social functions. Contemporary processes of participation hence cannot be separated from media metamorphosis and the analysis of the latter provides insights into the conditions and conventions of related social dynamics.

My talk will approach this dynamic interplay of technology, sociality and aesthetics by focusing on web memes. These memes can be described as transmedia objects: or relatively stable combinations of video footage, images, and text, »which emerge through grass-roots manner through networked media and acquire a viral character« (Goriunova 2013). That means they undergo processes of spatial dissemination and aesthetic transformation. But much more important than this loose formalistic definition of web memes is their pragmatic dimension. Memes become memes only if they are detected as such by aggregating, curating and archiving practices on platforms like knowyourmeme.com.

Due to this self-referentiality of web based communication, web memes not only short-circuit the production, distribution, and consumption of cultural artefacts in the social web and thereby structure the immense variety and almost sublime quantity of the digital archives, but also display how social entities develop. The morphogenesis of this media forms is inherently linked to the emergence of social structures built bottom-up. Collaborative producing, sharing and distributing, remixing and archiving media content in the environment of ubiquitous digital networks accumulate new socio-aesthetic assemblies. These social entities seem to be associated mainly by common practices and related affects rather than common ideas, goals, or representations (cf. Katz 1997). In a performative sense, it is more about doing symbols than being represented by them.

Since these collective imaginations produce imaginary

collectives, they always carry political implications: The question is not, if collectives formed by and through the production, distribution and consumption of web memes can become political ones, but when? This question obviously aims at the moment of turnover, when participation in the broad sense of media usage claims the promise of participation in the more radical sense of disrupting the distribution of the sensible and hence the conditions of »partak[ing] in ruling and being ruled« (Rancière 2001). In this perspective Olga Goriunova (2013) has described the correlation between the bulletin board 4chan.org and the political (h)activism of Anonymous as becoming of political participation via web memes (1978) memetics (cf. Schmid 2009), that builds the genealogic ground for the current revival of the meme-discourse in the web 2.0.. While she is drawing upon Gilbert Simondon's concept of (trans-)individuation, I want to confront and complement her thoughts with Gabriel Tarde's theory of imitation (1893) and social monads (1890). Tarde's speculative sociology not only suits Simondon's (1964) analogy of material, organic, psychic and social individuation. It moreover opens up a dimension of social contagion to describe the virtual political escalation of web memes. And it helps to revise the biological determinism of Richard Dawkins'

5 Who Will Translate the Web? Machines, Humans and Reinventing Translation as a Participatory Practice | By Christine Mitchell (Concordia University, Montreal, Canada)

Has translation ever been a participatory activity? While language use and transformation is governed by social relations, translation tends to be practiced out of sight, the

invisibility of translators and translation (Venuti) serving as a quality guarantee and aligning the practice with the familiar media-technological imperative of seeking transparency and immediacy (Bolter and Grusin). Translation is therefore usually considered an individually realized skill, "brainbound" cultural and technical expertise (Hayles). Using computers to translate between languages would seem to reinforce this trajectory, making translation even more immediate, invisible, and less participatory, by relegating this cultural practice to machines. Machine translation (MT), considered the first challenge taken on by Artificial Intelligence, is still regarded as its major promise (as a subfield of Natural Language Processing) or its chief, continued failure.

In this context, from a media historical perspective, I argue that the failings of MT have paradoxically given translation a new, visible and participatory contour, bringing it to light through the presumed inadequacies of its computerized execution. This new visibility takes on palpable urgency in digital networks, as the desire for informational, social and commercial seamlessness, not only by the economically motivated translation industry (Kushner), but by the non-translating public and software developers—confronts digital linguistic silos on the Internet and triggers concerns about cultural (self) representations online.

This paper examines MT initiatives to explore the impact of technological infrastructures on notions of collectivity, individuality and linguistic control as they pertain to digital translation practices. I orient the analysis around sites standing in for MT's past and present: Warren Weaver's "Translation" Memorandum (1949), considered MT's founding document, and Luis von Ahn's "Duolingo" project, just named Apple's 2013 "App of the Year." Weaver's

proposals inaugurated an intensive period of research that strove for “FAHQT,” or Fully Automatic High Quality Translation, using computers and statistical methods. Von Ahn’s platform extends the text transcription model he implemented with his ReCAPTCHA human identification test to translation, mobilizing non-translators to translate the web piecemeal, trading a free, gamified language learning opportunity in exchange for amateur translation labour. While critics find proof of MT’s fundamental and ongoing failure in Weaver’s legacy, Duolingo pushes ahead with MT of a very different kind—computationally conceived, but human performed.

Placing translation operations into crowdsourced and algorithmic hands reconceives language in posthuman terms, recognizing it as constituted and sustained throughout the social body in tandem with media systems (e.g. publishing, literacy training, etc.). However non-intuitive, this distributed translation model is transformative in the way it emphasizes the materialconstructedness of language and lets amateurs contemplate, see and participate in cross- linguistic processes that are usually out of bounds. At the same time, Duolingo operates recursively, enfolding humans back into a similar model envisioned by Weaver, this time delivering on FAHQT, individualizing users as machine components and their verbal outputs as entries in an expanding, increasingly autonomous linguistic database. Is it important to cultivate and sustain this participatory contour to translation? If translation automation remains the ultimate objective, is it even possible?

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6 Connectives, Collectives and their Secret | Keynote by Claus Pias, Institute of Culture and Aesthetics of Digital Media (ICAM) at Leuphana University (Lüneburg)

„Mr. Kittler’, [Luhmann] said then, ‘this is how it has been since Babylon. A messenger rides through the gate. Some people (like you) ask, which horse he is riding; others (like me) ask, which message he brings.’” It is impossible to summarize the difference between connectives and collectives any shorter than this anecdote does. Connectives are objects of investigation, created by media scholars, that refer to a material, pre-meaningful, infrastructural level. Collectives are objects of investigation, created by sociologists, which refer to a symbolic, meaningful and discursive level. Both have their systematic blind spots, and their historic grounds in the context of a modern age in crisis. What are the consequences, when digital technologies increasingly turn into a new arcanum? And what are the effects on the theory of participation, when the connectives become multitudinous and the collectives become uncontrollable?

Panel 2: Participatory Practices and Digital Media
Chair: Sabine Niederer (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands)

7 Editor Games | Scripts of Participation in Co-Creative Media | By Benjamin Beil and Pablo Abend (University of Cologne)

Computer games can be described as socio-technological assemblages (Taylor 2009) whose affordances establish certain scripts (Akrich 1992) which set the scene for user practices. The scripts define the degree of freedom provided by the overall gameplay which also includes the constraints and possibilities to alter the game world or parts of it. Thus, playing produces a recursive quality revealing itself only in the processuality of play which is subject to emergent changes but prescribed by game design. Lately, a new genre of games challenges these specifics. So called editor games like *Minecrat* (2011), *LittleBigPlanet* (2008), and most recently Disney's *Infinity* (2013) which entered the market with sweeping success are not games in the traditional sense in which players follow certain rules guided by narrative elements framing the gameplay (Léja-Six 2012). Instead, these sandbox games – often labelled as ‘digital lego’ or ‘co-creative open worlds’ – afford the construction of a game world rather than playing within one.

A comparison between ‘implicit participation’ (within the scripts of the software) and ‘real participation’ practices (acted out by the gamers themselves) seems promising to clarify the often conflictive nature of participative media cultures (Schäfer 2011). Of particular importance are the technological novelties introduced by game developers and publishers (top-down) and modifications as well as further developments

and adjustments in consequence of community-activities (bottom-up; Jeppesen 2004). Within this socio-technological network both sides build chains of associations to the level editors and game engines that virtually mediate between industry and consumers. Holding this exposed position within the mesh of participative modding cultures the technology qualifies as a starting point for the analysis of the negotiation processes between gamers, amateur programmers/designers, and the game industry.

Using the example of editor games the talk examines what it means to participate in digital games. From within the field of game studies methodological questions are addressed regarding the appeal of a gameplay which cannot be analyzed by following the steps of an implicit player: How are creativity and participation acted out? What potentialities and restrictions on the side of the artefacts are users faced with? How do players deal with these technological prescriptions? Within a praxeological approach (Malaby 2007) which takes into account the affordances and pre-scriptions of software as well as actual user practices diverging paradigms of participation become visible that define the range of participation in editor games and possibly in digital media in general.

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8 Multitmodal Crowd Sensing | By Sebastian Vehlken (University of Lüneburg, Germany)

Headlines like the following might be grist to the mill for all cultural pessimists which see Humanism been drowned in a data deluge – produced by mobile communication media and their multiple apps: »Crowd Management: Smartphones to prevent mass panic« (Pluta 2012). In that respective case, the headline referred to a research project of the German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence in Kaiserslautern. In order to prevent crowd disasters like the panic at Duisburg's Love Parade in 2010, the project team developed a novel crowd management application for the 2012 Olympic Games in London. This smartphone app transformed a number of visitors of the venue into "social sensors": It tracked their position, direction, speed and acceleration by the cellphones' in-built GPS and gyroscope and live-fed it into a computer program. This processed, anonymized and accumulated the incoming movement data and visualized it as a Crowd Density Heatmap in a central control room. As an effect, and with only

a short time-delay, the moving streams of visitors could be observed, critical developments – e.g. an overcrowding of subway stations – could be identified, and counter-measures could be flawlessly initiated.

In addition, this heatmap not only was transmitted into the control room, but was also re-directed to the smartphones of the participating visitors. Enriched by a dynamic list of further traffic indications generated by the computer program, they were enabled to autonomously change their moving paths or to accommodate their usage of public transport. Quite similar to navigation systems in cars, the crowd thus was equipped with a sophisticated and instantaneous sensor technology that allowed for a kind of "self-reflexivity" and that let emerge possibilities for self-organization.

These media technologies re-conceptualize the traditional understanding of human crowds which have mostly been connected to chaotic, irrational and uncontrollable behavior – a discourse dominated by theories of mass psychology which continued to be influential until the 1970s. And these media also extend crowd capturing technologies, e.g. the surveillance of public spaces by CCTV and even the visual tracking of individuals by means of CCTV images. The emerging research field of Multimodal Crowd Sensing (MCS) – with a first international conference staged in Hawaii in 2012 – thus tries to integrate networks of "social sensors" which are fed by the (conscious or unconscious) production of data by mobile media, and "physical sensors", like weather or traffic measurements. The aggregation and visualization of these data on heatmaps not only complements digital video footage with computer-generated movement-images. They also install novel feedback loops in comparison to traditional crowd capturing: Beforehand, operation controllers only could advise public services to take action with regard to developing mass dynamics, whereas with MCS, the "social sensors" now

are equipped with individual agency.

My presentation on the one hand examines the conceptual and media-technological importance of crowd sensing applications with regard to some concrete examples. What are the complexities and challenges which arise in the process of integrating various and different kinds of sensor networks (vgl. Ganti/Je/Lei 2011)? What tell us some first practical experiences regarding their functionality – e.g., do users obey to the indications produced by the apps? On the other hand, the presentation will also discuss the changing concept of “the mass” and the crowd – or as it is now, with a word that Howard Rheingold coined in a different and much more questionable context some years ago – of mathematically modellable and enhanceable “smart mobs”. How can we conceive of the emerging novel agencies, especially compared to the challenges the pose to privacy issues? And what is the “mold” (Deleuze), the form of governmentality to which these control and management phantasies are subjected?

9 **Blindness, Techno-Affordances and Participation in Everyday Life | By Arseli Dokumaci (Concordia University, Montreal, Canada)**

This part video part verbal presentation explores a blind individual’s everyday life and investigates what new modes of participation emerge through his embodied engagement with mobile media and digital technologies.

Access to participation in various aspects of society and public life has been among the key historical struggles of people with disabilities. While the question of participation has traditionally referred to physical spaces, the rise of new media has expanded its scope to involve non-material environments. Drawing on the video footage gathered in own ethnographic

research, this paper questions the changing nature of participation in everyday life in relation to a blind person’s extended bodily spatiality via the use of new media.

Throughout the presentation, I use excerpts from the interviews I made in 2013 with a blind university student living in Quebec. In the first part, I focus on softwares such as Blind Square, GPS navigation apps, dictation apps, LookTell apps, and money readers. Based on the participant’s testimony, I claim that these virtual technologies transform his embodied experiences of his material surroundings and geography. Then, I turn to technologies such as screen readers (which replace visually driven cursor movements with keyboard commands and speech synthesizer) and VoiceOver app (which translate gestures of fingers into functions in a touch-screen phone). Again based on my informant’s account, I assert that these particular technologies stretch the limits of his embodied engagement with a variety of elements in virtual space.

Drawing upon Merleau-Ponty’s example of the blind man’s cane (1962: 165) with which he emphasizes body-artifact continuity and James Gibson’s “theory of affordances” (1979) where he concretizes organism-environment complementarity, I propose to consider these technologies as expansions of the blind participant’s corporeality in the form of new techno-affordances. I claim that these techno-affordances not only add different participatory layers to an otherwise inaccessible physical world and virtual space but also cut across the boundary that is assumed to hold the two separate. I end with a brief reflection on how blind people’s techno-affordances could enhance current understandings of (non-)participation.

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10 Participation as a Pin| Participation in Political Clubs in an Online Swedish LGTB Community | By Dr. Jakob Svensson, (Uppsala University, Sweden)

This article is based on a research project studying political discussions in the Swedish LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Trans-, Bisexual and Queer) community Qruiser. The political is approached from a discursive and process oriented perspective in tandem with a general delineation that the political concerns the organization of society and our co-existence. Political discussions on Qruiser is defined as cultural participation and it is argued that not only may non institutionalized online arenas become spaces for political participation, we should broaden our focus to arenas of popular culture if aiming at understanding political participation in digital and late modern societies.

The aim of this particular paper is to understand what motivated participation in Qruiser political clubs. This aim is operationalized by attending to a cultural method focusing on community, meaning-making and participation frames. By using framing theory as an analytical tool, the paper seeks to answer which frames attracted and mobilized participation and how this was done. The research is netnographic through online interviews, participant observations in, and content analyses of, political discussions on 13 political clubs on Qruiser, those with most members during November 2012. Netnography is ethnography adapted to the characteristics of

online communities with the difference how the researcher 1) enter into the culture, 2) how to collect data and 3) ethical considerations a researcher has to make. These differences are attended to in the paper.

During the studied period very little participation took place in these clubs. The paper concludes that the few postings collected had the function of spreading information – post notices - and cheering. However, the paper argues that since these clubs did not attract a lot of participation, it would be misleading to in detail study the little participation that occurred if aiming at understand the general motivation to participate in these political clubs. Hence, the paper instead continues to ask why becoming member in a political club if not to participate in them? The interview material suggests that club membership rather had the function of wearing a pin, in the digital age translated to displaying an icon on your profile page. It is further found that this declaration of content was important in a community primarily set up for dating. Some participants clearly displayed their political views and interests in order to attract the right match as well as discourage others. The paper then concludes that the participation in the clubs did not center on discussions, but rather around finding a potential date, to discuss with elsewhere in combination with other activities. The frame that thus motivated much of participation - here understood as displays of club memberships - was to find a date. This further shows how the online environment - this being a LGBTQ community for finding sexual partners - intersected with the general political interest of these participants. Hence, political participation and dating are not mutually exclusive and may intersect in a digital late modern society.

Keynote

11 Other Beginnings of Participative Sense Culture: Wild Media, Speculative Ecologies, Transgressions of the Cybernetic Hypothesis | Keynote by Erich Hörl, Institute of Culture and Aesthetics of Digital Media (ICAM) at Leuphana University (Lueneburg)

The term 'participation' has not only become a fundamental category of the present, its astonishing ascension also indicates a profound transformation of sense culture (Sinnkultur): in the course of what I term the technological displacement of sense, referring to the redirection of sense culture due to the process of cyberneticization in the 20th century, participation itself has become our sense, and sense itself is no longer representative but participative. This simultaneously necessitates a reevaluation and radicalization of the term participation as such. This talk focuses on two crucial moments of this transformation that mark the entrance into participative sense culture: Lucien Lévy-Bruhl's hermeneutics of wild participation and Gilbert Simondon's speculative ecology of participation.

*Panel 3: Participation and the Claims of Community
Chair: Christina Bartz (University of Paderborn, Germany)*

12 Participatory media and collective identity | By Sebastian Haunss (University of Bremen)

The emergence of internet technologies like blogs, wikis, social networking sites and other forms of social media is often connected to the notion of participatory media, i.e. the promise that these technologies will enhance citizen participation in social and political processes. One of the ideas is that forms of many-to-many communication create an alternative to corporate controlled mass media. Also social media is seen as a tool to connect previously unconnected individuals, and thus enable cooperation among them. But the enthusiasm for the new participation enhancing tools sometimes overlooks that meaningful participation has to be understood as a process of collective action and usually not as individual participation. Creating opportunities for individuals to raise their voice is certainly important, but these voices have to be listened to, and therefore the democratic potential of participatory media therefore will depend largely on its capability to enhance collective participation.

Drawing on research on social movements and collective action I will discuss in my presentation why we have to rethink some of our ideas about participatory media when we account for the collective dimension of participation. Especially we have to reconcile the notion of collective identities as preconditions of collective action with the notion of coordination among dispersed individuals in virtual social networks.

13 Partial Visibilities, Affective Affinities: On (Not) Taking Sides | By Arnoldas Stramskas, Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania

The proposed paper would start by, once again, attempting to think through the famous statement by Guy Debord, who articulated major formula of society of spectacle as that which appears is good, that which is good appears. Few decades later Gilles Deleuze proclaimed that compared with the approaching forms of ceaseless control in open sites, we may come to see the harshest confinement as part of a wonderful happy past. The initial research question centers around forms of visibility that took new forms and heights in the digital era and its counterpublics—partial visibilities of minor spaces that attempt to come up with forms of sociality and micropolitical participation not based on digital/media circulation and traffic rankings but rather on qualitative relationship buildings (with or without digital presence). In these settings the role of mediation and digital tools are not placed in opposition to material collective presence but pragmatically subordinated in attempts to reinvigorate practices of participation, communities building and political space making.

Two projects based in Vilnius, Lithuania would serve as illustrations of quite different but also conceptually interrelated approaches to participation, media/mediation, and micropolitical. One is Technarium—makers space of DIY technicians—which is heavily influenced and deeply embedded in the information sources of the digital commons, but at the same deeply skeptical in its practices towards forms of participation that remain merely within the virtual (social media, for example). Another example, an improvised infoshop DBY (Don't believe you have rights), which aims to provoke and extend the critiques of mainstream LGBT

communities with queer anticapitalist interventions. What these two—although quite different—projects have in common is that while having minimal presence within the digital they are foremost interested in physical spaces of community generation and micropolitical engagement on the face-to-face basis. However, these examples do not fall squarely onto physical versus digital, nor romanticize physical as something unmediated, but rather point out to complex negotiation process, tactically employing digital techniques of relation (SenseLab) to advance their own agendas of collectivization and commoning. This commoning is not based on universal claims frequently espoused by those that appeal to total transformation of society, culture, or politics, but instead utilize strategies of minor space-making, complementing soft politics with strong relations, physical with digital.

This paper will present the argument that instead of taking sides in the binaries of digital/physical, visible/invisible, micro/macro-political, one should examine interstices of these terms and material practices that may just well point out towards the direction where participation is not perceived as depoliticized empty signifier holding an all encompassing answer to contemporary problems, but as a specific tool productively utilized in affectiveaffinities of small collectivities that could open up other scales and processes of resistance to the present Deleuze and Guattari.

14 „Man in the Loop“ – The Language of Participation and the New Technologies of War | By Nina Franz, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany

“Today the role of technology is changing from supporting to fully participating with humans in each step of the process.”¹¹

The issue of participation is commonly discussed in respect to claims of community that either put their hopes or their dire premonitions in the technological determinants of networked media and their effects on shaping new types of collectivity. In this perspective, technology has the part of mediating between human subjects, either in the positive understanding of bridging a communicative gap or in the negative outlook on the potentials of surveillance and control implied by the digitalisation and technisation of most social realms today. Meanwhile, recent technological developments have spawned ways of talking about human participation that have detached themselves entirely from the claims or rhetorics of “community and society” that were key-categories in the 20th century. Within this new discourse, the term “community” is replaced by the word “network” human action is no longer at the centre of technical processes, but pushed to the margin. Examples for this can be found in almost all sectors, from “Industry 4.0” or the algorithmic processes at the stock market to computerized health facilities or robotic surgeons that each pose questions of responsibility with unprecedented legal and ethical implications. But nowhere are the changes as momentous and divisive as in the field of contemporary warfare. Removing the human actors from the locality of war

¹ Donley, Michael B.; Schwartz, Norton A.: United States Air Force Unmanned Aircraft Systems Flight Plan 2009-2047. Issued by the United States Air Force Headquarters, Washington DC, 18 May, 2009.

into the remoteness of distant control rooms not only effects the soldiers’ alleged sense of identity within a “community of death”, but places them into a new situation that no longer registers under the claims of community that were formerly at the heart of military experience and ideology. In the new military discourse as presented by documents like the US-military’s “roadmaps” for unmanned systems, human actors appear no longer as heroic subjects but as potential hazards for the work of networked machines. And yet the “man in the loop”, the human factor within the control- and decision making-processes, is the key-trope in selling “drones”, or weaponized unmanned technologies to the public. The Air Force UAS Flight Plan from 2009 cites a new office for “Human Systems Integration” and a “Human Performance Wing”, new institutions that are to ensure the integration of “human considerations, including human capabilities and limitations” into the technical systems. As chains of reaction (such as the “OODA loop”) can be reduced to nano-seconds, human participation in the technological decision loops poses a serious problem to the competitiveness of arms systems. This is paradigmatic for the most decisive political implications of those technologies currently under development.

This paper will explore one of the “nightmares of participation”, which challenge the notion of human participation and its potentials for “reclaiming” a positive sense of collectivity. A close-reading of unclassified military documents such as internal conference proceedings from the military-industry (Germany) and the Roadmaps of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (USA) will provide the material for a theoretical analysis that should provide relevant insights on what it means to speak of participation within a “network” that is no longer defined by human subjects. What conclusions can be drawn from the new roles attributed to participants in

the practices of war and killing when they move from “human in the loop” to “human *on* the loop”, as one fine distinction in the military jargon proposes? Though this topic moves far from the community-discourse of the 20th century (from Ferdinand Tönnies to Jean-Luc Nancy), it may help form a basis from which to reach an understanding of what it means to formulate new claims of community today.

15 Crisis and Critique: Histories of Protest Media Participation | By Anne Kaun, Södertörn University & University of Pennsylvania

The latest economic crisis of 2007/2008 has spurred a renewed debate about the flaws of capitalism not only in radical, alternative circles, but also mainstream, commercial media (Fuchs forthcoming). Besides this, urban centers in many countries around the world saw protests against austerity measures as well as micro-experiments of alternative social organization in protest camps and community initiatives (Feigenbaum, Frenzel, and McCurdy 2013). This evokes the question whether the crisis has opened up and demanded new forms of social critique in all spheres of society.

In the context of new political and social formations of protest, Twitter and Facebook revolutions, the MoveOn effect and netroots are circulating buzzwords in the discussion on how a changing media environment enables or constraints civic practices as well as experiences. Vincent Mosco (2005) has powerfully discussed the revolutionary rhetoric that has commonly appeared with every media innovation, may it be the telegraph, electricity, the radio or television. These media innovations have inspired discourses on fundamental change

in terms of the end of history, the end of geography and the end of politics, he argues. Especially in terms of protest movements aiming at fundamental social change this rhetoric of change and newness has been palpable. Vincent Mosco forcefully argues that the true revolutionary force lies, however, in media that have become banal and invisible as they are engrained within our everyday lives. Taking Mosco’s plea to not conflate the process of institutional change with technological change as a technological infrastructure cannot lead a revolution per se, this talk investigates historical forms of media participation of protest movements that emerged in the context of large scale economic crises. In that sense, it puts current uprisings in a historical perspective and contributes to the question of Participatory Practices and Digital Media. The aim is to provide a history of how – often banal – media technologies as means of communication (Williams 1980) have been employed in order to promote radical social change. Rather than feeding the myth of the technological sublime the paper explores the character of protest movements, their political causes and ideologies, the political and economic context in which they emerged and asks for their practices of media participation.

In order to investigate the history of media participation of emerging protest movements in the context of economic crises, three case studies are discussed. Starting with the Great Depression in 1929, the paper explores the media practices of the unemployed workers movement and the different political actors that aimed to organize and channel the activities of the unemployed, most pronounced the Communist Party, the Socialists and the Labor movement organizations. The second case study considers what Manuel Castells has called urban social movements and more specifically the rent strike movement that emerged in the

context of the 1972/73 so called oil crisis (Castells 1980).

According to Castells urban social movements constitute a shift or translation of the class struggle to the local community forming a grassroots response to the segregation in collective consumption. The third case study investigates the latest large-scale economic crisis the Great Recession in 2007/2008. The analysis focuses on forms of media participation of the Occupy Wall Street Movement.

Methodologically the paper is based on a multimodal approach combining extensive archival work with in-depth interviews and participant observation.

16 Liquid Democracy and other “fixes” to the problem of democracy | Martin Dege, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA

Ever since the beginning of the Pirate Party movement in 2006, the various subdivisions have considerably enlarged their scope of topics. The original concern with patent law and copyright issues mainly in the digital world has been expanded with privacy issues, direct democracy, transparency, and participation — all lumped together under the umbrella of “Internet freedom;” an idea that rests on the assumption of “the Internet” as something entirely “new” that kicked off a neoteric epoch in human development characterized by transparency, openness and universal participation. Within this logic, the Internet provides the laws and rules for this new epoch and the transgression of these rules to party organization, politics, and ultimately social life is for the benefit of all. The German branch of the Pirate Party certainly represents the strongest proxy with elected representatives in four Landtage. And despite recent setbacks,

they have managed to introduce a number of topics into the greater political discourse. On the technology end, their most advanced and widely discussed tool is an online system called LiquidFeedback, a platform on which every member can set up proposals for the others to vote on. The whole system becomes “liquid” in that every member can choose to transfer their vote to every other member whom they deem to be more knowledgeable on a particular matter thus abolishing the necessity to acquire expertise on the topic for themselves while at the same time still being able to participate in the decision-making process.

While this all sounds promising, empirical evidence speaks another language: Compared to the number of party members, relatively few actually participate in LiquidFeedback polls and many of the discussions are circulating around issues of minor importance. This is usually reasoned with as mere teething troubles of an entirely new way of doing politics (which people have yet to “understand”). It might however also be an expression of an underlying, implicit ideology that is, at its core, dysfunctional: Liquid Democracy seems to suggest that the unwanted side effects of the established political system that is driven by bureaucracies, hierarchies, behind doors conversations, and bargaining can simply be dispensed with by fixing an imperfect communications infrastructure. In essence, rather than introducing something entirely “new” brought about by “the Internet,” Liquid Democracy seems to be pouring new wine into old wineskins by reviving the old Madison/Burke debate of the role of the representative as mere delegate vs. independent agent, possibly enhanced with Fishkin’s idea of deliberative polls. Coevally, the idea of Liquid Democracy is hardly anything new: Concepts of proxy voting or delegate voting have been discussed for example by Lewis Carroll as

early as 1884 and have subsequently reappeared mostly within the realm of rational choice and public choice theory. Liquid Democracy is concomitant of this history which is disguised by a nullification of anything prior to “the Internet;” a move that hardly saves us from the potentially harmful consequences of such a world view. As such, it is the aim of this talk to caution against a too enthusiastic epitome of universal participation brought about by new technologies. By historicizing existing concepts, the goal is to point to an empirically founded and theoretically reflected investigation of interaction processes between democracy and new technologies.