

Everyday Life in Digitalized Worlds

Private Lives Conference
Oslo

25 – 27th October 2023

Programme

Wednesday 25th October

Keynote 1

9.00-10.15

Climate Change, Algorithms and Governance of Matter.

[Professor Hannah Knox](#), University College London

Recent concerns about how to govern the appearance and use of algorithms, have largely focused on the problem of using algorithms to classify and categorize people – raising issues around ethics, bias and trust of algorithmic systems. However, algorithms are also being used as methods for the control and management of materials – from soil to carbon, cars to electricity.

Drawing on discussions in material culture and infrastructure studies, this keynote proposes a language and approach for exploring the algorithmic governance of matter. Specifically, I turn to the use of algorithms and data in the governance of energy in the UK, in the context of climate change and associated energy crises.

Through a study of the use of digital technologies and algorithmic forms of analysis and display informing energy projects in a town in the North of England, I explore what algorithmic practices do to the practices of engaging and thinking energetic relations. Tracing energy through dashboards, maps and monitors, I interrogate how data produces energy as a problem of scale. Scaling energy is explored as a political technique which distributes and frames people and practices in ways that have tangible effects on understandings of political efficacy, and the distribution of political agency.

PANEL 1 - Bodies in Digitalized Worlds

10:30-12:30

Convenor/Discussant: Tuva Beyer Broch, Norwegian Institute of Nature Research

The word digital derives from Latin for finger, making the body a central, yet underexplored, part of our current era. The digital relies heavily on vision, although recently touch has become an area of investment. Howes (2003) argues that the hegemony of vision in Western culture undermines understanding of the interplay of our multiple senses – In the anthropology of senses, it could be argued that the mind is often silenced. As online and offline worlds are entangled, so are our senses, body, and mind. In other words, that most people today live in digital environments, where the digital has become naturalized – still leaves room for different bodily experiences connected to the analogue and digital. Thus, this panel seeks to explore what happens to bodies and senses as humans around the world partake, consciously and/or unconsciously in digital practices in their everyday life. We ask how living in a digital era both challenges and actualizes our bodies and senses.

10:30-10:40

Welcome and short introduction

Tuva Beyer Broch, Norwegian Institute of Nature Research (Convenor)

10:40- 11:00

Domestic Workers in the Arabian Gulf on TikTok: Discursive Aesthetics and Bodies in Motion [ZOOM presentation]

Marion Breteau, American University of Kuwait/CEFREPA Kuwait Global

Recognized for suffering from precarious work conditions, several millions of women from Africa and South Asia are employed as domestic workers in the Arabian Gulf. The smartphone application TikTok has become a trend over the region for counting users from this job category. The videos they post highlight the issue of in/visibility as a founding dimension of their status as marginalized migrants, whose work and daily lives are confined to the domestic space. This phenomenon is depicted in local newspapers as a threat to the country's well-being and the locals' privacy. Other practices circulate on TikTok, such as illegal recruitment ads, all of which demonstrate the vulnerability to which these women are subjected, and how TikTok usage reflects wider structural contingencies related to labor migration in Gulf societies. I suggest examining TikTok as an agentic practice by means of creative procedures, and a sensory and bodily mode of existence for negotiating marginalization. By providing an overview of recurring trends and by focusing on their technical characteristics, metadata, and esthetic styles, I aim to resituate the bodily matter of such performances to nuance approaches that often depict this category of workers as silenced and powerless.

11:00- 11:20

The digital hand – Theorizing embodied news work in the digital era

Gudrun Rundningen, Oslo Metropolitan University

Based on a longitudinal ethnographic study of journalistic work for ten years (2013-2023) including one-year full-time fieldwork in 2017, this paper explores what the complex brain-body-tool relation can tell us about how the journalistic craft is reshaped by digitalization. For everyone using computers and cell phones on a regular basis, the hands seem to know their way around the keyboard or screen as a non-linguistic and embodied practice. In the newsroom, I find what I label the 'digital hand' to function beyond the obvious. For instance, a journalist told me that after writing news stories (short formats) for a while she couldn't write longer texts anymore. Another journalist said that while writing news stories "it just comes" through the empathy with the persons interviewed. Desk journalists wrote stories intuitively for the metrics (e.g., clicks based on readers behavior). This implies that not only digital tools, but also for instance format, interviewees, data, and readers can become embodied into our practices as part of our working rhythm and corporal non-linguistic knowledge. This paper theorizes 'the digital hand' as embodiment connected to the specifics of the materiality one engages with and the relations beyond or inherent in digital devices.

11:20- 11:40

The Technology Multiple: The Robot Avatar Substituting for the Ill Body

Maja Nordtug, OsloMetropolotan University

Marit Haldar, Oslo Metropolitan University

In this article, we explore how a very simple telepresence robot avatar becomes a technology multiple when interacting with humans. Based on Mol's notion of the body multiple, we explore how AV1, a social telepresence robot avatar designed to act as a substitute in schools for homebound students,

becomes a technology multiple. The analysis is based on 103 interviews with homebound students in Norway using AV1 and/or their guardians, interviews with teachers, and focus group interviews with classmates. In the analysis, we first explore the technology itself and subsequently the technology understood as more than itself. We find that the manyfoldedness of the technology includes an understanding of AV1 as just a piece of hardware controlled by software, as a toy, a gadget, a representation of a student, and as the actual homebound student. The different perceptions come into being in interaction with human bodies, and the technology thus arguably emerge with human bodies, creating a technology that is more than technological. female and producers are usually male, this asymmetrical distribution of knowledge is also a gendered one. Drawing on fieldwork in co-writing sessions, this paper uses a semiotic framework to describe and explore how the gendered distributions of power in the techno-sensory assemblage of professional songwriting is made audible and challenged as female songwriters claim their seat in the privileged 'producer's chair'.

11:40-12:00

Making sense of the ageing body: The use of apps by older Danes in managing physical health

Martin Vinther Bavngaard, Oslo Metropolitan University

Parallel to the proliferation of apps and wearables among consumers, the Danish Health Authorities push for the utilization of such mobile technologies by citizens to manage their health in an everyday setting outside the clinic. For older Danes owning smartphones, however, managing health remains among the least common practices performed. In-depth knowledge is needed as to how older people incorporate smartphones in their health management practices. This paper is based upon semi-structured interviews in which ten older Danes (aged 65-79) reflect upon their engagement with apps in managing their physical health, and explores the sociotechnical interplay embedded in these practices. The findings illustrate how apps shape the way participants relate to their own bodies. By way of quantification, apps render aspects of participants' bodies and bodily practices visible as on-screen numbers. Such numbers anchor their otherwise intangible bodily experiences and constitutes a window for self-assessment in which participants may contest their own subjective experiences of their ageing bodies vis-à-vis the perceived objectivity of the data displayed by their apps. A hurting knee, sleep deprivation, and bodily exertion all constitute sites of contestation between bodily experiences and app-driven insights. However, quantification via apps allows not only for self-assessment, but for the optimization of certain practices. In bounded sessions of physical exercise, apps are used for initiating and controlling activity as well as increasing one's efforts with the intention of optimizing the sessions. But the logic of optimization also extends into other practices of everyday life: Watching TV, shopping for groceries, and planning transportation are targeted as bodily practices to be optimized by quantification to adhere to efforts towards managing physical health. These findings thus showcase how apps become entangled in establishing and negotiating knowledge of the body and of bodily practices by the participants.

12:00-12:10

Tuva Beyer Broch, Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (Discussant)

12:10-12:30

Discussion

PANEL 2 - Power and Politics in Digitalized Environments

13:30-15:30

Convenor: Cecilia Salinas, University of Oslo

Discussant: Sharam Alghasi, Kristiania University College

An emergent body of anthropological work is contesting totalizing narratives about what digital technologies and the internet mean for societies. People do not adopt digital tools passively but perform effective and creative politics in myriad ways. As online and offline worlds are increasingly intertwined, the new complex way of interactions demands knowledge of the diverse engagement of people with digital technologies. This panel invites contributions that discuss the specific ways in which people engage with digital platforms and tools politically. As such, this panel aims to explore how digital technologies are incorporated into people's everyday attempts to disrupt, demand, resist, navigate and challenge the status quo in political spaces and within relationships of power.

13:30-13:40

Welcome and short introduction

Cecilia G. Salinas, University of Oslo (Convenor)

13:40-14.00

Solidarity in Digital Spaces: Navigating Diabetes Care and Rights in North Macedonia [ZOOM presentation]

Eda Starova Tahir, University of Skopje

There are around 26 registered citizen associations, as well as one union of associations, working in the sphere of raising awareness, education and protection of rights for people with diabetes in North Macedonia. Most of these associations have an online presence - a Facebook page or group that serves as a virtual space for people to communicate daily. In effect, some of the associations' everyday functioning plays out largely in these virtual spaces, and often moves beyond the formal organizational functions to becoming an open forum for people (not only formal members of the association) to share personal daily updates, questions and advice-seeking, expressions of frustration, as well as sharing, trading or selling of insulin pens, glucose sensors, and other diabetes-related products. Facing the reality of a complex and precarious bureaucratic system that frequently affects the availability of glucose meters, insulin as well as other medication and supplies, these online/civic spaces at times serve as solidarity-based safety-net, vents for expressing dissatisfaction with public institutions, or catalysts for further action. This presentation examines the way in which people with diabetes learn to navigate the healthcare system, how to better manage their condition, as well demand or enact rights in the public system through individual or collective action in and using digital platforms. As such, it considers how digital civic spaces become spaces of negotiating care and expectations amidst internalized conceptions of modernity, morality and welfare.

14:00-14:20

Examining the digitalized landscape of representation: Diversity washing?

Ujala Arshad Syeda, Oslo University

In recent years, the average Norwegian's interest in podcasts has increased in scope and publicity. With the rise of new media production, underrepresented minorities have been able to create spaces for themselves to have discussions they deem important. "Diversity podcasts" have become coveted in the sociopolitical trend that increasingly demands representation of ethnic and cultural diversity in Norway. Based on ethnographic research, this paper examines the implications of ethnic/cultural diversity among podcast creators with minority backgrounds in Oslo. What are the implicit and explicit conversations minority operators of podcasts are engaging in? While these podcast operators face the intricate task of forging their individual identities, they simultaneously face external perceptions that place them in narratives of 'us' and 'them'. How have their minority identities been a source of both strength and weakness as they attempt to navigate the digitalized terrain of representation? In order to see beyond the barriers of 'diversity' that contribute to processes of othering and exoticizing, there is a need to examine both the spoken and unspoken dialogues that have possible essentializing tendencies. After all, how do you put skin colour on an audio product?

14:20-14:40

Claiming a seat in 'the producer's chair': Gendered distributions of knowledge and power in the techno-sensory assemblage of collaborative popular music songwriting

Ingrid M. Tolstad, Work Research Institute, Oslo Metropolitan University

Songwriting in contemporary popular music is a highly digitalized endeavor, where *the computer* with all its interwoven analog and digital technologies has become a natural focal point. Songwriting is simultaneously largely a collaborative practice between *topliners* (creating lyrics and melodies) and *producers* (responsible for beats, instrumentation, and sound). While both roles are crucial to the creative process, operating the computer and its integrated production technology is primarily reserved for the producer. Listening to the sounds coming out of the speakers, while seeing their visual representation on the screen, adjusting them in real-time through touching and moving physical and virtual keyboards and knobs, is an embodied and multi-sensory experience deeply entangled with the technologies of music production. 'The producer's chair' thus represents a privileged position for acquiring, maintaining, and developing this techno-sensory knowledge, but also as a gatekeeper of (the outcome of) the creative process. As toplineers continue to be predominantly female and producers are usually male, this asymmetrical distribution of knowledge is also a gendered one. Drawing on fieldwork in co-writing sessions, this paper uses a semiotic framework to describe and explore how the gendered distributions of power in the techno-sensory assemblage of professional songwriting is made audible and challenged as female songwriters claim their seat in the privileged 'producer's chair'.

14:40-15:00

Creating Fourthspace: The Digital, Physical and Liminal Integration of Syrian Refugees in Scandanavia

Anisa Abeytia University of San Francisco, Global Research Network

This article is the culmination of seven years of mixed method research and field work that utilized Grounded Theory, questionnaires, Geographic Information System, ethnography and digital ethnography to understand the overlapping use of digital, and physical geographies by Syrian refugees

in Scandinavian spaces for social inclusion. The increasing popularity of digital social platforms in the daily lives of Syrian refugees requires a theoretical framing to contextualize and interpret their online and offline use for social inclusion. Notions of location, community and self are intimately connected to how social media is used and interpreted as a digital geography inhabited by schools, businesses and social networks that mimic, overlap and at times, supersede physical geography. I incorporate Edward Soja's Thirdspace (1996) and his description of the expansion of the liminal geographic imagination (Thirdspace) through mundane interaction in Firstspace (physical places), Secondspace (communal area) and I expand it to include a digital Fourthspace. Fourthspace is the intersection of digital, physical, commons and liminal geographies to reflect the everyday usage of these intersecting geographies and ultimately the acceptance or rejection of new ideas and technologies within the liminal realm of Thirdspace. Additionally, this research explores the implications and influence that physical, digital, and liminal landscapes have on refugee integration policy.

15:00-15:15

Everyday politics and social media in Norway

Cecilia G. Salinas, University of Oslo

This paper explores how Norwegians with culturally diverse backgrounds critically use social media in anti-racist struggles. It adds to those perspectives that see network sites as important spaces to study civic and political engagements and that see social media as a tool for empowerment and the exercising of emancipatory agency beyond algorithmic determination. Based on nine months of ethnographic fieldwork among Norwegians in the arts and cultural sector, I examine the complex imbrications of private lives, politics and technology. I argue that contemporary activism can exist without activists. I will develop my argument based on what research participants posted and shared on Facebook and Instagram and their reflections about their practices.

15:15- 15:30:

Sharam Alghasi, Kristiania University College (Discussant)

Thursday October 26th

Keynote 2:

9.00.10.15

Between Nostalgia and Projection: Is there a Digital Present?

[Dr. Anna- Maria Walter](#), University of Oulu

Digital users' (in)ability to effectively juggle competing presences of on- and offline is a topic of much debate. In this keynote, I discuss whether online presence equates to a digital present. Drawing on ethnographic work from youth in northern Pakistan and outdoor enthusiasts in the Alps, I want to complicate ideas about the hybridity of everyday lives and critically examine the complementarity and interchangeability of human (inter)action on- and offline.

While not discounting the value and quality of intimacy which mobile communication can engender, I question whether time spent online rather hints at the past and the future, given that many users either draw on shared memories or imaginaries, or seek to engineer an upcoming moment.

To what extent does the flirt on an app aim towards a physical meeting in the future? Does a post of yesterday's ski outing fill the void of a current presence? And how does content produced, shared, and commented online serve as a form of assurance of one's own or group values rather than stimulate interpersonal exchange and experience-making?

I explore how digital copresence differs from the moment in which we set the phone or laptop aside and "fully engage" in activities or directly with people, without technology's distraction.

PANEL 3 – Inscribing Nature in Digital Worlds

10:30-12:30 (part I) and 13:30-15:30 (part II)

Convenors: Marianne E. Lien, University of Oslo, and Tom Bratrud, University of Oslo

Digital technology is currently mediating biosocial relations in various ways: GPS tracking, smartphones, satellite photos and digital tagging is being incorporated in farming and herding practices; promising enhanced remote animal control as well as precision agriculture. At the same time, close encounters with 'untouched' nature (and wild animals) is ritually celebrated through the digital sharing of mountain-top-selfies on Social Media with implications for identity-work and regional tourism. This panel invites contributions that approach the ways in which natural environments are mediated, managed, interpreted and curated through digital technologies. How do digitized technologies shape relations human relations with the other-than-human world? What modes of knowing, forms of governance, and affective encounters do digitalized contact zones enable? We especially invite contributions with an ethnographic approach.

10:30 Welcome and short introduction

Marianne E. Lien, University of Oslo (Convenor)

Part 1

10:40-11:00

The Reluctant Kings of the Mountain: Negotiating Individual Distinction and Public Sameness in Digitalised Rural Norway [ZOOM presentation]

Tom Bratrud, University of Oslo

In Norway, equality as sameness has been emphasized as a dominant social form characterizing social interaction whereas claims to individual distinction are confined to private realms. However, most Norwegians seek belonging and stimulation in ways that are not only compatible with norms of equality and sameness. In this article, I discuss how communication of prestige-giving individual achievements on digital platforms but practice of egalitarian values in face-to-face interaction may lead to individual distinction as well as social inclusion. This is because digital platforms often have different norms for what is considered illegitimate bragging. Showing off distinction here is thus

compatible with practicing equality in other social arenas. Digital platforms may thus become alternative spaces through which people negotiate distinction and belonging in social hierarchies.

11:00-11:20

Performing human-muskox-reindeer relations in Dovrefjell through digital manifestations

Karin Lillevold, University of Bergen

This paper draws on recent ethnographic fieldwork in the national park Dovrefjell in central parts of Norway. This is a high mountain area where one of Europe's last remaining wild reindeer herds – described as one of the 'wildest' of the wild reindeer herds – live alongside the introduced muskox. The former was recently classified as threatened while the latter is classified as an alien species. Both have become significant species in the area, although humans relate to them quite differently. This paper explores how relations between humans, muskoxen and reindeers are performed through digital manifestations such as online database plotting showcasing where the animals have been observed, Facebook groups stating the latest observations, and Instagram hashtags and geotags indicating where the animals can be found. I will show how such digital manifestations of the animals' positions are used in two different, but similarly significant, types of hunting: The strongly regulated reindeer hunt taking place each autumn as part of the management, and the photo hunt by tourists and guide companies in search of the best shot of the muskox. I argue that in both cases the digitalization and use of different apps and technologies, are crucial elements in which human-animal relations are performed.

11:20-11:40

Concepts for a general typology of digital technologies and modes of knowing with landscapes as one example.

Henrik Sinding-Larsen, University of Oslo

The emergence of oral language, writing, and digital technology mark important transitions in the history/evolution of human culture. All three can be regarded as information technologies or cognitive artifacts (Krakauer 2016). Each supports different modes of understanding and manipulating the natural environment. With navigation of landscapes as an example, I will present the concept pairs *egocentric* versus *allocentric modes of knowing* (navigating) (Sinding-Larsen 2019) and *complementary* versus *competitive cognitive artifacts* (Krakauer 2016). An *egocentric* mode is grounded in bodily, emotionally, and relationally experienced landmarks and events while an *allocentric* mode is based on an abstract (externalized) coordinate system describing an empty space separated from its concrete beings and landmarks. The dichotomy oral versus written (including map-based) is related to the dichotomy pre-literate versus literate societies. Pre-digital versus post-digital societies may not represent a dichotomy along the same lines because digital technologies are extremely composite. Some aspects may strengthen an egocentric mode at the same time as other may strengthen an allocentric mode of knowing. Some aspects of digital technologies are transparent and may become internalized through use (complementary cognitive artifacts) while other, like GPS-navigation without a map or ChatGPT, provide competence without a comparable learning effect. *Competitive cognitive artifacts* are more like cognitive protheses that replace (compete with) our pre-digital cognitive abilities. The presentation will use diverse illustrative examples from the natural

environment while the main objective is to present the concepts.

11:40-12:00

Tracing sheep through their ears: The co-use of traditional ear marks and electronic tags in a Shetland common grazing area

Louisa Crysmann, University of Oslo

Roaming the hills freely, Shetland's hill sheep are marked with both traditional cut ear marks and electronic numbered ear tags to attribute the animals' ownership to the handful of crofters with rights for grazing there. On the hill, ear marks offer the most reliable attribution of ownership, since the cuts are administered earlier in a lamb's life and remain permanent, whereas the tags can fall out in the rough pasture. Electronic ear tags allow local crofters, vets, bureaucrats, auction marts and abattoirs to identify sheep, not only as originating from a specific farm but also as individual animals. Both ear marks and tags are enacted anew through each encounter, from the first cut or attachment to each time a sheep is handled in the sorting pens, and finally when they are slaughtered for meat, flitting between identifying an individual history, noted in an excel file, to marking their belonging to a farm when they are found, moved, or killed. By exploring the varied and complimentary uses of analogue ear marks and digital ear tags throughout a hill sheep's life, this paper will aim to unravel the uses of digital systems for tracing the lives of these independent hill dwellers, and highlight some ways that crofters use the numbered ear tags to follow their sheep's individual stories, getting to know the individuals in their flock through new methods.

12:00-12:20

Digitalization and reindeer herding

Marianne E. Lien, University of Oslo

Digital technologies such as GPS, electronic ear-chips and Social media platforms are incorporated everyday tools of Sámi reindeer husbandry practices in Norway, alongside non-digital- modes of knowing and relating with animals. Digital tools are mobilized not only in sorting and identifying individual reindeer and their movements, but also in making scientific claims about the effect of infrastructural interventions such as wind turbines or mining on the animals' movement and well-being. More recently, drones are applied during reindeer herding and surveillance. This paper traces digital interfaces in human-animal relations, with a specific focus on the recent dynamics related to drones. I explore the affective, sensory and practical dimensions of drone-herding and the spatio-temporal choreography of this more-than-human assemblage across shifting landscape formations. The paper draws on fieldwork among reindeer owners in East Finnmark, as part of the research project Private Lives; Embedding Sociality at Digital Kitchen-Tables.

12:20-12:30

Discussion

PANEL 3, Part 2:

13:30-13:50

Making Nature Count: Water, Data and Finance

Ainur Begim, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

In the past several years, biodiversity loss has become one of the top sustainable finance concerns. If previously biodiversity largely figured in the context of conservation and “ecosystem services” (MacDonald, 2010), today governments, multilateral development organizations, non-profits and the financial sector expanded their engagement with biodiversity. Nature is increasingly positioned as vital to the global economy and its future growth, and companies are increasingly encouraged and incentivized – through regulation and client expectations – to measure their impact on biodiversity and ascertain what nature loss means for their bottom line. These conversations intensified in the lead up to and post the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) in Montreal in December 2022, resulting in a flurry of publications, new initiatives such as Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), and efforts among finance and financial data professionals to measure, develop biodiversity data and metrics and integrate nature concerns in financial decision-making. This paper traces the efforts of a Norwegian investment firm to incorporate biodiversity into their spreadsheets, models, and investment decisions and otherwise navigate the new brave world of sustainable finance. Their efforts to quantify biodiversity and turn nature into financial metrics that could be easily inserted into financial models and decision-making demonstrate how sustainable finance professionals aim to legitimate their engagement with non-financial issues to mainstream financial practitioners and investors and the way non-financial concerns get taken up in finance with important consequences for the future of increasingly financialized nature

13:50-14:10

Recipes: Common experiments and the fermenting public

Ana Delgado, University of Oslo

Sauerkraut, kimchi, coffee, chocolate, cheese... Fermenting is the most common technique to preserve food in traditional cultures. In Norway and other countries in Europe, it somewhat fell into oblivion with the coming of industrially processed food, to experience a comeback within the last couple of decades. The possibility of sharing recipes in the digital media has surely helped the proliferation of a public interest in fermentations. To explore how people engage in practicing fermentations, I look at recipes as they circulate in diverse media, including Facebook groups, blogs, and YouTube videos. Recipes make knowledge on fermentations public and portable, yet they also enable experimenting in the private space of the home. I draw on ethnographic work in both on- and offline sites to explore material and digital means of home experiments with fermentations. I look at the ways in which recipes circulate as text-devices and are de-scripted and brought back to life in the intimate environment of the home to show how recipe circulation and use elicit a public and has ‘commoning’ effects. The paper shows how as they circulate, and are shared and brought up to use, fermentation recipes bring together off and online sensing experience, the materiality of the living and the affordances of the digital, configuring the contours of a particular mode of experimentality. I use the term “common experiments” to describe this way of tinkering with the living that is quite ordinary, cheap and accessible, and that results in the production of a pool of knowledge and microbial commons that make further home experimenting possible. I further argue that in its productivity, common experimenting with fermentations ‘uncommons’ the world as it questions existing world-orderings, redistributes action and opens for new forms of human-microbial relations.

14:10-14:30

Reindeer data interventions: on how to account for ren betesro in changing habitats

Daniela Sant'Ana, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

In this paper, I am interested in how the dynamic contours of habitats of different kinds are produced in biosocial entanglements (Kelly, 2012; Anderson et. al., 2017; Marres, 2020). I focus on a project financed by Swedish environmental and energy authorities to understand how the wind power turbines affect the reindeer's selection of habitat and reindeer husbandry, in Norway and Sweden. While each research assemblage should use both, reindeer movement GPS data available and the collaboration with herders, another clear prescription was to separate selection of habitat of reindeer and the decisions of the herders in the analysis, which unfolded differently in each assemblage. I describe how, from their lab-offices, ecologists in Sweden have worked on those tasks for nearly 9 months, between 2020 and 2021. In continuation of previous projects, ecologists and herders sat in front of projected screens while herders would tell what was going on each year, like a protocol. The script developed by a researcher automatically classified the events of free ranging, those of herding, errors in GPS, technical problems in the satellite data, that appeared in the data set. They would add that to the participatory GIS in another round where herders could comment on the animation, year by year. Considering the herder's concept of ren betesro the ecologists analyzed how habitat choice/avoidance and movement speed varied in relation to venvironmental and meteorological factors and predators and to the establishment of turbines. This period was also when I first came across with the data cleaning moment of ecologists, and collaborated in the preliminary methodological discussions of the project, on which I build my argument. Here, I take what I describe as an experiment of co-inhabiting changing worlds, to a different plane, that of my (initial) deskwork about their work. I am not only interested in how the process to model habitat selection bounded the data produced in disputed ren grazing lands. I also want to consider the challenges that transforming office conviviality and interdisciplinary collaboration into ethnographic encounters present to the way I craft early-stage doctoral research in a foreign, Nordic context.

14:30-14:50

Smartphones and selfies in the Arctic: how the digital shift influences the inner dynamic of nature-based adventure tourism

Axel Rosenberg, Norwegian School of Sport Sciences

The 'digital shift' (Sharpley, 2021), with its use of mobile technology and social media, is considered one of the megatrends that shapes the nature, practices and experiences of nature-based tourism (Elmahdy et al., 2017). Some scholars argue that the digital shift has moved tourists' focus from documenting the extraordinary to building relationships (Urry & Larsen, 2011), whereas others highlight a selfie trend that is primarily concerned with visual presentations of the self (Dinhopl & Gretzel, 2016). Could it be that nature is being lost from tourism, even from nature-based tourism? How robust is the evidence? Despite the omnipresence of both smartphones and selfies in nature-based tourism, the use of mobile technology and social media is still under-represented in tourism research, including in studies of tourism experiences. This paper will share knowledge from an in-depth study of tourism practices during guided ski trips on Norway's Arctic mountain plateau, Finnmarksvidda. It focuses on the multiple ways in which participants use smartphones to capture and share their experiences of what could be considered an aspect of a 'good life'. It investigates the types

of ‘stories’ participants relate, and the impacts of smartphone use on the nature of the trips and the choices participants make.

14:50-15:10

“It’s complicated”: Oppression and resistance in the digital world of rock climbing. [ZOOM presentation]

Jennifer Wigglesworth, University of Northern British Columbia

In this paper, I explore how social media shaped, and was shaped by, my research on discriminatory rock-climbing route names in Canada and the United States. My research employed a feminist ethnographic method: I interviewed 34 women, collected participant observations in the field over two years, and augmented these materials with stories drawn from my own experiences. In 2019, I wrote a public sociology blog on misogynistic climbing route names that generated much pushback (and praise) from the climbing community, and I captured screenshots of social media threads where my blog was shared. In the summer of 2020, I followed online through social media as the advocacy around discriminatory route names gained traction alongside transnational calls for racial justice with the Black Lives Matter movement. I argue that social media facilitated a more complex and deep understanding of the power relations operating in climbing, and, in particular, flagged for me the severity of women’s internalized sexism and men’s entitlement and the tenacity of grassroots resistance. This paper offers an empirical example of how outdoor environments are constructed, mediated, and transformed through digital technologies, and it contributes an ethnographic understanding of the opportunities and challenges of digital research.

15:10-15:30

Discussion

Friday 27th October

Keynote lecture 3:

9.00-10.15

Mimetic Fascism: On belonging and inspirational violence in the age of virality.

[Associate Professor Cathrine Thorleifsson](#), University of Oslo

New and emerging digital technologies are rapidly utilized by netizens to forge communities and spread ideas. The past decade, the combination of anonymity with a lack of moderation has made particular web-based forums into gathering places for white supremacists who anonymously produce conspiracy narratives and calls for redemptive violence.

Based on fieldwork in a fascist digital subculture, this keynote examines violent escalations of internet culture and the online practices that are utilized in processes of belonging and radicalization.

Combining analysis of user behavior with face to face interviews, I shall argue that the cultural practices enabled by digital infrastructure are particularly powerful for the amplification of the logic of an endangered ultra-nation that needs urgent violent defense.

Users forge belonging and are radicalized through transgressive play frames, where violence is promoted through memetic irony and aggrieved masculinity and pain is transformed into heroic supremacy. Cyberfascism co-produced among users across continents lends itself to inspirational violence whereby actors imitate forms of political violence based on examples carried out elsewhere.

Finally, I shall offer some recommendations for preventing and countering violence in this specific digital milieu.

PANEL 4 - Friends or Foes? Digital Platforms in our Everyday Lives

10:30-12:30

Convenors: Lene Pettersen, Kristiania University College, and Plata Diesen. Kristiania University College

10:30-10:50

The Digital Lives of Syrian Refugees in Norway and the European Union: The Creation of Digital Jama'iyat and Facebook Social Media Networks as a Social Inclusion Tools

Anisa Abeytia, Policy, Digital Equity, and Innovation, Global Research Network

Digital spaces are increasingly playing a pivotal role in the lives of refugees as a means of maintaining ties to their home countries, connecting to communities in their new homeland and as a means of self-integration. This study explores, through both ethnography and digital ethnography, the social media habits of Syrian refugees over time and across geography, from 1998 when the internet was first introduced into Syria, until 2019. As Syrians began to arrive in Europe their posting habits on Facebook reflected changes they were experiencing during resettlement that are indicative of: altered trajectories of life goals, depression, a lack of confidence in the efficacy of social media as a medium of change, and a means of avoiding the Syrian state's censorship apparatus. However, instant messaging and private/secret groups remain popular and mimic older Syrian social networks, *jama'iya*, that migrated onto the internet and serve as in-group networks. The creation of Refugee Welcome Pages and digital *jama'iya* on Facebook allowed for the development of communities that emerged from an outpouring of sympathy for asylum seekers. Refugee Welcome Pages thus far developed in three stages, first as a triage to provide support to refugees, then as a way locals could build networks to truly welcome refugees.

10:50-11:10

Navigating Digital Intimacies: Relationships *with, through, and around* Large Language Models

Fartein Hauan Nilsen, University of Bergen.

In an increasingly digitalized world, the emergence of Large Language Models (LLMs) stands to redefine the contours of human-machine interaction. This paper examines the multifaceted relationships humans form *with* LLMs as assistants and companions, *through* LLMs in roles like digital matchmakers, and *around* LLMs in tech epicenters such as San Francisco. The study for this paper is based in a mixed-methods approach, merging the nuances captured through traditional ethnographic fieldwork in San Francisco with the immediacy and breadth of digital interactions via Social Media platforms like Discord and Reddit. Drawing inspiration from Activity Theory and Cyborg Anthropology, the paper explores how LLMs serve as both tools and agents, mediating social interactions and both shaping and being shaped by socio-cultural norms. The paper highlights a dual narrative: LLMs as harbingers of techno-optimism, promising enhanced connectivity and assistance, and as catalysts for techno-anxiety, raising concerns about authenticity, privacy, and agency. Focusing on the experiences of users, developers, and online communities, this paper contributes to digital

anthropology by examining the intricate web of digital intimacies in the age of LLMs, offering insights into the evolving socio-technical landscape and its implications for human identity, relationships, and culture.

11:10-11:30

Status Que? – A systematic review on qualitative studies on online dating

Plata Diesen, Kristiania University College.

The use of dating applications is expanding, with a rising 384,15 million users worldwide. In bringing couples together, internet dating platforms increasingly play the role once dominated by family and friends. Online dating has overtaken as mediator for single people to meet, in providing a virtual space to make contact, and a bridge to face-to-face relationships. Having reviewed the existing qualitative research on online dating and dating apps in 72 full text articles and 33 abstracts from 2013–2023, we have discovered five major categories: 1: Motivation: users may wish to achieve long lasting love, intimacy, hook-up sex or a mix between. 2: Vulnerability: online dating may imply insecurities, stigmas and risks. 3. Self-presentation: users negotiate their online presentation and assess the presentations of others. 4. Technology and digital culture: user views on algorithms, affordances and required technological skills. 5. Inequality: Differences regarding racial hierarchy, gender and age. It seems clear that most of the studies include either mainly heterosexual college age adults, or men seeking men using localisation-based dating apps. We call for more research on a larger variety of online daters.

11:30-11:50

Navigating the Digital Age Without a Care: The Homo Disconnectus

Victoria Kratel, Kristiania University College.

In the “digital age”, individuals “live in media, rather than with media”. As a result, a diverse array of everyday tasks has shifted in the online realm, including care work, leading society to exist in a state of “constant connectivity”. Consequently, digital disconnection, entailing the choice to refrain from using digital media, is a form of opting out, which requires agency. Building on the contributions of Bourdieu and Giddens on agency, I introduce the fictitious agent *homo disconnectus*, who is endowed with maximum agency and the ideal structures to digitally disconnect. The homo disconnectus thus serves as a tool to illustrate that the decision of whether digital media are ‘friends or foes’ is not solely up to the individual but is highly influenced by structural privileges. Using the example of care work performed online, I uncover the significance of gender and class. This leads to my core argument that we must closely examine the factors that hinder self-determined media use in order to effectively dismantle these barriers.

11:50-12:10

Dark design patterns and gamification as the heart of dating applications’ business models

Associate professor Lene Pettersen (presenter) and professor Faltin Karlsen, Kristiania University College, Oslo, Norway.

Dating applications represent a paradox: on the one hand, they provide a monetized platform for people to form relationships, yet on the other hand, the more people who find partners, the less

revenue goes to the company. With this paradox as a backdrop, this extended abstract examines the business model of dating applications by address the following research question: What characterizes the business models of dating applications? To provide a nuanced picture of this, we conducted a 2022-study combining data about dating apps and app users: (A) 22 in-depth interviews with current and previous users (aged 24–49 years) of Norwegian dating applications users; (B) a systematic analysis of 30 serious dating apps in Google Play and Apple’s App Store; and (C) a diary study of four of the 30 dating applications. The findings reveals that dating apps follows a business model that creates revenue through a mix of an in-app purchase-model and subscription fees. The apps typically market themselves as free, yet they use several dark design and gamification features to create and spark emotional curiosity and engagement that in turn brings in revenue to dating app companies. Several of the users stated that they have experienced the apps as manipulative, emotionally exhausting and that they created the same kind of “addiction” or “cravings” they experienced in social media. Clearly, design is not only power, design gives the dating app companies power where designing for emotional engagement is a key value-creating element in their business models.

12:10-12:30

Weberian Concepts of Authority Within the Social Media Entertainment Industry

Jake Ference, University of Oslo

The growth of social media and social platforms over the last two decades has caused a huge change in the ways that the entertainment industry finds its way into the lives of individuals. This industry is putting more effort and money than ever before into advertisement through social media, and individual members of this industry (mostly entertainers themselves) are developing new ways to bring their fame and relevance onto these platforms. Additionally, with many people using these social platforms to get a large portion of their entertainment, and the rise of a new class of entertainers, social media influencers and content creators, we have seen how the entertainment and social media industries have become intertwined. However, the key to being successful on these platforms, as an established celebrity or an online content creator, is through the users and audiences on these platforms. The user’s attention has become the most important form of currency on social media, it determines if an entertainer figuratively lives or dies in the industry. This paper will explore the relationship between users and online entertainers, new and old, on social media platforms. This takes place through a Max Weber inspired discussion of power, authority, and legitimacy, which will outline a new concept of “Entertainer Authority,” where entertainers try to utilize an audience in order to gain success. This will not only give a foundation for Weber’s authority within the online entertainment space, but also lead to a discussion of the unique agency that users gain within this authority. This space lacks the scale and large gaps in power that Weber’s traditional ideas contained. This not only allows users to choose their involvement with entertainers freely, but also more easily remove that authority from individuals, or possibly obtaining it for themselves.

PANEL 5: Consumption and Friction on Digital Platforms

30 Friday 27th October

13:30-15:00

Convenors: Clara Julia Reich and Mikko Laamanen, Consumption Research Norway

With the rise of platforms and the platform economy, new questions regarding interactions in everyday life emerge. Considering the variety and unique features of digital platforms spanning from social media to gaming to service provision platforms, there is a need to understand the particularities. Frictions, negotiation, and boundary-making processes can be a fruitful way to gain insights into users' digital practices on and in their encounters with the platforms. Such processes might reveal heterogenous, unequal encounters, and points of contestation that slow or accelerate operations of power. Drawing on various disciplines, this panel invites contributions that explore the frictions that occur between users and digital platforms. This includes the frictions occur *among* users as well as *in* the engagement with the platform. The panel draws upon the role of users as consumers, as well as the role consumption and the material play in interactions with the platforms.

13:30-13:40

Welcome and short introduction

Clara Julia Reich, Consumption Research Norway (Convenor) and Mikko Laamanen, Consumption Research Norway (Discussant)

13:40 – 14:00

Frictions in platform ‘investment’: Imagination, scale and resistance in an alternative platform

*Mikko Laamanen, Consumption Research Norway, Oslo Metropolitan University
Karolina Mikołajewska-Zajac, University of Queensland*

Underpinned by the imaginary of a frictionless market, digital platforms strive to facilitate frictionless consumption (Manzerolle and Wiseman, 2016) whereby individuals enroll in user-friendly platform systems where their material and social resources get locked-in while platform proprietors extract data and value from users' activities. In the platform economy, friction inextricably connects functionality with entrapment (Seaver, 2019) resonating with Tsing's (2005) understanding of the friction metaphor as connecting the freedom of motion with coercion, frustration and restraint. We trace the frictions of investment into an EU-based short-term accommodation platform cooperative (Scholz and Schneider, 2016; Schor, 2020). Building on the polysemic notion of 'investment', we investigate "ecologies of friction" (Tironi and Albornoz, 2022) at three platform levels: 1. individual investment into platform work (e.g., multihoming and cooperative membership), 2. collective investment into platform participation (e.g., selling a collective governance model to stakeholders), and 3. resource investment into the business model (i.e., the imagination of platform growth and returns). We show these multilevel frictions through in-depth interviews with platform owners and users. Based on our analysis, we suggest that frictionless platforms as the dominant model animates the imagination of cooperative leaders: their alternative platform is difficult to sell to both users and investors whose differing expectations of 'investment' become a source of friction. Frictions as both tools for scale and resistance to data capitalism are illustrative in the platform cooperative strategies for escaping forward in the platform economy, in the space in-between mainstream and alternative platforms.

14:00-14:20

Nedtrekksmenymakt

Jens Røyrvik, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Petter Almklov, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Håkon Fyhn, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

I takt med den generelle digitaliseringen av hverdagen utspiller stadig mer av menneskelivet seg gjennom de kategoriene og prosedyrene som er skrevet inn i de digitale grensesnittene vi omgir oss med. Nedtrekksmenyer er avgjørende for dette grensesnittet. Det peker, for det første, på nedtrekks- eller rullgardinprinsippet, der vi klikker på en post slik at det ruller ned noen alternativer vi kan velge mellom. Ordet «meny» antyder at vi velger mellom et begrenset antall ferdige retter. Når vi snakker om nedtrekksmenymakt sikter vi til den makten dette grensesnittet øver på oss mennesker gjennom de nedrullede kategoriene, selv om ingen alternativ passer oss. Digitale nedtrekksmenyer virker også slik at vi ikke kommer oss videre før vi har valgt fra menyen, å velge et alternativ – og kanskje klikke på «neste» - er det som helt konkret får oss videre. Et typisk eksempel er menyer der vi må fylle inn «mann» eller «kvinne» for å komme videre, noe som får en del mennesker til å stoppe opp. Eller at du må fylle inn et korrekt antall timer som gyldig kategori av arbeid uansett hva du egentlig har gjort. Hvilken kvalitetssikring ønsker du i emnet ditt? Vi kan velge mellom alternativ, men vi må velge – ellers stoppes vi og kommer ikke videre i menyen om vi ikke innordner oss kategoriene.

14:20-14:40

Platform structures and enacting data literacies through critical pedagogy

Henry Mainsah, Consumption Research Norway, Oslo Metropolitan University

The capacity to understand and act in response to datafied systems and environments is now a crucial part of living in many contemporary societies. The proliferation of digital devices and mass user platforms such as Google, Apple, Facebook, and Amazon, has given rise to unprecedented rates of data generation, collection, and reuse. Machine learning (AI) systems are growing sophisticated and our everyday actions increasingly shaped by automated decision making. Critical reflexivity and tactics are needed to challenge quantification, datafication and computational logics embedded in such systems. This paper examines what role creative methods and critical pedagogies play in developing data literacies among college students. This article draws on an analysis of experiences from collaborating with students on an interdisciplinary cross-faculty course on technology and society at a Norwegian university. The course design drew on elements of Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, and collaborative and cooperative learning approaches comprised of problem-based learning (PBL) along with discovery-based and inquiry-based learning. Working in groups, students used methods such as drawing, prototyping, fictional scenarios, and story completion to map personal data journeys, visualize data infrastructures, debate ethical choices in technology design, and reflect on how algorithmic logics intervene in citizens' actions. Through these activities, students are positioned as qualitative researchers of their own datafied lives. I argue that the data literacies developed in this context provide tools for raising awareness about the deep structures of hegemonic datafied systems, and pathways for acting as social agents to build alternative data futures.

14:40-15:00

The intersection of consumption, social interaction, and dark patterns in video games among Norwegian youth

Kamilla Knutsen Steinnes, Consumption Research Norway, Oslo Metropolitan University

Clara Julia Reich, Consumption Research Norway, Oslo Metropolitan University.

Playing video games on platforms is a common leisure activity among young people in Norway. On platforms young people engage with each other through consumption practices. Video games apply various mechanisms to keep player's interest and to encourage consumption of digital items. Some of these monetization strategies can be considered as "dark patterns" as they manipulate players to purchase items. In this study, such mechanisms were analyzed through digital walk throughs of three multi-player online games. In addition, 19 interviews with 9–15-year-olds from different parts of Norway were conducted. The young people discussed the relevance of consumption of digital items in video games and the social meaning of such elements. The participants shared the positive sides of social interactions such as exploring virtual worlds together and building friendships. They also reflected on tensions and negative experiences such as exclusion, hate speech, and hacking which are often interlinked with identity. Further, the participants reflected on manipulative design and their strategies and practices from their encounters.

15:00-15:20

Sharenting and 'privacy turbulences': Experiences from young people and parents in Norway

Clara Julia Reich, Consumption Research Norway, Oslo Metropolitan University

Live Standal Bøyum, Consumption Research Norway, Oslo Metropolitan University

Kamilla Knutsen Steinnes, Consumption Research Norway, Oslo Metropolitan University

Both in the Norwegian context and internationally, sharenting is a widespread practice referring to parents sharing content in the form of images, text, or videos on social media. There is a paucity of research from a Nordic context including young people's perspectives. To address this the study methodologically builds on a total sample size of 36 participants across three focus groups with (a) ten early adolescents aged 9-12; (b) seven adolescents aged 13-17; (c) nine parents aged 34-57, and (d) a workshop with five parents aged 39-57 and their five children aged 10-17. The main findings are that 'privacy turbulence' in the form of friction and tensions occurs among parents and their children as they have different perceptions about what, with whom, and in which amount should be shared. Drawing on theories of impression management as well as communication privacy management sharenting is conceptualized. The study presents motivations, risk perceptions, sharenting practices, the role the Norwegian context plays as well as suggestions to improve young people's needs for privacy and creating their own digital identities.

15:20-15:30

Questions and Discussion

Mikko Laamanen, Consumption Research Norway and Clara Julia Reich, Consumption Research Norway (Discussants)