

Infrastructures of Sense|Making

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Organized by the Research Unit "Media and Participation. Between Demand and Entitlement", in cooperation with the Research College "SENSING: The Knowledge of Sensitive Media" (Potsdam)

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Call for Papers

Contemporary modes of *Teilhabe* (participation) in media-infused environments unfold within material and bodily infrastructures as the ground for any form of sense|making. Infrastructures, far from being mere functional connections between entities or the conveyance of information, come to define the connective tissue between social, material, and aesthetic domains in digital cultures of the 21st century. Part and parcel of such an infrastructural shift are processes of data generation and its marketability, platform-based forms of organization of information, and knowledge, but also new relations between (mobile) interfaces, discursive frameworks, and human sense modalities where the boundaries between organic and technological spheres become more and more porous. It seems to be a critical moment to scrutinize the question whether and how human sense|making is related to, and thus collides with, the intra-sensing of various agencies and the infra-sensing of techno-material processes. Immanent to these material and processual operations are thus multiple couplings of sensing and sense|making, that is, between sensors, sensation and meaning. Instead of locating such sensuous and techno-sensory regimes and attached meaning structures in predefined places of power, such as institutions, the notion of infrastructure underlines what comes to pass as sensed or registered and the occurrence of meaning depends on dynamic processes of participation.

How such emergent forms of *Teilhabe* occur with and through the sensuous materialities of infrastructures in order to yield meaningful effects defines the key concern of this autumn school. We conceive of participation as a process of infrastructuring with and through sensuous realms of the human and more-than-human, in order to generate different forms of sense|making. In these relational frameworks, inclusion and exclusion often are enmeshed with infrastructure operations, data generation/discrimination, and processing involving specific time economies. Drawing on research in new sensory technologies and their networked ecologies (aiming at, and being out, of control), new platforms for sensory agencies such as hearing aids, mobile media, temporalities of delay in infrastructural data curating such as online-streaming services, and the aesthetic dimensions of techno-political activism or militant art practices lie at the heart of the multi-layered conjunction between infrastructures and sense|making.

Rather than presuming a clear divide between technological infrastructure and human user, or technical interfaces and the human body, the autumn school aims at emphasizing the affective, material, and often economically driven realities of contemporary sociotechnical systems in their capacities but also constraints for various politics of participation. We wish to engage early career researchers and postdocs from a wide range of fields, such as media studies, cultural studies, sociology, science studies, cultural anthropology, HCI, philosophy of technology, aesthetics, art theory, social movements research, and performance studies to explore the infrastructural dimensions of sense|making in their material, technological, embodied, economic, computational, affective, haptic, and operational dimensions.

Potential subjects of inquiry could be:

- relations of power and knowledge in infrastructures of sense|making
- dimensions of de-sensing, in-sensing, and de-affection
- sensor technologies and more-than-human processes of sensing
- VR-based infrastructuring of seeing and hearing
- hearing technology platforms (hearing aids, cochlear implants)
- infrastructures of seeing, platformization of seeing practices
- decolonial and queer critiques of infrastructures and modes of participation
- sensuous matter/materialities of infrastructures / infrastructures of sense
- case studies relating to haptic media and the sensuous
- motion gestures as practices of sense|making
- mobile device-based infrastructures of data collections and meaning structures
- algorithmic forms of power/control through infrastructuring sense
- temporalities: analysis of practical scenes of idling, waiting and interruption as well as historical analysis of these technologies
- recommender systems: analysis of scenes of making (non)sense of the world through the interfaces, categories and genres of recommendation
- aesthetic and activist practices of sense|making with and through technological, artistic, and social infrastructures
- emergent processes of infrastructuring as modes of (aesthetic) resistance
- re-distribution of the sensible through alternative, technopolitical, infrastructures and platforms
- infrastructure and modes of participation through the sensuous
- 'ruins and rubble' of infrastructures and digital media
- modes of dis/assembling collectives through infrastructural experiences and processes of sense|making, i.e. calculated publics or networked audiences

Successful completion of the autumn school can be awarded with **5 credits** according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Credits will be awarded on the base of preparatory readings, 100 % (active) participation during the course, and impulse presentation. We welcome submissions by docs, postdocs and early career researchers.

Please hand in a one-page paper on how questions of infrastructures and sense|making are central to your own work and research. Please send your paper and a short biographical note to [mediale.teilhabe.kn \[at\] gmail.com](mailto:mediale.teilhabe.kn@gmail.com) by **24 May 2020**. Please, feel free to direct any questions concerning the Autumn School to us.

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