

Non-Knowledge and Digital Cultures

Symposium, 26.–27.01.2016, Lüneburg

Organized by: Prof. Dr. Andreas Bernard, Prof. Dr. Martina Leeker, Dr. Irina Kaldrack, and Matthias Koch

With contributions by: Timon Beyes, Paula Bialski, John Durham Peters, Eva Illouz, Noortje Marres, Claus Pias, Katja Rothe, and Christoph Wulf

Digital technology today provides us with an abundance of information and, potentially, knowledge that seems to be eliminating all gaps of non-knowledge. Hosting scholars from diverse fields, such as literary, media, and social studies, the DCRL's Symposium aims at critically discussing such diagnosis and observations. It inverts them by analyzing the specific functions and forms of non-knowledge in digital cultures. One basic interest is thus concerned with the relationship of media technologically based ubiquitous networking to the productivity of non-knowledge, especially in human imagination, taking form in, for example, literature and film or subjective fantasies, desires, and reminiscences. Second, ascribing to non-knowledge a major significance in our present days immediately calls for discussing the means, range, and limits of scientific description and analysis with regard to the epistemological challenges arising from it.

Digital technology may provide means for facilitating knowledge and eliminating non-knowledge – and yet the ambivalence of the respective instruments, such as “algorithm”, “social media”, or “big data”, lies in the fact that, while their *effects* – their arrangements and distributions – are visible to all of us, the specific manner in which they function remains opaque. This breach or discontinuity leads to the question of how algorithms can be represented. They regulate our life, but their governmental principles remain in the dark. Such an analysis of non-knowledge thus does not at all intend to leave an aftertaste of irrationality. Instead, it intends to make a contribution to the analysis of power structures in the digital age.

Keynote by Eva Illouz (Jerusalem): “Knowing way too much: Love, Therapy, technology”

Programme

Tuesday, January 26, 2016

Venue: Stadtarchiv Lüneburg, Wallstraße

6–8 p.m.	Keynote by Christoph Wulf (Berlin): “Unknowing and Silent Knowledge. Iconic, performative and material perspectives”
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Wednesday, January 27, 2016

Venue: Musikschule Lüneburg, St.-Ursula-Weg 7

9.30–10 a.m.	Introduction
10–11 a.m.	John Durham Peters (Iowa City): “Promiscuous Knowledge, or, Computational and Theological Grounds for Rejecting Omniscience”
Coffee break	
11.15–12.15 p.m.	Katja Rothe (Berlin): “Guessing, hesitating, and tarrying. On the media-ecological uses of media”
Lunch (Catering)	
2–3 p.m.	Paula Bialski (Lüneburg): “Fields of Anonymity: a mapping of discourses around trackability, tracelessness, and accountability in programming worlds”
3–4 p.m.	Noortje Marres (Warwick): “Could Problems Take the Place of Knowledge in Digital Societies?”
Coffee break	
4.15–5.15 p.m.	Claus Pias, Timon Beyes (Lüneburg/Copenhagen): “Transparency and secrecy”
5.15–5.45 p.m.	Sum up
6–8 p.m.	Keynote by Eva Illouz (Jerusalem): “Knowing way too much: Love, Therapy, technology”

