



Self-calibration in a digital society

Thursday 16 April 2020 11.00am – 12.00pm

Keynote Speaker

Prof Christine Hine,

University of Surrey

Author of (2006)

Virtual Ethnography. Sage.

Location

To be advised (online delivery)

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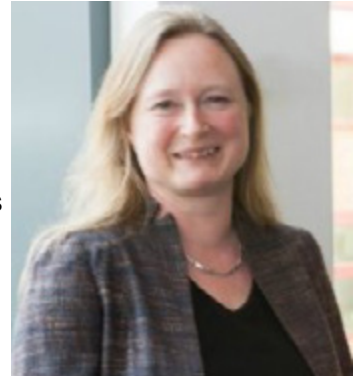
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A workshop in collaboration with the School of Sociology and the School of Politics and International Relations, and the Interpretation, Method, Critique Research Cluster, ANU

In this paper I will be focusing on how people in their everyday practice make sense of themselves and the society that they live in using an array of resources that include, but are not confined to, digital media. The advent of digital media has changed the forms of interaction available to us and the extent to which other people's intimate thoughts and activities are visible to us on an everyday basis.

People's consumption practices, their fitness levels, their musical tastes and response to media events are constantly displayed for us to measure ourselves against. Even while identifying the potent nature of digital technologies, however, it is important not to treat people as "datafication dopes" who are simply victims of whatever data might be imposed on them. Media studies has taught us that audiences are not passive recipients of messages and Science and Technology Studies argues that technology users too can be active interpreters who derive their own meanings from technologies. In its focus on everyday processes of self-calibration this paper will explore lived dimensions of datafication and mediatization and seeks to consider how far these processes are indeed being implicated in new ways of understanding who we are. I will explore some of the different forms in which people become visible to one another online, and the potential outcomes in terms of the tendencies for social homogeneity and fragmentation.

Professor Christine Hine is a sociologist of science and technology who has a particular focus on the role played by new technologies in the knowledge construction process. She has a major interest in the development of ethnography in technical settings and in "virtual methods" (the use of the Internet in social research). In particular, she has developed mobile and connective approaches to ethnography that combine online and offline social contexts. In common with many scholars in Science and Technology Studies, Christine has a scientific and technical background herself. She studied Botany (BA, Oxon) and Biological Computation (MSc, York) and completed her DPhil in the Biology Department at York before making a transition to Sociology of Science and Technology.



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