

16 &  
17 DEC

# FIGURATIONS:

## PERSONS IN/OUT OF DATA

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# FIGURATIONS: PERSONS IN/OUT OF DATA

We're drowning in an ocean of data, or so the saying goes. Data's "big": there's not only lots of it, but its volume has allowed for the development of new, large-scale processing techniques. Our relationship with governments, medical organisations, technology companies, the education sector, and so on are increasingly informed by the data we overtly or inadvertently provide when we use particular services. The proverbial data deluge is large-scale—but it's also personal. Data promises to personalise services to better meet our individual needs. Data is often construed as a threat to our person(s). Not every person predicated by data is predicted the same. The intersection between data and person isn't fixed: it has to be figured.

This conference brings together an interdisciplinary group of researchers to explore how the person—or persons, plural—are figured in/out of data. Figuration might encompass any or all of processes of representation, calculation, analogisation, prediction, and conceptualisation. It cuts across multiple scales, epistemological modes, and disciplinary areas of enquiry. It tackles problems that cross into disparate disciplines. Our proposition is that it can help us think and study our increasingly datified present. Over two days, more than 50 presenters and 4 keynote speakers will address how the 'figure' and its variants—figuration, figuring, to figure, and so on—are being developed and used in disciplines including the medical humanities, the social sciences, media studies, art history, literary studies, philosophy, science and technology studies, urban studies, and geography.

This conference has been organised by members of the project's digital culture strand: Professor Celia Lury and Dr. Scott Wark, based at the University of Warwick's Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies, with contributions and assistance from the Centre's administrative team and other members of the People Like You project team.

## 2 TIMETABLE, MONDAY 16 DECEMBER

<b>09:30</b>	<b>REGISTRATION &amp; COFFEE</b>			PSH Atrium Lower Ground Floor
<b>10:00</b>	<b>WELCOME &amp; INTRODUCTION FROM PLY</b>			LG02
<b>10:20</b>	<b>KEYNOTE — WORKING OUT THE WE</b>	P4	LG02	Professor AbdouMaliq Simone
<b>11:20</b>	<b>BREAK</b>			
<b>11.30</b>	<b>FIGURING BORDERS/NATIONS/ SPACE</b>	P5	PSH 305	Dr. Sanjay Sharma, Jasbinder S. Nijjar Dr. Stephan Scheel Dr. Nishat Awan and Maria Dada
	<b>DATA DOUBLES</b>	P7	PSH 314	Dr. Karoliina Snell, Minna Saariketo, Dr. Rune Saugmann Dr. Sarah Widmer Thao Phan
<b>13:00</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>			
<b>13:45</b>	<b>FIGURING INSTITUTIONS/BORDERS</b>	P9	PSH 305	Dr. Alex Taylor Harry Hvdson Dr. Scott Wark
	<b>ART, GAMING, CULTURE</b>	P12	PSH 314	Dr. Tyne Daile Sumner Dr. Rob Gallagher Dr. Yiğit Soncul
	<b>SOCIAL MEDIA FIGURES</b>	P14	PSH 326	Nicola Bozzi Niall Docherty Chiara Visentin
<b>15:15</b>	<b>COFFEE</b>			
<b>15:30</b>	<b>MEDICAL AGENCY</b>	P17	PSH 305	Dr. Mercedes Bunz, Dr. Marco Braghieri Emma Stamm Dr. Stephen Rainey
	<b>FIGURES OF MEDIA/THEORY</b>	P20	PSH 314	Dr. Zara Dinnen Dr. Thomas Sutherland Professor Greg Elmer
<b>17:00</b>	<b>BREAK</b>			
<b>17:15</b>	<b>KEYNOTE — AUTHENTICATING FIGURES: ALGORITHMS AND THE NEW POLITICS OF RECOGNITION</b>	P4	LG02	Professor Wendy Chun
<b>18:15</b>	<b>END</b>			

<b>09:30</b>	<b>REGISTRATION AND COFFEE</b>			PSH Atrium Lower Ground Floor
<b>10:00</b>	<b>KEYNOTE — DATA THROUGH TIME: FIGURING OUT THE NARRATIVE SELF IN LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH</b>	P22	LG02	Professor Jane Elliott
<b>11:00</b>	<b>BREAK</b>			
<b>11.15</b>	<b>FIGURING THE MEDICAL PERSON</b>	P23	PSH 305	Liz Orton Dr. Ivana Guarrasi, Dr. Anthony Errichetti Professor Sophie Day, Jayne Smith, Professor Helen Ward
	<b>INFRASTRUCTURAL FIGURATIONS &amp; CONFIGURATIONS</b>	P26	PSH 314	Silvia Semenzin, Dr. Alessandro Gandini Dr. Oskar J. Gstrein, Dr. Anne Beaulieu Dr. Matt Spencer
	<b>PORTRAIT</b>	P28	PSH 326	Prof. Rebecca Fortnum, Dr. Felicity Allen Dr. Nathalie Casemajor Dr. Claire Larssonneur
<b>12:45</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>			
<b>13:30</b>	<b>MEDICAL DEVICES</b>	P31	PSH 305	Dr. Emma Garnett Dr. Milena D. Bister Dr. Will Viney
	<b>THE WORK OF FIGURES/FIGURING WORTH</b>	P33	PSH 314	Dr. Valeria Graziano Dr. Imanni Sheppard Dr. Leila Dawney
	<b>FIGURES OF SIGHT AND SOUND</b>	P36	PSH 326	Dr. Elinor Carmi Dr. Aleksandra Kaminska Dr. Danel Rourke
<b>15:00</b>	<b>COFFEE</b>			
<b>15:15</b>	<b>FIGURING DATA/JUSTICE</b>	P38	PSH 305	Professor Jo Ann Oravec Sylvia McKelvie Dr. EJ Gonzalez-Polledo, Dr. Silvia Posocco
	<b>PERSONIFICATION</b>	P41	PSH 326	Dr. Nora A. Draper Professor Celia Lury Dr. Jonathan Gray, Dr. Liliana Bounegru, Dr. Ganaele Langlois, Dr. Esther Weltevrede
<b>16:45</b>	<b>BREAK</b>			
<b>17:00</b>	<b>KEYNOTE — UBIQUITOUS SURVEIL- LANCE AND DATA SELVES</b>	P22	LG02	Professor John Frow
<b>18:15</b>	<b>DRINKS RECEPTION</b>			PSH Atrium

# WORKING OUT THE WE

Professor AbdouMaliq Simone

Professor AbdouMaliq Simone is a Senior Professorial Fellow at the Urban Institute, The University of Sheffield.

Urban life is the locus for the intersection of forces, many of which are completely indifferent to human existence, and what those forces configure is neither for us primarily, or for any discernible purpose. That we live in environments that exceed then our capacity to understand them, domesticate them, turn them over to our use then requires modalities through which “we” (whatever that “we” is) extends itself with and through an “earth” whose dimensions are neither fortuitous or destructive, but where the dispositions of this extension remain largely inexplicable. Given this, a “we” is to be configured that is always less than and more than “human”—so the human cannot exist as the arbiter, the definer of “just relations”—relations that just are, but which can be shaped also to enable the capacity to thrive. Urban institutions thus must be based on a continuous working out of relations, of ensuring the capacities of residents to participate in these “workings out”; to continuously translate what people value, how they want to gather and live together, and what kinds of material substrates are necessary for those aspirations, without changing the languages in which those aspirations are articulated. The challenge, as Arturo Escobar so well-articulates, is how to form territories of intersection, where the functioning of the territory, of the administration, of the urban system is based on extending the capacities and knowledge of its constituents toward each other, while according the space for those different knowledge capacities to remain different without connoting a difference in terms of value or access to material sustenance. This is life that resists calculation, that does not decide upon things “for sure”, that institutionally facilitates the “give and take” of multiple initiatives, without hoarding or indebtedness.

DAY 1, KEYNOTE 2, PSH ATRIUM, 17:15

# AUTHENTICATING FIGURES: ALGORITHMS AND THE NEW POLITICS OF RECOGNITION

Professor Wendy Chun

Professor Wendy Chun is the Canada 150 Research Chair at the School of Communication, Simon Fraser University.

What does recognition mean in an era of pervasive data capture and automatic pattern detection? Tracing the historical move from “pattern discrimination” to “pattern recognition,” this talk unpacks the logic and politics of recognition at the core of systems designed to automatically identify and classify users. It also examines the gap between user interactions, captured actions and algorithmic projections in order to understand how we have become figures in a drama called “Big Data.”

# CIRCULATIONS: THE GRID AS A SPACE OF POSSIBILITY

Dr. Nishat Awan, Maria Dada

The Topological Atlas project aims to map the border regime as it comes into contact with undocumented migrants at the Pakistan/Iran border. Taking the idea of the composite nature of the architectural map and its echoes today in satellite imagery and crowdsourced data, the aim is to produce maps that show the same situation from different angles or perspectives. Thinking with Khosravi's definition of circulation as 'a controlled movement of people sent back and forth between undocumentedness and deportability' – how might circulation as a figuration for the movement of undocumented migrants, not only physically but also across legalities and bureaucracies and therefore data, allow us to rethink the grid as a space of possibility?

We start with the notion of the figure/ground in art and architecture, a representation with fixed boundaries between spatial categories that was challenged in the 18th century by the Nolli map of Rome. This representation made porous the boundaries between inside and outside, between the public and the private by breaking the rigid lines between figure and ground. Computational space tries to capture the ground by placing it in a tight, neat grid, a pixel, creating a perfect inside and outside. Disunited from the ground the figure loses its significance.

How might the deformation of the grid disrupt the rigid separation of figure and ground? Adam Harvey's 'CV dazzle' renders the grid useless by blurring the boundaries between figure and ground. The paintings of Mohr locate the point at which the structure of the grid collapses so that figure and ground reunite. In our case as data enters in and out of it through the figuration of circulation, the computational space of the grid is forced to recalculate itself.

**Dr. Nishat Awan** is senior lecturer in Visual Cultures at the Centre for Research Architecture, Goldsmiths. Her research sits at the intersection of geopolitics and space, including an interest in borders and spatial representation.

**Maria Dada** is research fellow at the same institution with research interests in the fields of design, continental philosophy and material culture. She investigates the possibilities of digital modelling in reconfiguring socio-political and economic structures.

# IDENTITY REMAINS A BATTLEGROUND: RECONFIGURING MIGRANT AGENCY IN CONTEXT OF THE DATAFICATION OF BORDER & MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

Dr. Stephan Scheel

**Dr. Stephan Scheel** is currently working as an Assistant Professor (Juniorprofessor) at the University of Duisburg-Essen in Germany. His research is located at the intersection of border, migration and critical security studies as well as science and technology studies.

Today we experience a veritable ‘datafication of border and mobility management’ (Broeders & Dijstelbloem 2017). The European Union (EU) is for instance developing a growing arsenal of biometric databases that seeks to capture all people travelling to the Schengen area irrespective of the mode of entry. One objective of these efforts is to guarantee the identifiability and deportability of third country nationals entering the EU. The epistemological register underpinning this project is what we might call *database realism*: the claim that data held by authorities in digital format mirror the identity of the subject to which they refer. In scholarly accounts, this database realism is carried by the widely-used notion of the ‘data double’ (Lyon 2008). Based on an encounter at a foreigner’s office in Germany, in which a woman from a West African country had to contest a biometrically certified identity that had been retrieved by means of her fingerprints from a database called *Visa Information System* (VIS), I show that migrants still have the capacity to defy states’ attempts to establish their identity by technological means. While authorities claimed the woman in question was Mavel B. – a married woman from Ghana who had applied for a visa at the German embassy in Accra – the woman in question claimed to be Mary B. – an unmarried woman from Ghana who had lost her passport and was about to give birth to a German citizen. Based on a material-semiotic conception of migrant agency as the effect of complex and contested socio-technical networks, this paper will analyse this encounter between authorities and Ms B in terms of a sociology of translation. Rather than as ‘data doubles’, digital files linked by biometrics to migrants’ bodies emerge as treacherous translations whose meaning remains contested.

## ‘MUSLIM-AS-TERRORIST’: SURVEILLANCE AND RACIAL PARANOIA

**Dr Sanjay Sharma, Jasbinder S. Nijjar**

State and popular media discourses of so-called ‘Islamic terrorism’ are replete with anxious representations of the technologically augmented ‘Muslim’, with a cunning capacity to evade surveillance and capture. The figure of the Muslim is fearfully constructed as an ambiguous and (un)knowable force of potential mass destruction, intent on destroying ‘western civilisation’. Increasingly intense, multifaceted and integrated forms of surveillance are a central feature of Western security attempts to counter the violence of Islamic terrorism. It has led to a security state surveillance agenda that connects counter-terrorism with the administrative procedures and everyday activities of other public institutions, including education, health and imprisonment. Muslim groups are being

subjected to invasive and degrading forms of counter-terrorism policing and punishment that include profiling, tracking, arrest, detention and rendition. These integrated security strategies are constitutive of the development of an overarching state surveillance apparatus that authorises and oversees a plethora of interconnected data gathering practices. Such activities, biometrical finger-printing, iris-scans, DNA, CCTV, facial recognition and data-mining and location-tracking, seek to de-mystify and contain the threat of Islamist terrorism.

This presentation interrogates how a Muslim-terrorism-surveillance assemblage institutionalises palpable forms of racialized profiling. We examine how Muslim populations are constructed as a threat to national security, thereby justifying practices of mass surveillance that propagate racist discourses of uncertainty and risk. We advance an analysis of a racialized surveillant assemblage, that is generative of a mutable, algorithmically determined *figure* of the Muslim-as-terrorist. Such a regime of mass surveillance effectively puts all Muslims under suspicion. Paradoxically, mass data-mining operations stifle, rather than aid, the identification of actual 'terrorist' threats. This highlights the mutability of contemporary racial profiling, and conditions a *paranoid* surveillant racism, through which the figure of the Muslim becomes modulated as an *unknowable* threat of death and destruction.

**Dr Sanjay Sharma** teaches in the Department of Social & Political Sciences, Brunel University. He has published in the areas of race and digital culture, alterity and difference, and is currently completing a monograph exploring the ecology of digital racism (Rowman & Littlefield). He is a founding editor of the online open access *darkmatter Journal*.

**Jasbinder S. Nijjar** is a PhD student in the Department of Social & Political Sciences, Brunel University, London. He is currently examining institutional racism in London's Metropolitan Police Service.

#### DAY 1, PSH 314, 11:30 — DATA DOUBLES

## PERSONS AS FOAMS: THE CASE OF PERSONALIZED LOCAL SEARCH ENGINES

**Dr. Sarah Widmer**

As evidenced by the recent launch of the features 'your match' or 'for you' on Google Maps, 'personalized collections' on Yelp, or by the more long-established personalization of place recommendations on Foursquare, local search engines (digital media indicating nearby restaurants, cafés etc. to their users) are yet another example of the pervasiveness of personalization in our digital lives. By looking at the case of Foursquare, this paper examines the concomitant production of persons/spatialities occurring on such spatial media. To start, we present the specific 'mode of knowing' deployed on such apps, which frame the person as a bundle of ever-accumulating location data that can be connected to other bundles, identified as similar ('people like you', 'friends' or 'followees') or as relevant ('local guides', 'experts', etc.). By doing so, we aim to highlight the post-demographic ways in which persons are known, and the fluidity

**Dr. Sarah Widmer** has recently obtained her PhD in political geography at the University of Neuchâtel in Switzerland and currently works as a postdoctoral researcher in surveillance studies at the University of Aarhus in Denmark

with which they are affiliated to larger calculated ensembles. This allows us to suggest that if we are to find a 'figure' to apprehend this data-driven production of persons/spatialities, we'd better use one whose contours are not defined permanently; we therefore propose to use the fragile, ephemeral and fluid figure of 'foam' as it has been conceptualized by the philosopher Peter Sloterdijk. As we will argue, conceptualizing persons as foams allows us to highlight the ways in which personalization algorithms produce fragile and impermanent forms of co-existence in 'connected isolation' – a term that underlines that apps like Foursquare neither produce us as completely isolated and singular persons, nor as members of clear and lasting ensembles of belonging and identification. By evoking the impermanence and modularity of these data-driven 'foams', we will attempt to raise their politics by arguing that their underlying logics of socio-spatial sorting are becoming increasingly difficult to grasp and to politically address.

## 'DATA DOUBLING': PROCESS, POWER AND AGENCY IN DATA FLOWS

Dr. Karoliina Snell, Minna Saariketo, Dr. Rune Saugmann

**Dr. Karoliina Snell** is a sociologist and STS scholar doing research on health data at Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, University of Helsinki.

**Minna Saariketo** is a media and STS scholar who is about to defend her thesis on the imaginaries of agency in the landscapes of code at Tampere University.

**Dr. Rune Saugmann** is working on the connections between digital images and security politics, based at Tampere University.

'Data double', and other concepts such as 'figure', 'digital dossier' or 'digital person', are used to describe the representations of the person constructed through data gathering and processing, algorithms and calculations, combination and flows of data. While these concepts do imply to the fluidity and constant transformation of the 'data double', the terminological choices suggest a coherent and fixed entity. We turn the focus on the processes of 'data doubling' or 'figuration' as the constitutive elements that make 'data doubles' constantly changing, adaptable to different situations, and beyond the control of the individuals being 'doubled'. We propose that re-thinking different aspects and dimensions of the concept is a necessity considering the contemporary datafied landscapes. We argue that 'data doubling' is dependent on the actions and choices of the individual as well as others such as flexible reference populations or 'likes' in social media - and those governing the data. By highlighting the process, the '-ing', we want to emphasise power relations and agency of those involved in 'data doubling'. We also claim, that the person rarely encounters her data double, but faces instead traces and implications of the enactment of the doubling - which further suggests a need to elaborate the conceptualisations used in research. Our presentation stems from empirical research done related to three different fields: health data, security politics, and social media.

# FIGURES-IN-THE-MAKING: FIGURATIONS OF AI AND GENDER

**Thao Phan**

Artificial intelligence is often considered the science of making intelligent machines. Unavoidable are the ways in which gender informs and shapes what constitutes intelligence, yet rarely is gender explicitly addressed as a topic of research. At best, gender is reduced to an empirical question of counting gendered bodies. Indeed, by studies of gender, what many actually mean is a study of women—their presence or exclusion, their representation, or the ways in which their lives are affected by systems and technologies. Even in studies of AI that foreground feminist readings of science and technology, gender is a taken for granted relation—the stable backdrop against which AI is enacted rather than something which is itself under revision. Gender, in this context, is conceptualised as a predetermined, preformed category; already made rather than something that is constituted through the practice of history or technology making itself.

This paper considers how, in the making of artificial intelligence, gender too is being made. Drawing on my PhD research in feminist STS, I argue that the concept of “figuration” can help articulate and guide analysis on the co-constitutive relation between AI and gender. I explore the use of figures and figuration in the work of Donna Haraway, Lucy Suchman, Karen Barad, and Claudia Castañeda, and introduce “figures-in-the-making” as a critical concept that shifts the analytic register from a study of stable, discrete, singular figures, to figuration as a contingent and ongoing process. Figures-in-the-making extends on Harway’s critique of Latour’s “science in the making.” Unlike Latour who specifies a time and a place for studying science in action—in the lab, before science is made—I contend that when it comes to figures like gender, there is no single site of action or pre-final moment. Gender is always a dynamic relation; constantly constituted through performative action and so can only ever be examined in-the-making. In this way, figures-in-the-making constitutes a method for study that changes where we consider the site of scientific action to be, and thus, opens diverse imaginaries and actors as equal sites of figurative action.

**Thao Phan** is a Research Fellow at the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation. She is feminist science and technology studies researcher who specialises in gender, AI, and algorithmic cultures.

**DAY 1, PSH 305, 13:45 — FIGURING INSTITUTIONS/BORDERS**

# TABULAR WORLDINGS

**Dr. Alex Taylor**

Through a number of routes, I’ve found myself thinking about the seemingly inconsequential table—the kind of table made up of

**Dr. Alex Taylor** is a sociologist at the Centre for Human Centred Interaction Design, at City, University of London. With a fascination for the entanglements between social life and machines, his research ranges from empirical studies of technology in everyday life to speculative design interventions. He draws on feminist technoscience to ask questions about the roles human-machine composites play in forms of knowing and being, and how they open up possibilities for fundamental transformations in society.

columns and rows. Tables lie behind so much of the proliferation of data and computation we are witnessing in contemporary life. They are also core to much of the taken for granted work we do as researchers. Who hasn't managed, ordered or tracked their work in a table in some way? And yet we neglect the lively nature of these *ordering technologies* (Drucker 2014). In offering a practical solution for sorting and organising pretty much anything (e.g., numbers, times, dates, names, events, journeys, bodies, persons, etc.), we overlook how they afford and authorise very particular ways of making matter matter or indeed figuring persons (e.g. Rosenthal 2018; Wernimont 2018). Take Excel. The tool's powerful capacities for ordering items in a seemingly infinite number of rows and columns—setting various systems of organisation against one another—are in no way inert. The explicit or implied hierarchies, the categories and comparisons, the roundings up or down, the spatial and calculative transformations, etc.—altogether, they are, already, telling a story. They are, if you will, technoscientific “worldings” (Haraway 2016).

I want to use this talk to explore this line of thought: how bodies and persons are figured, from the start, through such tabular worldings. Tentatively, my aim is put the slave records from the mid to late 19th Century in conversation with the contemporaneous data-driven forms of classification so many seem enthralled with. Doing my best to avoid crude analogies, I'll use the tabular systems from these vastly different historical moments to ask questions of how subjectives are enacted, and give specific attention to the violences done through such figurings.

## THE RUSE OF ACCESS: VIDEO VISITATION, CARCERALITY, JUSTICE

**Harry Hvdson**

**Harry Hvdson** is a Ph.D. student in the Division of Cinema and Media Studies at the University of Southern California. Wielding media studies, abolitionist modalities, Black feminist epistemologies, and critical race theory, their work concerns video visitation and the re/working of the prison's insides/outside.

According to media theorist Marshall McLuhan, “[t]he whole concept of enclosure as a means of constraint and as a means of classifying doesn't work as well in our electronic world” (McLuhan 1967). In this conference paper, I intervene in McLuhan's moment of technoutopianism, an ideological sensibility that permeates various strains of both cinema and media studies, and prison reform and anti-prison activism. This paper is animated by a discussion of and against the campaigns of United States local, state, and federal governments, departments of correction, and communications providers—a matrix that has been termed the *prison industrial complex*—to replace in-person visitation programs, both contact and non-contact, exclusively with video visitation. This paper takes as its focus a

needs assessment of the Dane County Jail in Madison, Wisconsin, submitted to the Dane County Board of Supervisors by architectural and engineering consulting firm Mead & Hunt, who in part promote the construction of a new jail because of outdated communications and security electronic infrastructures that could support video visitation platforms.

Through this case study, this paper follows the endeavors of other scholars and activists towards building a framework to think the entanglements and possibilities of media studies and abolitionist praxis. This conference paper works primarily through and complicates Marshall McLuhan's formulation of the "global village" (McLuhan 1967) by thinking how media studies and abolitionist epistemologies, taken together, provide critical tools towards "the abolition of a society that could have prisons" (Harney and Moten 2013). Insofar as video visitation transfigures the 'presence' of the 'incarcerated' into an 'absence' marked by its rendering on screen, I ask how the modes of social death manufactured by and manufacturing the prison are reconfigured by telecommunications technologies and rework carceral geographies. In so doing, this paper follows and extends Wendy Chun's contention that "to be is to be updated" (Chun 2016)," rather, I suggest that the/this update—that dialectic of habit and *emergency*—also secures and expands the carceral-colonial "zone[s] of nonbeing" (Fanon 2008), a (non)state that TV and media studies are particularly equipped to address.

## THE INTEROPERABLE PERSON

**Dr. Scott Wark**

Large-scale data processing proliferates figures of the 'person'. In this paper, I want to focus on one particular figure in particular: what I want to call the "interoperable" person. This paper will argue that the figure of the "interoperable" person emerges when our data is processed to personalise content for us. Focusing in particular on data management platforms, or the enterprise "grey" media that large corporations use to facilitate the production of personalised content, this paper will analyse techniques of tracking and targeting to home in on what advertisers call "serendipitous moments". These are moments, or so the common wisdom goes, in which a user has just the right advertisement served to them at just the right moment—the one in which they're ready to browse a product or service and click buy or subscribe. In this moment, a "person" is figured by data. But who — or what — is this person? Are they the user, a profile constructed of the user's data, or the recipient of a product or service? Stepping away from the relative efficacy of targeted advertising for a moment, I want to focus on the construct of the person contained in the data management platform. Such platforms use data to construct the "person" as an interoperable figure that can be targeted and

**Dr. Scott Wark** is a Research Fellow for the Wellcome-funded project, 'People Like You: Contemporary Figures of Personalisation'. He is based at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies at the University of Warwick. He researches online culture, amongst other things.

retargeted, on repeat. This “person” isn’t us. It’s a limited construct. Nevertheless, it shapes the possible action that a person, a user, might take. That is, it shapes their capacity to individuate, or their potential. This figure, I want to argue, is central to what a person might be today.

DAY 1, PSH 314, 13:45 — ART, GAMING, CULTURE

## DIGITAL LYRIC: POETRY, BIG DATA, AND SUBJECTIVITY

Dr. Tyne Daile Sumner

**Dr. Tyne Daile Sumner**, Ph.D. (The University of Melbourne) is a Research Fellow and Digital Humanities specialist in the Digital Studio, Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne. Her research operates at the crossroads of poetics, surveillance and big data. She is Associate Editor of the much-anticipated *Lionel Fogarty: Selected Poems 1980-2017*, published by re.press in 2017. She is currently engaged in new research, tentatively titled ‘Poetry in the Age of Big Data’, that critically examines the role of poetic discourse in the context of big data’s objective of total algorithmic control.

This paper will address a number of pressing questions at the nexus of contemporary lyric poetry and big data. The aim of this is to consider how contemporary poets are translating the actual experience of mass internet tracking into an aesthetic topos as well as to investigate the limits of subjective lyric expression in an age characterised by near total revelation, of both a voluntary and involuntary nature. The focus will be on the approaches that various lyric poems take to the topic of big data surveillance, many of which frame their speaking “I” inside a network of codes and symbols that work to the problematize their responses to the act on online self-disclosure. In so doing, this paper will use lyric poetry (in particular, poetry published exclusively online) to suggest an alternative framework for theorising the ways in which big data is transforming human subjectivity. Key questions the paper will address include: What are the characteristic forms, features, functions, and effects of contemporary lyric poetry in a technological context where the total breakdown of privacy has eroded the distinction between normative discourse and confession? What kinds of solutions can poetic language offer in the face of the proliferation of augmented, virtual and cross realities (XR)? In what ways can we reorient literary criticism in relation to the recent so-called ‘computer generated poetry’ that has come about as a by-product of Artificial Intelligence and machine learning? What is the significance of poetry’s ability to construct a sense of heightened experience and intimacy in the context of an ever-increasing matrix of highly personalised algorithms and data-predictive modelling? These questions and others will be used to generate a new theory for explaining big data (surveillance) in new and productive ways. Finally, the paper will innovatively contrast the historical origins of modern poetry (i.e. poetry as traditionally a mode of emotional expression) with the superimposed impersonality of big data.

# FIGURING SEXUALITY AND SURVEILLANCE IN THE TEAROOM

Dr. Rob Gallagher

Integrating familiar representational techniques into rule-bound digital simulations, videogames present opportunities to dramatize datafication's reconfiguration of personhood, privacy and politics. Take, for example, *The Tearoom*: a first-person 'historical public bathroom simulator' created by designer and academic Robert Yang, whose games address the surveillance and policing of queerness. Casting players as a man seeking sex in a men's bathroom in 1960s Ohio, *The Tearoom* foregrounds two kinds of figuration: the anatomical and the statistical.

In part as a response to censorship of his previous games, Yang figures his characters' genitals as fleshy firearms, reasoning that 'guns are clearly not penises' and that the games industry never 'bans... game[s] about guns.' But *The Tearoom's* surreal sexual play is also underpinned by hard facts and figures. There is a 23% chance our partner will reveal himself to be a cop, reflecting a 2015 study finding that 'of LGBT people who've survived abuse or violence from a stranger, police officers were 23% of the perpetrators'. The software used to procedurally generate non-player characters, meanwhile, reflects available demographic data: census records suggest 'Mansfield was about 5.82% black' in 1962 so, Yang 'hardcoded that exact probability into the game', hoping players would be moved to reflect on the interplay of 'race' and sexuality in this particular time and place.

Where many queer games foster empathy through affecting stories exploring individuals' biographies and psychologies (often indulging in what queer historian Heather Love terms the 'emotional rescue' trope), Yang takes a more radical approach to videogame figuration. Part sex sim, part data visualization, part interactive documentary, I will argue his game resonates with the work queer theorists and media scholars like Galloway, De Villiers, Birchall and Nyong'o have done in repurposing Edouard Glissant's notion of opacity for the age of datafication.

**Dr. Rob Gallagher** is a post-doctoral researcher with Ego-Media, a project considering the impact of digital technologies on practices of self-presentation and conceptions of identity. He is the author of *Videogames, Identity and Digital Subjectivity* (Routledge, 2017)

# SUA CUIQUE PERSONA(E): TECHNIQUES OF PERSONA

Dr. Yiğit Soncul

Reproductions of the lid of a portrait box that resides at Uffizi Gallery in Florence, by Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio (1510), appears in three

**Dr. Yiğit Soncul** recently completed his PhD on the contemporary visual culture of the mask at Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton. Affiliated with Archeologies of Media and Technology research group at WSA, he is the co-editor of the forthcoming parallax special issue 'Networked Liminality.'

pieces of contemporary scholarship from different disciplines, visual studies, medieval history and jurisprudence, that express an interest in the face and in the emergence of its status as a marker of identity (Belting 2017; Gaakeer 2016; Groebner 2007). The picture itself is a painting of a mask on the lid of a portrait – a cover that masks the portrait beneath. Under this lid resides an image of the face of an aristocratic woman. The painting of the mask masks the portrait here, as it were, but both of them are already paintings of faces – likenesses of (possibly the same) persons. *Sua cuique persona*, the text inscribed on this lid / mask of this portrait of an aristocratic woman, has been translated from Latin into English in different ways: 'to each, his role (persona),' 'to each his own mask,' 'each to his mask.' This variety is symptomatic of the emergence of these terms. In the word 'persona,' and its referent image of the face, personhood, mask, and role (character) enter into meaningful relations with each other.

This paper explores the very relationship between the discernibility of one's face and a person's identifiability that attracts interest across these disciplines. The emergence of the concept of personhood is traced back to *persona* (literally, the mask donned by the actors of ancient theatre). What makes portraiture, as a key technique of modernity, articulate specific notions of personhood and what is its status today? In responding to this question, this paper charts an array of techniques and practices, from Renaissance portraiture to contemporary selfie culture, in their connection to how the person is figured through specific techniques of imaging the self.

#### DAY 1, PSH 326, 13:45 — SOCIAL MEDIA FIGURES

## FROM FIGURES TO FIGURATION – FOR A CULTURAL CRITIQUE OF TAGGING

**Nicola Bozzi**

**Nicola Bozzi** is a freelance writer and PhD student at the University of Salford. His research project focuses on Internet stereotypes and identity labelling in the age of social media. You can follow him at [schizocities.com](http://schizocities.com) or as [@schizocities](https://twitter.com/schizocities) on Twitter and Instagram.

Tagging is one of the defining features of Web 2.0. Known as a bottom-up tool for information classification that enables "folksonomies" (Vander Wal, 2005), tagging comprises a range of practices: geo-referencing photos, participating in political debate, tagging a friend, trolling a celebrity. Irreducible to a single image, these practices reflect techno-cultural dynamics that are often aimed at defining a collective identity or a common enemy.

When it comes to identity, tagging is grounded in historically and culturally situated practices of labelling - from the making of the criminal (Tannenbaum, 1938) to intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) – which make it a site for both oppression and emancipation. Drawing

inspiration from Bowker and Star's wish for a "living classification" and their statement that computer scientists should read African-American poets and radical feminism (1999), I draft a critical theory of tagging that factors in its cultural and aesthetic value.

While the most typical visualization of tagging is the "tag cloud", a map of popular keywords within a data sample, I build on the idea that a category is "in between a thing and an action" (Bowker & Star, 1999, 285) to frame tagging as a gesture that materialises a tactical practice of the everyday (De Certeau, 1984) and a type of relational aesthetics (Bourriaud, 1998). As an alternative to the "symbolic inefficiency" of information aesthetics (Galloway, 2012), I develop a cultural critique of tagging through the discussion of three cultural avatars, each in relation with a controversial type of labelling: the @Gangsta and the spectacle of crime in the age of material addressability, the #DigitalNomad and the urban politics of geo-tagging, the Troll and the naturalisation of social hierarchies through the construction of the #SocialJustice VS #FreeSpeech conflict.

## FACEBOOK'S DISCURSIVE AND MATERIAL CONFIGURATION OF IDEAL USERS: THE POLITICS OF WELL-BEING ONLINE

**Niall Docherty**

This paper examines how Facebook configures ideal users of the platform discursively and in its material design. Firstly, it will demonstrate how Facebook's public campaigns of 'healthy' usership relay eudaimonic discourses of well-being – normative accounts of what it means to 'live well' in the present age. Through an empirical analysis of the HCI research funded by Facebook, and the public relations materials conveying their findings, I will show how ideal healthy Facebook usership is predicated upon a 'social' human subject conceptualized through theories of evolutionary psychology and neoliberal social capital. Human relationships, in this framework, have value in terms of social capital – the substantive emotional or material support social relations yield. Here, well-being is associated with increased access to such resources. Active, engaged communication on Facebook, it is said, increases well-being by facilitating the flow of social capital between social ties. Adopting habits of self-interested sociality - understood as good, healthy usership, therefore, is configured as the 'natural' choice of Facebook users 'rationally' concerned with their own health and well-being. The second section of this paper will show how Facebook scripts modes of 'healthy' usership in the material design of the News Feed's

**Niall Docherty:** I am a third year PhD student at the University of Nottingham, Centre for Critical theory and Cultural Studies. My thesis studies the discursive and material construction of users on Facebook, exploring how social networking habits function as expressions of contemporary capitalist power.

user-interface. I will show how users are technically nudged along behavioural corridors of active communication in ways that allegedly align with their so-conceived 'natural' interests. The consciously designed intensification of user-interactions on the News Feed is presented by Facebook as a means to boost users' digital health, while simultaneously expanding the scale and depth of profitable user data that serves Facebook's primary business interests as a capitalist data-platform. Consequently, this paper will argue that the discursive and material configuration of ideal users on Facebook produces a normative vision of responsabilized human flourishing that operates on the level of habit, which, in turn, entangles users, ideally manifested or not, within relations of digital capitalist power.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AS A BUREAUCRATIZATION OF SOCIABILITY: A WEBERIAN APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING FACEBOOK

**Chiara Visentin**

**Chiara Visentin** currently works as an intern at the Sciences Po Médialab and pursues a Master's degree in Sociology and Social Research at the University of Pisa. Her research interests are historical sociology, history and sociology of media and technologies, and Max Weber. Previously, she gained a BA degree in Philosophy at the University of Pisa and worked on projects in history of ideas, institutional history and linguistics at the Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa. She also worked as a Knowledge Engineer for Amazon Alexa.

This talk suggests that some changes in personal interaction practices due to their increasing mediation through social media can be read through the lenses of Max Weber's theory of bureaucratization. The logic of a huge and largely institutionalized ensemble of algorithms, like for instance Facebook's, is assimilable to the bureaucratic logic described by Weber. This can be shown from at least two points of view. First, a deep historical continuity binds bureaucratic tasks and techniques and the development of information and communication technologies. Secondly, a strong conceptual closeness exists between algorithms for the organization and management of information and the weberian ideal-type of bureaucracy, as agents of rationalization and bearers of formal rationality.

This connection allows to regard social media as at least partly extending an old, bureaucratic logic to a new, traditionally informal domain, namely that of personal relationships and interactions. To describe some ways in which Facebook, as a significant representative of the category, does so, a number of characteristics and implications of bureaucratic power in Weber's theory are relied upon: increasing quantification and computability, extending the scope of explicitly stated rules, advancing centralization, allowing an ever more intense management of ever greater numbers of subjects, objects and relations, exerting power by virtue of knowledge, and democratizing while at the same time giving rise to new inequalities.

Finally, it is argued that Weber's political critiques of bureaucracy can highlight interesting lines along which to criticize today's "bureaucratic algorithms", in that he warned against the psychological and cultural impoverishment and the loss of individual self-determination that bureaucratic rule could foster, as well as the lack of political accountability of such rule.

#### DAY 1, PSH 305, 15:30 — MEDICAL AGENCY

## 'THE AI WILL SEE YOU KNOW': ON THE PERSONIFICATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE MEDICAL SECTOR

**Dr. Marco Braghieri, Dr. Mercedes Bunz**

When thinking about the figuration of persons in/out of data in the medical sector, one usually thinks about the patient. However, recent developments in Artificial Intelligence research around machine learning have led to a new way of configuring algorithms, which are now created through a statistical model that analyses a large set of data without explicit instructions but by finding patterns and inference in that data, and by categorising it. Our research project inquires the hypothesis that these new ways of programming algorithms in the medical sector are presented in the role of a 'person', namely the role of a doctor. Our project will study health reports, computer science papers, and also perform a content analysis using a query-based web archive of several English language news media to show that there is a tendency to present new AI in the medical sector in the role of a doctor. Drawing on a critical take on automation by Gilbert Simondon (2017), we will then problematize this framing.

The background of this project lies in the fact that diagnostic procedures have long formed the heart of medical expertise – it is the diagnosis that leads to correct treatment for which we call on a doctor. However, now that machine learning (ML) applications are being trained on large collections of medical data to perform diagnostics (Beam & Kohane 2018), the outcome of a medical diagnosis can also be delivered by an algorithm. But can it? Our research project "Will machine learning relocate medical knowledge" funded by the Wellcome Trust looks into this transformation and compares the discourse that shapes it, with the actual technical function of those algorithms asking: What leads to the case of medical algorithms being presented in the role of doctors? We hope that Gilbert Simondon's take on technology in 'On the mode

**Dr. Marco Braghieri** is Research Assistant at the Digital Humanities Department of King's College London.

**Dr. Mercedes Bunz** is Senior Lecturer at the Digital Humanities Department of King's College London.

of existence of technical objects' could help to reposition medical algorithms, which is why our project is interested in carefully following and testing Simondon's thinking of technology as a mode of existence that does have agency but is not a person.

## DATAFIED BRAINS AND VIRTUALISED SUBJECTS

**Dr. Stephen Rainey**

**Dr. Stephen Rainey** is a research fellow in the Horizon 2020-funded project 'Brain-Com', examining the ethical and philosophical issues relating to neuroprostheses and speech. He is based at the Oxford Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics, University of Oxford.

This paper will develop the view that a 'virtualisation' of the target of research may occur in big neuroscience. This would mean that data is reporting on itself, in a particular way, not necessarily on key features of behaviour as related to brain processes. This motivates a philosophically reflexive, complex approach to big neuroscience.

'Big neuroscience' is a label for an internationalised approach to brain sciences on the ground of an inter- and multi-disciplinary methodology such that, through scaling expertise and insights, accelerated progress in describing and understanding the brain will result. This is explicitly related to the hope for an acceleration in understanding mental phenomena. Efforts are underway to 'decode' the human brain using combinations of neuroscience, computer science, informatics, and centrally data.

Such efforts are self-consciously Big Data projects. In this context, neuroscience research datafies the brain, linking data sets, and using supercomputers to process data sets. Despite the sophistication of these endeavours, a challenge may be raised concerning the causal relationships among data, analysis, and brain-based reality. Finding these relations is not straightforward.

What 'framing' is in place that can account for neuronal spiking and synaptic modulation, for example, besides laws of sciences like physics and chemistry? Contextualising the datafied proxies used in big neuroscience requires the selection of evidence such that causal, or normative relations can be established between datasets and neurophysiological or even psychological phenomena. Data proxies, constructed according to specific framings, may result in virtual subjects.

The virtual subjects constructed from data may provide insights about brains and behaviour, but questions remain: how is this construction approached, with what material, and why? To whom do they relate? In a context of trying to understand what makes 'us' tick in terms of brain data, how the virtual and the real subject figures requires close attention.

# HOW PSYCHEDELIC DRUG RE-SEARCH—FIGURES PERSONS IN/OUT OF DATA: A DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW

Emma Stamm

This paper describes the ways in which persons are figured in and out of data in research on psychedelic substances. Currently, we are in the midst of what some have labeled “the psychedelic renaissance,” a rise of interest in the psychiatric application of psychedelic substances. Psychedelic research after the digital turn must reckon with unprecedented epistemic conundrums. Digital and especially data-intensive approaches challenge researchers insofar as they appear to inadequately represent the qualitative character of psychedelic experience. By most accounts, the effects of psychedelic ingestion are particular to each individual and atypical of ordinary experience. Multiple scholars have noted that the epistemic virtues promoted by digital methodology — including objectivity, positivism, and standardizability — contrast with the palliative properties of psychedelics, which are notably subjective. The difficulties of translating the subjective dimension of psychedelic treatment into data have led certain scientists to critique the rote use of digital methods in this field. If digital methodologies presuppose ontic or epistemic incommensurability between various realms of experience, they argue, they might foreclose the articulation of the therapeutically effective qualities of psychedelics.

My paper reads psychedelic psychiatry publications alongside articles from philosophers of science to indicate the following: many psychedelic researchers resolve this methodological paradox by envisioning persons not as figures, but as iterative patterns available to partial digital representation. These patterns are denied the psychological investment conventionally accorded to “persons.” The metaphor of “depth” to describe the object allegedly recalcitrant to data-intensive hermeneutics is forsaken in favor of the “flat” person-as-pattern immanent with shifting experience. These researchers, however, are not purely behaviorist. They consider that if “deep” and “unchanging” facets of personhood are real, such facets exist beyond any operable conception of the “person.” That which psychedelic research “figures out” of data is therefore also figured out of all forms of expression.

**Emma Stamm** is a Ph.D. candidate in Critical Data Studies at Virginia Tech. Her dissertation examines digital epistemology through the lens of research on psychedelic substances.

# USERNESS

**Dr. Zara Dinnen**

**Dr. Zara Dinnen** is Lecturer in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Literature at Queen Mary University of London and author of *The Digital Banal* (Columbia University Press, 2018).

I propose the term ‘userness’ to describe a normative process of subjectivity under the material conditions of computation; a process that may see a person coming to take up a user-position, or may see such a position taken up by a nonhuman entity (Goriunova, Wark 2018). In this paper I will particularly consider how the processes of userness are temporal and tensed: the user is both prior and speculative to their coming into use. Working with computer science, design theory, Sara Ahmed’s work on use, affordance, and orientation, and Elizabeth Povinelli’s work on ‘governance of the prior’, I attend to the processes of participation and recognition by which users become, as also processes of coming into a situation that is retroactively for users. This is to think on how we might become easy with being one kind of subject or another, oriented ‘in this way or that’ toward computers, with userness as a condition we are somehow for, or that is for us. I am particularly interested in how userness is not only an affordance of the computational, but a story popular culture tells about life now, and has been telling about life to come, which is to say the user is a contemporary kind of political subject. Across the broader project this paper is drawn from, I think about how hacker imaginaries—the situation by which hackers are a speculative expression of possible relations between citizen and user-subjects and modes of computational governance—in popular memoirs, comics, TV and film, narrate userness as a clause of contemporary life. This paper will draw on some of those examples to consider how we might situate userness within the broader tensed affordances of contemporary subjectivity and political life.

## THE BACKGROUND NOISE OF EXISTENCE: FIGURATIONS OF AUTHENTICITY IN PHILOSOPHIES OF THE DIGITAL AGE

**Dr. Thomas Sutherland**

**Dr. Thomas Sutherland** is Senior Lecturer in Media Studies at the University of Lincoln.

Under the current conditions of rampant datafication, as a result of which our lives seem able to be ordered, captured, and processed within an increasingly extensive regime of algorithmic governance, it is unsurprising to see frequent recourse within disciplines such as media studies to philosophical perspectives, both old and new, that would emphasize aspects of one’s subjective and material existence irreducible to this quantifying and qualifying gaze. And yet, such perspectives carry with them the inevitable risk of falling back into a

rigid duality between an authentic and inauthentic self (whatever the specific content of these terms might be) that ultimately replicates the fundamentally Kantian distinction between a noumenal and phenomenal self: an appeal to a freedom grounded in a subjective transgression of representation (and the boundaries that it implies). For Alexander Galloway, the French philosopher (or 'non-philosopher') François Laruelle points toward another option, one that sees 'both data and information abandoned', offering 'not so much a movement of freedom or a movement of reality,' but 'a movement of subtraction in which presence is whittled down to the radical anonymity of something whatsoever [...] a condition of indifference rooted in indecision'. Indeed, Laruelle seeks to relativize any such binary distinctions between the authentic and inauthentic, understanding them as groundless philosophical interpellations of a subject that is irreducible to any figuration; a subject which forms an imperceptible background noise that can never be foregrounded. In this paper, I will consider some of the affordances of such a project for life in an age of ubiquitous datafication, but I also wish to note some limitations that have not yet been sufficiently addressed within English-language scholarship: namely, the foundational individualism of Laruelle's work, and its tacit denigration of communication and sociality. Is it really possible to identify a subjectivity inimical to all tropes of authenticity?

## THE ZERO PERSON: RETHINKING POSITIONALITY, PERSPECTIVE AND RELATIONALITY IN ALGORITHMIC MEDIA

**Professor Greg Elmer**

This paper argues that studies of media datafication, broadly construed, have either displaced the question of personal perspective, or oscillated between critiques of personalization as identification (leading to questions of privacy) and/or social sorting (clustering, profiling). And indeed many of the algorithms that govern and modulate practices, content and relationships on media platforms today are similarly structured. The goal of this paper is to enumerate the significance of user (or other media actor) 'perspective' on and across such media properties, particular the popular and commercially operated ones. After a brief genealogical approach to the study of both 1st and 3rd person perspectives in media, highlighting their governance of contemporary algorithmic media, the paper borrows from Deleuze, Whitehead, Latour and others to discuss the possibilities of a zero person perspective in media studies, not only for analyzing and critiquing media platforms but for laying the groundwork for a media logic that displaces the surveillant, homophobic, and ultimately discriminatory outcomes of contemporary algorithmic media.

**Greg Elmer** is Professor of Communication and Culture at Ryerson University. Greg is a leading theorist of surveillance and media platforms. His books and articles research the social implications of consumer profiling, social protest, political forms of pre-emption, and technologies of data commodification. He is currently working on a book project that analyzes the financialized and 'impersonal' business models of social media companies.

# DATA THROUGH TIME: FIGURING OUT THE NARRATIVE SELF IN LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH

Professor Jane Elliott

Professor Jane Elliott, is a Professor of Sociology, Philosophy and Anthropology at the University of Exeter

This paper will explore the ways in which individuals can be obscured and revealed through the practices of longitudinal social research. In particular it will juxtapose qualitative and quantitative data from the 1958 British Birth Cohort study (which has followed thousands of individuals from their birth in 1958 through childhood and adult life) in order to consider the ways in which different approaches to research can reinforce or disrupt narrative conceptions of the self. It will also discuss the opportunities and challenges for longitudinal research provided by new practices of self-tracking e.g. using apps and wearable devices made possible following the digital revolution.

Use of the metaphors of figure and ground will be used to suggest that a more complete account of individual experiences can only be achieved when we pay attention to the broader social context in which those individuals make sense of their lives. The paper will also consider the ethical tensions between the need to preserve the anonymity of individuals in research studies and the desire to acknowledge and record the specificity and uniqueness of individual experiences.

DAY 2, KEYNOTE 2, PSH ATRIUM, 17:00

# UBIQUITOUS SURVEILLANCE AND DATA SELVES

Professor John Frow

Professor John Frow is an ARC Professorial Fellow in the Department of English at The University of Sydney.

Are we made up entirely and without residue of the data that defines us, or is there a disjunction between our data shadows and our embodied selves? How do we come to recognize ourselves, our selves, in the pronouns that interpellate us online, and what is it exactly that we recognize? What does it mean to occupy the semantic and positional space of the shifter? And is there a continuity or a discontinuity between the systems of surveillance and data aggregation that address us and the systems that don't? The markers of identity generated by such systems work by both individuating and classifying us; this paper seeks to think about the range of possible relations between that generality and that particularity.

# EVERY BODY IS AN ARCHIVE

**Liz Orton**

Every Body is an Archive is a performed reading about the medically-imaged body as a field of data for calculation and diagnosis. The text, in which the body is reconceptualised as a new kind of archive, is based on a four-year artist research project at UCLH, supported by the Wellcome Trust.

Medical images are now one of the most important sources of biomedical data, and an increasingly important part of diagnosis, care and treatment. The NHS made 41 million medical image scans in 2017. As patients we are full of images, which though we rarely see, stored as code allow for new ways of accessing, knowing and disseminating the body.

The reading is accompanied by moving images, comprising 2D and 3D visualisations made by the artist using appropriated professional radiology software. In making the latent images visible, pulling them from medical storage, the work constitutes an act of deterritorialisation, and also reveals the performative potential of clinical software.

The images focus on the body's surface, unstable as a form of medical representation, which can be understood as a search for a social identity in medical data. The work moves around, through and under the body's surface: a clinical, mathematical, visual and ethical inquiry into the skin as a boundary. Though recognizably human these reconstructed bodies resist identification as characteristic marks are erased through computerised sampling of skin, hair, water, tissue, air and blood.

The text is based on two inter-weaving narratives: the artist's experience of looking for her mother in her medical images; and a broader inquiry into the politics of the ownership, use and sharing of medical image data. It wonders whether in a future of data combinatrics the imaged body might become a space for economic and financial speculation.

**Liz Orton** is a visual artist who uses photography, moving image and text to explore ideas of authorship and authenticity in representation, particularly in relation to technologies and the body. Her work engages widely with archives, both real and imagined, to explore the tensions between technical and personal systems of knowledge.

Liz is an Associate Lecturer of Photography at the London College of Communication, and teaches medical students at Queen Mary University London and Kings College London. She is an Associate Artist with Performing Medicine, and in 2016 she was recipient of a Wellcome Trust Arts award for Digital Insides, a project about medical imaging technologies, and a UCL Grand Challenges grant. She is editor of *Becoming Image: Medicine and the Algorithmic Gaze*.

Liz exhibits widely in group exhibitions including recently at York Museum, the Photographers Gallery, PhMuseum, FACT, FORMAT Photography Festival and the Arts Pavillion.

# HARVESTING PERFORMANCE DATA: TURNING HUMAN SIMULATORS INTO TEST OBJECTS

Dr. Ivana Guarrasi, Dr. Anthony Errichetti

**Dr. Ivana Guarrasi** is a lecturer in the Department of Communication at University of California, San Diego. She studies human patient simulation in medical and nursing education. Using ethnographic and ethnomethodological approaches to studying practices of standardization and quantification, her work is situated at the intersection of communication studies, social studies of medicine, and science and technology studies (STS).

**Dr. Anthony Errichetti** is a director of doctor-patient communication assessment at the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners. He has worked for over 20 years developing and directing medical school and hospital-based simulations centers in Philadelphia and New York.

The Association of Standardized Patient Educators *Standards of Best Practice* states that “Human simulation is a recognized methodology that involves human role players interacting with learners in a wide range of experiential learning and assessment contexts.” One use of human simulation is as a *standardized patient*, i.e. a trained layperson used in a standardized exam of clinical performance. In this process, medical and healthcare learners are tested with the use of human test items – standardized patients. SPs are performers who are not only trained to simulate patients but also to assess examinees’ clinical skills using rating scales and checklists. Responding to biomedicalization processes in healthcare (Clarke et al., 2010), the SP field in the United States gained legitimacy as a teaching, learning and assessment tool by being identified with the rhetoric of psychometrics, most importantly the notions of examination validity and reliability.

SP are placed in a predicament – to realistically simulate patients (“lived body”), but to also embody principles of medical standardization in their patient portrayal and assessment of clinical skills (“objective body”). This talk discusses the transformation of SPs from “lived body” to “objective body” through discourses that reinforce the legitimacy of standardized testing in clinical skills training. Using the lens of science and technology studies (STS) we foreground the entanglement of recruiting the “lived body” of the SP performer and the “objective body” of medical standards in the SP performance and assessment of medical students. In particular, we examine how the intersections of quantification and SP performers’ personhood become embodied in medical simulation.

Drawing on in-depth interviews with 20 standardized patients, we analyze how SPs’ use personal and subjective resources to sustain the quantifiable standard. In order to numerically measure students’ ability to demonstrate qualities such as empathy, communication skills, and good bedside manners SP performers draw on their own biographical events, memories of these events, traces and affects of previous experiences and subjective perceptions. In contrast to the rhetoric of psychometric testing, we show that in practice SP employ idiosyncratic micro-tactics to achieve the practical goal of producing a functional performance exam with measurable learning outcomes.

# THE GARDENER AND THE WALLED GARDEN

**Professor Sophie Day, Professor Helen Ward, Jayne Smith**

Two strands of our People Like You collaboration are situated within a large London NHS-University complex. They explore contemporary practices of personalisation, precision and stratification in health care and related data science. Platforms for standardising and sharing data between research and care are in construction, as they have been for some years. Currently, they take the form of creating a large 'knowledge bank' linking health records and biological samples with explicit consent for research use. Researchers will be able to work with the data without being able to identify patients, through pseudonymising techniques. This virtual research space is described as a "walled garden".

We are an anthropologist, an epidemiologist, and a patient with breast cancer who has participated in many research studies since 2013. The patient is known, fortuitously, as the gardener and she has agreed that the three of us explore her history in order to discover the boundaries and junctures between healthcare and research materials over this period. We are all interested in this history, hoping to discover where the data are, how they are being used, and what their value is to continuing care, to other patients, and to science. In this paper we ask what/who/when is a person as they are disassembled, transformed, layered and valued; emerging from and disappearing into data that are disaggregated and segregated. Together, we hope to reaggregate the data and reconstruct a fuller history in which the patient is recognisable.

This enquiry necessarily raises questions about the different ways in which a person is figured and distributed through personal experience, ethnography and biomedicine. It will be fascinating to explore what resonates with and interests each of us, and the extent to which the gardener recognises herself inside the maze of garden walls.

**Sophie Day** is Professor of Anthropology at Goldsmiths.

**Jayne Smith** is a patient with breast cancer.

**Helen Ward** is Professor of Public Health at Imperial College.

# THE DATAFIED PERSON IN “TRUST-LESS” BLOCKCHAIN SYSTEMS: THE INDIVIDUALISATION OF PRIVACY

Silvia Semenzin, Dr. Alessandro Gandini

**Silvia Semenzin** is a PhD student in digital sociology at the University of Milan. She is studying Blockchain social applications to research on new sets of power dynamics and algorithmic bias in digitally-mediated contexts.

**Dr Alessandro Gandini** is senior researcher in digital sociology at the University of Milan.

Trust is considered an indispensable aspect in society. In recent years, the question of data and trust has become ever-more central: not only have we witnessed a loss of trust by citizens towards institutions, but we have also faced new challenges brought by scandals such as the Facebook and Cambridge Analytica leaks, which have generated new concerns about data ownership and surveillance.

In recent years, a technology emerging from the hacker world has been advocated as the solution to problems of institutional trust and data transparency: Blockchain (Tapscott, Tapscott, 2016). Most famously known for the implementation of Bitcoin, the Blockchain technology has recently started to gain attention also because of its social applications beyond finance, e.g. in governance, music, art (O’Dair and Beaven, 2017). The biggest promise of Blockchain technology is that of building a “trust-less” distributed system, thanks to the use of transparent peer-to-peer networks that would eliminate the necessity of having intermediaries and central authorities (Gerard, 2017). However, many questions remain. How would Blockchain technology eliminate the need for societal trust? What are the visions underpinning a trust-less society, and what the implications for the individual as a data subject?

Tracking Blockchain imaginaries through in-depth interviews and digital methods, this paper aims to explore how the person(s) is/are figured out in Blockchain technology experimentations beyond finance. Initial evidence shows that Blockchain developers and experts conceive the Other on the basis of competition and meritocracy; in so doing, while promising decentralisation they implement a vision that reinforces neoliberal individualisation. This brings us to a notion of trust that is delinked from an idea of mutuality and reciprocity (Bourdieu, 2002), and closer to a notion of assessing the risk of interacting with strangers (Luhmann, 2002), typical of financial economies. The vision of a trust-less society, we will conclude, emerges as that where the person(s) is/are singularities and their social relations are regulated by ‘symbolic tokens’ that act as ‘fictitious commodities’ (Gandini, 2019-forthcoming).

# HOW DID THIS PERSON GET IN THE DATA?: A DISCUSSION OF THE BLURRY CONCEPT(S) OF PRIVACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

**Dr. Oskar Josef Gstrein, Dr. Anne Beaulieu**

While the United Nations confirmed in numerous resolutions that privacy is and remains a human right in the digital age, our daily experience in the use of digital devices combined with the seemingly ever-increasing production of personal data suggests that it is difficult to understand this fluid concept of privacy. The largely successful implementation of the European Union's GDPR suggests that a culture change towards a more data protection aware society is occurring. At the same time, the question remains whether and how concepts developed in the 1970s can address the complex reality of the 21st century.

In this submission, we take a look at several existing concepts that address the division of private and public space, and discuss how these definitions affect the figuration of person(s) in and out of data. We contrast the concept of data subject whose data is being "protected" (the basis of the GDPR) with other approaches, including the German concept of informational self-determination, or the South American "habeas data" doctrine. We explore the tensions between considering the different societal and cultural traditions from which these concepts arise, the conceptualization of privacy as a universal right, the (seemingly?) global nature of digital platforms, and the perennial vision of the digital as a universal space of data.

These considerations lead us to reflect on the mutual adjustments that are going on: as we move in/out of data and as the digital becomes an inherent part of our identity, we both change our understanding of person to be able to effectively address privacy, and adjust our concept of privacy to address the concept of personhood.

**Dr. Oskar Josef Gstrein**, MA, LL.M., PhD, is Senior Researcher Data Research Centre - Campus Fryslân, University of Groningen (RUG), The Netherlands.

**Dr. Anne Beaulieu** is Associate Professor of Science and Technology Studies and Director Data Research Centre, Campus Fryslân, University of Groningen, The Netherlands.

# THE FIGURE IN CONFIGURATION: TRUST AND PROMISE AMONG INFRASTRUCTURES

**Matt Spencer**

Many areas of life depend upon the correct functioning of digital infrastructures. Figurations invite distinctive ways to think through

**Matt Spencer** is an Assistant Professor at the University of Warwick's Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies. His research is supported by a UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship entitled 'Scaling Trust: An Anthropology of Cyber Security'.

the maintenance of these infrastructures, particularly in light of recent transformations in methods. With the rise of automation in configuration management, new tools are given responsibilities for setting up servers, patches, services, packages and applications. Human configuration managers become users of these tools, tasked with writing "configuration as code" or even "infrastructure as code." On the heels of these developments, a recent and more nascent shift, which we can call a "turn to society" in infrastructure, imagines machines making promises to one another and developing attitudes of trust or mistrust toward each other.

Three questions stand out, invoking persons in different ways: 1) in the mode of a figurational sociology, we see interdependency and trust redistributed among people, machine agents, and abstraction layers; 2) New methods have brought a set of distinctive figures through which mediation and abstraction are handled: chefs and recipes, puppets and puppeteers, scores, conductors and orchestras; 3) Society or social relations figure as resources for the invention of new methods, via equivalence or analogy to technical relations, or as "found" solutions to general problems of cooperation and coordination.

## DAY 2, PSH 326, 11:15 — PORTRAIT

# THE PORTRAIT AND THE PROXY

**Dr. Felicity Allen, Professor Rebecca Fortnum**

**Dr. Rebecca Fortnum** is Professor of Fine Art at The Royal College of Art, where she leads the School of Arts and Humanities Research Programme. In 2019 she completed a Visiting Research Fellowship at Merton College, Oxford where she developed her project, *A Mind Weighted with Unpublished Matter*, that includes paintings and drawings of known and unknown female subjects from sculptural portraits in Museum collections. Fortnum has had solo shows at the Freud Museum and the V&A's Museum of Childhood. Her new book, *A Companion to Contemporary Drawing*, edited with Kelly Chorpene, will be published by Wiley Blackwell in December 2019.

What possibilities can the proxy offer in questions of recognition? Focussing on our own distinct practices of portraiture, we consider different forms of anonymity, individual or grouped, in relation to the concept of proxying, with particular attention to gender. We discuss Fortnum's series of portraits *Prosopopoeia* generated from historic sculptural portrayals, and Allen's Dialogic Portraits with live sitters. In both cases proxies are a focus – who is (or is imagined as) proxy for what or whom, sitter, subject, artist or viewer?

With troubling frequency, artists, curators and art writers anticipate a viewer's response, exemplified, for instance, in Lynette Yiadom-Boakye's gallerist's website commentary that her imaginary portraits' 'lack of fixed narrative leaves her work open to the projected imagination of the viewer.' The supposed viewer is as fictional as the artist's subjects, evidenced by asking, when is art not 'open to the projected imagination of the viewer'?

In her project *A Mind Weighted with Unpublished Matter*, Fortnum explores the potential of the small *Prosopopoeia* diptychs, where an abstract panel is placed alongside a painting derived from an

18th or 19th Century sculptural portrait of a woman, an image of reverie responding to the viewer's contemplative gaze with downcast, averted or closed eyes. In her project *Begin Again*, Allen recorded interviews with 76 sitters to consider from their perspective the processes of portraiture but, instead of 'giving voice' to her sitters, she anonymised their portraits and mixed her own and their speech to produce a series of artists books, *Begin Again nos 1–21*.

Allen's relational and collective work acknowledges mutuality and possible transference between artist and sitter, implicitly re-positioning a prospective viewer's relation to the portrait. In Fortnum's work the subject of the portrait is retrieved from historical obscurity, yet remains entangled in narratives that, whilst engaging the viewer, potentially obscures the historical data.

## FIGURES OF DATA SOVEREIGNTY: FROM DATAMETRIC PROFILES TO THE FIGURATION OF USERS' BODY POLITIC

**Dr. Nathalie Casemajor**

In a study of political personification throughout art history, Dario Gamboni states that "by means of the fiction of representation a community can be seen as a person" (2005, 162). Effigies and allegories of the sovereign have the narrative power to institute collective entities. Composite figures are another way of visualizing the body politic: they organize "the visual co-existence of individual elements" (people, objects) in a way that "allows the thematization of their reciprocal relationships." (2005, 163) For example, the composite portrait is a photographic technique that combines different individual faces to aggregate the traits of group categories and visualize the statistical average of "types." Some claim that these late 19th century type portraits are one of the first applications of convolution factor analysis and neural networks. But these collective type figures, just like contemporary datametric user segments, lack the agency and sovereign power of political *persona*.

This paper focuses on the figuration of the collective as a body politic in the era of datafication. It is more specifically concerned with cultural publics – library users, museum viewers – insofar that they are increasingly measured by way of their data practices. On the one hand, the analysis of "data doubles" and "data selves" makes it possible to critically examine the ways in which "data-publics" (Madsen and Munk, 2019) can be *known*. But studying the formation of "*knowing* publics" (Kennedy and Moss, 2015) further

**Dr Felicity Allen** is an artist and writer whose current work is mainly focussed in two forms, the concept of the Disoeuvre (exhibited in 2019 at x-hibit, Vienna, and published by Ma Bibliothèque) and Dialogic Portraits, which she makes in series through watercolour on paper as well as textual, audio and video recordings. Her first series produced the 2-volume artist's book *Begin Again nos 1–21*, collected by Tate and the Getty. The third series, commissioned by Turner Contemporary, produced the film *As If They Existed* (2015). She is currently making Dialogic Portraits with *Refugee Tales* and with the cross-disciplinary research project *People Like You*.

**Dr. Nathalie Casemajor** is an Assistant Professor in the Urbanisation Culture Société Research Centre at Institut national de la recherche scientifique (Montreal). Her work focuses on cultural development, citizen engagement and digital culture.

calls for a conversation about the modes of self-figuration and agential configuration of data-publics. In this sense, a figure can be understood as a sequence of movements in the choreography of collective action towards data sovereignty. Beyond the usual visualisation of individual user profiles and consumer segments, how can one figure the body politic of users as data sovereign? This paper paves the way for a research-creation project that will partner with cultural institutions in Quebec to co-create figurative representations of data sovereignty with their users. It draws on the francophone literature on “figures of the public” (Cefaï and Pasquier, 2003) and “figures of the user” (Paquenseguy, 2012) to provide a conceptual framework of figuration as an active process of forming collective entities and configuring roles in the process of collective action.

## FIGURING OUT ‘PERFECT SKINS’

**Claire Larssonneur**

**Claire Larssonneur** is a Senior Lecturer at University Paris 8, specialising in Contemporary British Literature, Translation Studies and Digital Humanities.

She has co-chaired the Digital Subject research project between 2012 and 2015 and co-organised the 2016 Cerisy la Salle week-long seminar on the Post-human and Digital Subjectivities, which led to her guest-editing issue #7 of *Angles* on “Digital Subjectivities”. She has launched a new project entitled *Auteur Numérique* in 2018, funded by Paris 8, the MSH Nord and Labex ICCA. She is also currently working on the economic and societal implications of neural machine translation and preparing a collective book for Palgrave Macmillan, *When Translation Goes Digital*, with Dr Renée Desjardins and Dr Philippe Lacour.

The creative work of Gregory Chatonsky, a French Canadian artist, harnesses algorithms, machine learning and data mining to repurpose texts and visual representations harvested from online popular culture. In the series *Perfect Skin* (9 installments from 2015 to 2018), he ran a programme on a dataset of pictures uploaded on the Net, such as the more than 5000 Tumblr selfies posted by Kim Kardashian, to create distorted and serial representations of the human body which were then reproduced through several mediums (photo, video, textiles, ceramics, VR, etc.). Going beyond distortion to outright creation, he then produced the 2018 series *Ossuaries* by collecting several hundreds of 3D files of human and non-human bones, found on websites such as Google Warehouse, Thingiverse, Shapeways, etc. Once those files were fed to a neural network, the software learned to create new ones and the generated files were cleaned on a computer and 3-D printed.

In this paper I would like to explore variations of the word figure, focusing on how they interplay within Chatonsky’s work. Several angles are juxtaposed : mathematics with the common meaning of figure, our appetite for closure as in “it figures” but also the outline of the body and the complex process of guessing from a handful of clues (“to figure out”). Would his creations best be described as “corps sans organes”, to take up the Deleuzian reference Chatonsky explicitly uses, or rather “organes sans corps”, disjointed members that only make sense when turned into a pattern by the algorithm? Drawing upon the aporias of reading Chatonsky and the feelings of unease his work may trigger, I would like to explore the tension between a fantasy of control, objectified through data and algorithms, and the lingering suggestion of death and decay that pervades his work.

# MOLECULAR RELAPSE IN BREAST CANCER RESEARCH AND THE FIGURES OF PERSONALISED MEDICINE

**Dr. Will Viney**

During a 12-month ethnography members of the People Like You research team assessed changes in breast cancer services in collaboration with researchers and NHS staff. We wanted to learn about new ways of diagnosing and treating cancers that are associated with what the NHS calls personalised medicine. In one study we have observed, patients treated for breast cancer have given blood every 6 months for 4 years or more. The scientific team use these samples to develop 'liquid biopsies', extracting and tracking circulating tumour DNA. Study results suggest that this technique can predict cancer relapse up to two years in advance of existing screening technologies. I want to propose that the kind of 'personalised' monitoring involves the figuration of disease in ways that affect how cancer is researched, treated, and experienced.

Using the terms developed by Auerbach (1938; 1946) personalised tracking may establish serial, figure-fulfilment relationships, with connections between events and persons. For Auerbach figural representation involves the first event or person signifying both itself and the second that it involves or fulfils. Liquid biopsies in oncology involve multiple figures: the figure of 'molecular recurrence' as a possible or anticipated horizon, fulfilled in the event of clinical relapse; the figure of the patient who develops secondary disease, who fulfils the promise prefigured by the study's clinical and scientific aims; finally, if a patient's cancer returns, researchers sequence tumour samples to reinterpret data and ask what else they prefigured. A further, predictive horizon is emergent, and a further quest for a figure-fulfilment relation is made possible. If each symptom is a visible sign of invisible disease then clinicians using serial liquid biopsies are not just stratifying patients into sub-groups of patients, viz populations, but into figures of personalisation – processes that make the person multiple.

**Dr. Will Viney** is Research Associate in the Department of Anthropology, Goldsmiths, University of London. He is assisting Professor Sophie Day by exploring changes in personalised healthcare and medicine. His work employs textual, visual and ethnographic methods from the humanities and social sciences to understand the 'person' in personalised medicine. Prior to working with the People Like You project he was Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in the Centre for Medical Humanities and Department of English Studies, University of Durham. He has contributed to publications such as *Cabinet*, *Critical Quarterly*, *frieze*, *The Palgrave Companion to Biology and Society*, and the *Times Literary Supplement*. His first book, *Waste: A Philosophy of Things*, was published in 2014 and he directed the documentary short, *Twins on Twins* (The Derek Jarman Lab, 2017).

# ‘FIGURING OUT’ ASTHMA: PERSONAL SENSING IN AIR POLLUTION SCIENCE

Emma Garnett

**Emma Garnett** is a Research Fellow in the Social Science and Urban Public Health Institute at King’s College London. Working across sociology and science and technology studies, her ethnographic work explores the socio-material and political dimensions of environmental health research and practice, predominantly around air pollution. She is interested in interdisciplinary methods and critical approaches to data, and is currently engaged with a series of participatory public health projects deploying personal sensors.

This paper takes data practices of an interdisciplinary research team exploring the environmental health dimensions of air pollution as a starting point for thinking about the different ways the person is figured in/out of data. In this project, young people with asthma living in Delhi are invited to wear pollution and breathing sensors that measure their ‘real-time’ exposure-response relationships to urban air. The limitations of monitoring stations and measurements of ambient pollution for estimating health risk are now well rehearsed. Yet there is far less data about how much air pollution individuals breathe and the way different micro-environments contribute to the unevenness of exposure and harm. Producing person-generated data has been presented in air quality and exposure science as an opportunity to address these discrepancies, and for building more effective public health interventions.

It is within this context that the personal sensor project brings together different disciplines, funders, publics, artists and policymakers around the figure of asthma. Focussing on asthma is pragmatic because the air pollution sensors work effectively on people who experience breathing difficulties. It is also strategic; a way to set inclusion criteria that means the study’s findings will carry clinical value. Underpinning these research considerations is the social and cultural figure of asthma as a political concern. I suggest that thinking with the figure of asthma, and its various configurations, allows for other forms of apprehending person-centred data of exposure and health to emerge. Drawing on observations of participants using the sensors, the scientific team’s negotiations of various data sets and participatory workshops where young people are invited to create ‘asthma characters’, the paper unpacks a series of encounters between persons and data. To conclude, figuring asthma in/out of data is discussed as a collaborative mode of inquiry into the late industrial logics shaping environmental health knowledges, research and practice.

# INTERVENING INTO THE BODY/ DATA-INTERFACE OF THE TER- MINALLY-ILL PERSON

**Dr. Milena D. Bister**

Data have a multitude of meanings for medical practice. The history of medicine itself is intrinsically interwoven with the generation of data about ill bodies and people. The development of data generating instruments of various kinds has shaped the direction of medical practice ever since. Hospital buildings and hospital beds have to be considered as one of the central data-generating technologies before the rise of biomedicine. The latter has opened up numerous opportunities and challenges to study and treat sick bodies through data. More recently methods of epidemiology and epigenetics have made health a growing intervention zone for medical practitioners and researchers. The promise of future personalized medicine and cure will further reconfigure the interrelated nature of the human body, medical practice and data technologies and infrastructures. Importantly, the continuous transformation of medical knowledge production have challenged and refined significantly our understanding of what it means to be a person.

Based on my current involvement as a social scientist in a medical technology development project, I will discuss in this paper how the interface between a terminally-ill body and a data-generating sensor system for the prevention of pressure ulcers is conceptualized, classified, problematized, and codified in multiple ways throughout the construction process. Using the actor-network approach within science and technology studies, the analysis will address the ways in which the project's team members from the disciplines of engineering, user design, social sciences and nursing sciences figure the terminally-ill person in and out of their own data practices. By doing so I wish to attend to the ambiguities in which contemporary technology- and data-driven medical care practices alter the imagined and understood ways of being a terminally-ill person.

**Dr. Milena D. Bister** is a post-doc researcher and member of the "Laboratory: Anthropology of Environment | Human Relations" at the Department of European Ethnology, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Within the anthropology of science and technology her research focuses on knowledge practices in medical healthcare with a focus on psychiatry and palliative care.

**DAY 2, PSH 314, 13:30 — THE WORK OF FIGURES/FIGURING WORTH**

# FIGURES OF UNWORK

**Dr. Valeria Graziano**

As part of the recent discussion on post-work, I will reclaim three specific figures of trans-individuation to demonstrate how it might be possible, building upon Paolo Virno's theory on the relationship

**Dr. Valeria Graziano** is a research associate at the Centre for Postdigital Cultures and visiting lecturer for the MA in Gender Studies, University of Roma Tre. She works on politics of pleasure, modes of organising social reproduction, transfeminist technologies and antiwork practices. She was a visiting fellow at the Digital Cultures Research Lab, Leuphana University and the John Hope Franklin Research Center, Duke University. She is co-editor of 'Repair Matters', a special issue of *ephemera: Theory & Politics in Organisation* (forthcoming 2019) and convenor of the international project Pirate Care.

1. Daniele Del Giudice, *Lo stadio di Wimbledon*. Preface by Italo Calvino (Turin: Einaudi, 1983).

between living labour and knowledge (including the one embedded in technological objects), to institute practices of unwork. The first is the figure of Bazlen, a writer who never wrote, lifted from a fictional character created by Daniele Del Giudice in *Wimbledon Stadium*<sup>1</sup>. The second is the social figure of 'othermothers' in African-American culture, as conceptualised by Patricia Hill Collins. Despite the markedly different contexts that produced these figurations, I will read them alongside each other to trace the contours of a materialist, feminist figuration of unwork that casts intellectuality as a mode of social reproduction and, contiguously, recodes socialized reproduction as a practice of knowledge production. The logic governing such reorganization will be finally introduced through a queer reactivation of a third figure, that of Amy, the little girl who refused to perform her job as subject for a psychological test and by doing so allowed Carol Gilligan to coalesce her notion of an 'ethics of care'.

While many authors turned to the literary genre of science fiction and utopian writing to sketch possible scenarios of a post-work society and the coming wave of automation (expected to get rid of about 25 to 50% of jobs in the next decade), my paper turns instead to figuration as another mode of constructing narratives about the future, claiming that it might allow for a more effective political traction of the 'imaginal' in reshaping the political field. Figures of trans-individuation, rather than operational yet speculative societal portrayals, are a supplementary, rather than polemic, gesture to utopian writing, necessary in my view to address a crucial aspect that the current focus on the role of technologies in the abolition of work has neglected, namely, the different processes of technosomatic subjectification we might rely on to bring about not simply a post-work, but an anti-work society, continuing the long tradition of the refusal of work from the perspective of class struggles.

## THE WORK THAT FIGURES DO

**Dr. Leila Dawney**

**Dr. Leila Dawney** is a Cultural Geographer and Social Theorist at the University of Exeter. She has published widely on figuration, and is currently working on a monograph on figures and authority.

Figures reflect, diffract, enact and differentially produce relations of power. They operate as mythologies for the taking shape of worlds. As metaphor, illustration and experimental form, the figure has the power to close down and open up worlds. In this paper, I provide a short genealogy of figuration on contemporary critical and philosophical thought, discussing its analytical and performative functions. Beginning with Foucault's original invocation of the four figures of biopolitics, I discuss how figures operate as hinges for forms of power, and chart how these concepts have been used in cultural analysis and critique. I then move on to discuss a second genealogy of figuration through Haraway's work, where they are invoked as experimental devices for disrupting binaries and mapping alternative worlds. Analysing the work that figures do, and adopting

critical and creative practice in relation to figures reveals their vitality and affective force in sculpting worlds: how they lure us towards particular political architectures, and provide substance for aleatory and minor ways of being and relating. Finally, I argue with Haraway, that, “it matters which figures figure figures” (Anthropocene chthulucene etc) and, suggest that figures, as pathfinders for other ways of living and being, need to be cared for.

## FIGURING HUMAN WORTH: EVALUATING MEDICAL IN- EQUITY FROM THE LENS OF THE QALY

**Dr. Imanni Sheppard**

The availability of new medical technologies within the United States is not only based on actual or perceived need but also a mathematical equation that measures the perceived utility of the individual multiplied by the number of years he or she is a vital member of society—a complex set of calculations known as QALYs (Quality Adjusted Life Years). It is a mathematical figure designed to evaluate an individual’s degree of fit, biological citizenship. The idea of being a good biological citizen has (and continues to be) the most significant determinant to medical accessibility. Unfortunately, QALYs do not account for social variables that directly or indirectly affect health outcomes. QALY indices are also socially and historically situated and QALY variables tend to discriminate against elderly members of society. Nonetheless, QALYs assessment shape concepts of what constitutes the normal, healthy body—the normal, healthy human. Moreover, the mathematical standardization of the good biological citizen has historically created dichotomies of socio-medically defined healthy bodies which has led to legitimized medical inequity, medical disparity, discrimination, and stigma. This reality is a profound echo of Nietzsche’s judgment criteria relative to the rejection of abnormal phenomena. To this end, social judgements become normalized though biased figures. It is the ruse of objectivity in mathematics that has been mined from qualitative subjectivities. With this in mind, my presentation will examine the ways in which QALYs have acted as socio-medical figurations that not only determine one’s perceived social worth and biological citizenship, but also how QALYs normalize thanatopolitics—the politics of death.

**Dr Imanni Sheppard** is an Assistant Professor of Medical Humanities at Bard Early College in New Orleans, Louisiana. She is also the author of *Health, Healing, and Hurricane Katrina: A Critical Analysis of Psychosomatic Illness in Survivors*.

# REMIXING FIGURATIONS: HOW TO PRODUCE DATA SUBJECTS WITH SONIC EPISTEMOLOGIES

Elinor Carmi

**Elinor Carmi** is a digital rights advocate, feminist, researcher and journalist who has been working, writing and teaching on deviant media, internet standards, (cyber)feminism, sound studies and internet governance. Currently Elinor is a Postdoc Research Associate in digital culture and society, at Liverpool University, UK, working on several ESRC and AHRC projects around digital inclusion and digital literacy.

This paper shows how media power has been enacted to produce people as data subjects through media, in this case the web. But unlike most media scholars, who use visual conceptualization, such as (in)visibility, seeing and black-box, this paper proposes a different conceptual approach. This paper argues that sonic epistemologies are better suited for multiplicities of actors (users, workers, and nonhumans), channels and temporalities that networked mediated spaces like the web entail. Synthesizing science and technology studies and sound studies, sonic epistemologies are practices that redraw boundaries of bodies. This ability is especially useful for multi-layered spaces like the web, where bodies, time and space are more flexible and are in constant process of production.

The main argument is that media companies have been conducting two main practices I call processed *listening* and *rhythmmedia* as part of seven sonic epistemological strategies to (re)produce data subjects. The first three strategies are associated with *processed listening*: new experts, licensing, and measurement; the next four strategies are related to *rhythmmedia*: training of the body, restructuring territories, filtering, and de-politicizing. The outcome of these strategies is the production of data subjects who behave in an efficient and economically desired way through media. Such strategies (re)configure the boundaries of what it means to be human, worker and social.

As a case study I show how these strategies were deployed in the web standardization process in the European Union (EU) in the early 2000s. This required configuring spaces and people on the web. To examine this, I have undertaken multiple qualitative methods such as: analysing legal documents from the European Union, analysing advertising association texts, and analysing the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) standards.

## SPEECH PORTRAITS AND THE “AUDIO-VISUAL” SELF

Dr. Aleksandra Kaminska

People often say that the way we speak creates an impression of who we are. Scientists are now working to see if there is any

merit to this intuition, creating images of human faces from speech data. In this conversion, artificial intelligence is producing correlations between voice/speech and face, generating images of persons without them having been seen. In this, facial portraits are a good example of the full extent of machine “vision” and its computational scanning, processing, and transformational rendering of information. This is significant for numerous reasons, namely that a person’s speech and voice patterns are some of the more recognizable features about them. The specific notion of recognition is signification and will be central to this talk, working to place it in dialogue with concepts such as identification and figuration. Indeed, recognition is a complex term: for example, philosophical approaches place it as central activity of human self-realization and social existence, while in studies of communication recognition can be conceived as an important goal for interpersonal dialogue. Moments of recognition thus require special attention because they are not just about a person being superficially seen or heard, but also in some manner about there being an understanding of identity beyond that which is perceivable. The goal here is to use recognition as a way to think about the work that occurs as biometric voice and speech data become not only in themselves useful for recognition-as-identification, but also used for the figuration of the facial portrait. What does this tell us about the relationship between the “audio” and “visual” self/selves; about recognition of persons as image or sound; about the visual impressions of voice and speech? The paper will namely draw on scientific research on speech portraiture, visual representations of voice recognition, and interdisciplinary inquiry into “recognition,” in order to better understand the work of machine vision in an age of technological recognition and, specifically, the figure of the speech portrait.

**Dr. Aleksandra Kaminska** is Assistant Professor in Media Studies at the Université de Montréal, Canada. Her current projects centre on the material aspects of identification, authentication, and recognition. She is currently writing a book on the history of security printing and is co-editing a special journal issue of *PUBLIC: Art/Culture/Ideas* on the theme ‘Biometrics: Mediating Bodies’ (Winter 2019).

## PETRA, ALEXA, AND THE NON-HUMAN PROBLEM OF SPEECH

**Dr. Daniel Rourke**

How is the figure of the ‘other’ – whether a colonised subject, or a person subjugated because of their gender, sexuality, ethnicity or otherwise – to be approached (or re-approached) in light of the contemporary rise of big data and its AI assisted integration? This paper will approach this question through three interlinked case studies, which come together to ‘refigure’ their central characters into an original assemblage. Using a particular scene from the novel *Robinson Crusoe*, where Robinson mocks his companion Friday’s speech by comparing him to his parrot, the paper will ask difficult questions about the power of language in its colonial historical, and soon to be colonised AI assisted future. Read alongside the scene from Daniel Defoe’s novel, I will follow ‘the parrot’ through a

**Dr. Daniel Rourke** is lecturer and co-convenor of the MA in Digital Media, based in the department of Media, Communications and Cultural Studies, Goldsmiths. In his art practice and academic work, Daniel creates collaborative frameworks and theoretical toolsets for exploring the intersections of digital materiality, the arts, and (critical) post-humanism. These frameworks often hinge on speculative elements taken

from fiction and pop culture: figures and fabulations that might offer a glimpse of a radical 'outside' to the human(ities). His PhD – *The Practice of Posthumanism* – mobilised a series of speculative figures to investigate arenas under which the self-effacement and subsequent renewal of humanism as post-humanism is taking place. His writing, lecturing, and artistic profile is extensive, including work with Arebyte Gallery (London), PICNIC Brasil (Rio), Photographer's Gallery (London), Walk&Talk Azores (São Miguel), AND Festival (Manchester), The V&A (London), Centre Pompidou (Paris), Transmediale (Berlin), and The Tate Modern (London).

natural and colonial heritage, leading into an analysis of a particular YouTube sensation: Petra the African Grey. Petra's ascendancy to internet stardom came off the back of her strange, smart, and very funny relationship with Amazon AI assistant, Alexa. The analogical relationship between the voice of her human owner, Petra's 'parroting' imitation voice, and the 'ear' of the Alexa machine learning system – merely the outward mechanism of interaction with Amazon's enormous data assemblage – opens onto a fascinating set of questions about a world burgeoning with skeuomorphic AI interfaces. How can the figure of the parrot, in its hybrid relationship with Alexa, help us better comprehend the power AI and Amazon have over human speech? How can a return to the figure Friday, from Defoe's novel, help us unpack the problematic imperialist principles embedded within big data, and caught up in the spoken interfaces we use to access them (and they use to access us)? And how can Robinson Crusoe's cruel othering of Friday open a door onto a series of posthuman problems still waiting to be decolonised beyond the parrot and AI assistant?

#### DAY 2, PSH 305, 15:15 – FIGURING DATA/JUSTICE

## TOP-TO-TOE: OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND COUNTER-FIGURATIONS

Sylvia McKelvie

**Sylvia McKelvie** is an interdisciplinary researcher and sociologist currently based in southeast London. At present she is leading a study evaluating the provision of acute care after sexual assault. Much of Sylvia's previous research is informed by ethnographic, historical and arts-based methodologies. Her areas of interest include health inequalities, critical legal theory, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality. Sylvia holds a BA from the University of British Columbia and an MSc from the LSE.

As Lynn Higgins and Brenda Silver suggest in *Rape and Representation*, the figuring of sexual assault and abuse is inseparable "from questions of subjectivity, authority, meaning, power and voice." This paper expands on feminist literary scholarship, asking how the interrelation of data and sexual violence informs figurations of victimhood. Under the guise of judicial process, data collection, which includes post-assault physical findings and personal mobile devices, is routine for police and prosecution services. Sexual violence is also a statistical minefield, wherein high rates of gendered victimization are diluted by low rates of convictions. By examining the philosophical and empirical dimensions of sexual assault and data, I reveal two important areas of inquiry: 1) forensic medical examinations and evidentiary procedures and 2) the trial of personal data and acts of resistance.

Inspired by Claudia Castañeda's definition of figuration as simultaneous "semiotic and material practices," I firstly discuss forensic medication examinations (FMEs) and their role in the figuring of the patient-victim. I show that the medicalization of reporting sexual assaults renders survivor's bodies responsible

for evidencing violence -- an act of figuration itself. Despite a vast backlog of rape kits and growing victim databases, our current models of justice continue to rely on a body of evidence or bodies as evidence. Secondly, I explore figuration and our "imaginary bubbles of privacy," as articulated by Wendy Hui Kyong Chun and Sarah Friedland. I analyse how personal data collection by prosecutorial services is likened to a form of sexual assault. Drawing on critical race and postcolonial scholars like Sherene Razack and Estelle Freedman, I demonstrate how this practice contributes to the social reproduction of gendered and racialized violence. I close with the possibilities of counterfigurations. As survivor activism reveals, such as recent demonstrations outside CPS headquarters, data can also be a means to destabilise dominant moral constitutions of person(s).

## FORENSIC APOPHENIA: PROBLEMS WITH MAKING INDIVIDUALS AND MAKING SENSE IN THE BIOINFORMATION ARCHIVE

Dr. EJ Gonzalez-Polledo, Dr. Silvia Posocco

This article draws on intersecting debates on archives, infrastructures and ethics in anthropology to analyse problems with making individuals and making sense in the 'bioinformational turn' in forensic science. Focusing on transformations in forensic science provision in England and Wales, the article reflects on how bioinformation enables resonances and truth claims that interrogate positivist projections of forensic science and practice. The article frames frictions between ways of making knowledge in scientific cultures, law enforcement, and a legal system that aims to create facts and certainty, against a concern with process, context and technological make-believe against which individuals are constituted as distinct entities in forensic practice. By analysing infrastructural transformations underpinning forensic provision, we conceptualise forensic apophenia as a propensity toward complexity and a capacity to respond to connections and resonances between multiple registers, infrastructures and forms of data, which is at risk in the erosion of forensic provision as a public service.

**Dr. EJ Gonzalez-Polledo** is Senior Lecturer in the Anthropology Department at Goldsmiths, University of London, UK. Gonzalez-Polledo's research interests encompass gender and social theory; the biosciences; and digital infrastructures. Gonzalez-Polledo is currently developing two major research projects on biology and biohacking, and forensic bioinformation.

**Dr. Silvia Posocco** is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Psychosocial Studies, Birkbeck, University of London, UK. Posocco's research focuses on gender, sexuality, violence, life and death. Current projects include a monograph on transnational adoptions circuits in the aftermath of war in Guatemala and new research on forensic biorepositories, bioinformation and evidence.

# FIGURING PERSONS AS LIARS OR TRUTH-TELLERS: EMERGING VARIATIONS ON POLYGRAPHS, INTEGRITY SCORES, AND INVASIVE TRUTH EXTRACTION

**Professor Jo Ann Oravec**

**Jo Ann Oravec** is a full professor in the College of Business and Economics at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater in the Department of Information Technology and Supply Chain Management; she is also affiliated with the Robert F. and Jean E. Holtz Center for Science, Technology, & Society Studies, University of Wisconsin at Madison. She has written books (including *Virtual Individuals, Virtual Groups: Human Dimensions of Groupware and Computer Networking*, Cambridge University Press) and dozens of articles on futurism, film, artificial intelligence, disability, mental health, technological design, privacy, computing technology, management, and public policy issues.

The speech acts of “lying” or “telling the truth” are often characterized as having significant religious, ethical, and practical importance, even though the basic notions of honesty can be complex and hard to convey (especially to children). This presentation explores the ethical and social aspects of research agendas and technological development perspectives that foster the development of lie detection technologies, with an emphasis on those that use big data and artificial intelligence (AI) approaches. The process of lie detection is often construed as “use of a physiological measurement apparatus with the explicit aim of identifying when someone is lying. This typically comes with specific protocols for questioning the subject, and the output is graphically represented” (Bergers, 2018). Some emerging forms of lie detection technologies incorporate the remote collection of data without notification of subjects as well as contain various AI- and machine learning-assisted analyses. Some initiatives take invasive approaches that include brain scanning and/or electrical brain modification (Darby & Pascual-Leone, 2017; Maréchal, Cohn, Ugazio, & Ruff, 2017). Accumulation of “integrity scores” or other ways of profiling individuals over time in terms of their propensity to lie is sometimes a part of the strategies (Oravec, 2018). As discussed in this presentation, applications of the algorithms and methods involved may have particularly negative outcomes for individuals whose cultural and demographic backgrounds inspire them to frame truth telling in ways that vary from the researchers’ and implementers’ assumptions; since these lie detection technologies are often used in wartime and international border crossing contexts, such cultural differences can be especially problematic.

Although many polygraph and lie detection approaches are indeed restricted in use in various contexts, an assortment of new technologies that are labeled as “lie” or “cheating” detection have emerged that are being used with fewer restrictions (Greenberg, 2019). This presentation critically examines the appropriateness of this framing as well as explores the potential dangers it involves for children whose basic notions of honesty are just being formed. For example, in the realm of children and young people, voice- and

keyboard-mediated lie detection can be introduced in toys and games (Stein, 2019) as well as everyday educational contexts, framing truthfulness issues in problematic ways that may affect character development. Researchers are also introducing brain scanning as a way to detect lies and identify forms of mental concentration; the notion of “self-lie detection” has been investigated by researchers, with the projected potential for increasing personal insight about truthfulness through technological means (Echarte, 2019). This presentation projects future technological developments and outlines the continuing need for ethical and professional vigilance on the part of researchers and system developers as they choose projects to work on and technologies to bring to market.

The significance of truth telling in everyday life is expanding as societal attention to truth and falsity issues as well as social conformity increases. Many individuals have had early introductions to truth telling with fables such as Pinocchio and artifacts including “elf on the shelf” (Pinto & Nemorin, 2015; Talwar et al., 2018). Research and development efforts on educational cheating and deception have also gained new dimensions in the advent of big data capabilities, and some of the resultant initiatives are in use today in classroom settings despite the fact that they are in the early stages of testing and evaluation. Deception-related behaviors have been construed as a continuing and somewhat vexing issue for many kinds of institutions as administrators increasingly impose metrics on evaluation processes and as greater shares of human interaction go online, so further investments in the development and use of lie detection systems are likely.

## DAY 2, PSH 326, 15:15 — PERSONIFICATION

# ‘PEOPLE LIKE YOU’: FIGURES OF SPEECH IN AN ERA OF PERSONALISATION

**Professor Celia Lury**

In this paper, I consider slogans such as ‘Not in our name’, and the hashtags ‘Je suis Charlie’, and ‘MeToo’. In all cases, the focus of analytical concern is a personal pronoun – ‘our’, ‘je’, ‘me’ and ‘you’, and in all cases the analysis addresses the personhood such figures of speech occasion. It is suggested that what matters is whether participating in a speech event necessarily means you are a part of the event. The disjunction between the two - participating in/being part of - is identified as a characteristic of practices of personalisation and raises issues of social and political inclusion and exclusion, as well as challenging our ideas of truth.

**Celia Lury** is a Professor in the Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies at the University of Warwick.

# METAPHORS OF VISIBILITY: RHETORICAL PRACTICES IN THE NORMALIZATION OF INDIVIDUAL ONLINE IMAGE MANAGEMENT

**Dr. Nora A. Draper**

**Dr. Nora A. Draper** is an Assistant Professor of Communication at the University of New Hampshire. Nora's research examines the political economic and sociocultural dimensions of media and technology industries. She is the author of *The Identity Trade: Selling Privacy and Reputation Online* (NYU Press, 2019) in which she examines how the companies across the consumer privacy industry have responded to and shaped public concerns regarding identity, reputation, and surveillance through the promotion and sale of tools to enhance personal privacy online. Her recent work has been published in the *International Journal of Communication*, *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, the *Journal of Broadcast & Electronic Media*, *Media Industries, Policy & Internet*, *Feminist Media Studies*, and *Surveillance & Society*.

Online image management has become a routine component of contemporary self-presentation. The application of commercial logics regarding publicity to identity performance – a practice generally known as self-branding (Hearn, 2008) – blurs the boundaries between personal and professional identities (Duffy, 2017). Concerns about being overexposed are balanced against the dangers of being invisible in a social environment that prizes visibility (Banet-Weiser, 2012; Bucher, 2012). Commercial intermediaries that sell online reputation management services create a tension that pairs the inevitability of digital visibility with the urgency of image management (Draper, 2019). This paper explores how industry efforts to sell image management as a universally necessary consumer service draw on metaphors – including digital tattoo, digital footprint, and digital doppelgänger – to foster anxieties about how our digital identities will be constructed, encountered, and interpreted. Metaphors provide an avenue for engaging with the new and complex through reference to the familiar and understood (Stark and Hoffman, 2019). Inquiries into the use of metaphors for technical concepts have observed the absence of human actors in rhetorical strategies that, for example, identify data as a natural resource or storage as a cloud (Hwang and Levy, 2015; Watson, n.d.). Conversely, the metaphors I examine here offer a sense of embodiment that links the physical and virtual worlds. In so doing, they present privacy risks that cannot be solved by invisibility, instead demanding a form of strategic transparency that balances the risks and rewards of publicity. Ultimately, this paper considers how concepts such as transparency and publicity – those traditionally as beneficial when dealing with institutions – operate when applied to individuals and the formation of social identities.

# DATA PERSONIFICATION? ON THE (CON)FIGURATION OF SPECULATIVE PERSONS IN, THROUGH AND WITH DATA

**Dr. Jonathan Gray, Dr. Liliana Bounegru, Dr. Ganaele Langlois,  
Dr. Esther Weltevrede**

Historical and social studies of statistics suggest the role of quantification in “making people up” (as Hacking memorably phrases it). Recent research attends to how changing data practices – from big data to sensing devices to machine learning – may be implicated in attempts to re-articulate social life with non-traditional categories and schemes using natively digital transactional data. This paper examines and conceptualises a range of data practices which are used to articulate not just collective “data people”, but also speculative “data persons”. In particular it draws on three cases to explore the (con)figuration of such speculative persons in, through and with data: (i) transnational prototypes and experiments with data infrastructures for “beneficial ownership” surfacing different legal and economic definitions of “personhood” and ways of making persons intelligible in data in the context of tax justice and anti-corruption campaigning; (ii) the computational materialisation of personal and personalised profiles based on web and social media activity accomplished through data; and (iii) the development and testing of personas and configuration of users invited to make sense with data. Drawing on these cases, we present ongoing work on “research personas” employing a combination of digital, ethnographic and fictional methodologies. The paper thus contributes to the empirically informed conceptualisation and theorisation of practices of data personification as a site for both researching frictions, tensions and controversies as well as staging encounters and interventions between digital data infrastructures and what activists describe as “living, breathing human beings”.

**Dr. Jonathan Gray** is Lecturer in Critical Infrastructure Studies at the Department of Digital Humanities, King’s College London, where he is currently writing a book on data worlds. He is also Co-founder of the Public Data Lab; and Research Associate at the Digital Methods Initiative (University of Amsterdam) and the médialab (Sciences Po, Paris).

**Dr. Liliana Bounegru** is Lecturer in Digital Methods at the Department of Digital Humanities, King’s College London. She is also co-founder of the Public Data Lab and affiliated with the Digital Methods Initiative in Amsterdam and the médialab (Sciences Po, Paris)

**Dr. Ganaele Langlois** is Associate Professor in the Department of Communication Studies at York University (Toronto, Canada). Her work focuses on digital methods and critical theory to examine questions of power and subjectivity through digital media platforms and infrastructures. She is the author of *Meaning in the Age of Social Media* (Palgrave, 2014).

# PEOPLE LIKE YOU

This conference is the mid-project event for the 'People Like You: Contemporary Figures of Personalisation' project.

Personalisation is changing many parts of contemporary life, from the way we shop and communicate to the kinds of public services we access. We are told that purchases, experiences, treatments, and interactions can all be customised to an optimum. As a group of scientists, sociologists, anthropologists and artists, we are exploring how personalisation actually works. What are optimum outcomes? Do personalising practices have unintended consequences? We argue that personalisation is not restricted to a single area of life and that personalised practices develop, interact and move between different sites and times. The project is split into four areas: personalised medicine and care; data science; digital cultures; interactive arts practices.

This conference has been organised by the project's digital culture spine, lead by Professor Celia Lury and assisted by Dr. Scott Wark, who are based at the University of Warwick's Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies, with contributions and assistance from the whole team.

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