

Ambient Play: Digital creativity, play and labour in everyday life

SUMMARY OF ABSTRACTS

WIRELESS LEASH?: CHANGING WORK PRACTICES

Free to connect: wifi and the spatial reconfiguration of work

Ursula Huws

The focus of this paper is on wifi hotspots and how their use by the laptop generation spatially reconfigures the relationship between social and work activities. A number of social and economic trends (the casualisation of employment, the high cost of housing, the 'boomerang generation' still living with their parents) have converged to create a new spatial landscape in which work is increasingly carried out in 'social' spaces such as cafes, bars, parks and airports. This creates new tensions between the need for privacy and focus on the one hand and conviviality on the other, mirroring in real space the interpenetration of income-generating work, consumption work, play and emotional labour that takes place online, as well as obfuscating the ways in which economic relationships impact lived daily experience at the bodily level. The paper explores the way that traditional perceptions of what constitutes the 'free' are challenged by these developments, whether this refers to free access to the internet, free labour or social freedom and asks how these freedoms are paid for.

Ursula Huws is Professor of Labour and Globalisation at University of Hertfordshire. She is also the editor of *Work Organisation, Labour and Globalisation*. Ursula Huws has carried out extensive research over four decades on the economic and social impacts of technological change. She has authored many research reports for international and national government bodies as well as writing and editing books and articles aimed at scholarly and popular audiences. Her work has appeared in translation in a number of languages including Chinese, Swedish, German, French, Italian, Greek, Hungarian, Danish, Portuguese, Turkish, Spanish, Hindi, Japanese, Korean and Serbo-Croat. She is currently Chair of COST Action IS 1202, the Dynamics of Virtual Work. Her latest book is *Labor in the Global Digital Economy: the Cybertariat Comes of Age* (Monthly Review Press, New York, 2014).

Reconceptualising professional learning within emergent digitally-mediated work practices

Anoush Margaryan

Contemporary work practices require new forms of professional learning that align with the new spatial and temporal reconfigurations of workplaces, new work cultures, new networks of knowledge, and new requirements pertaining to the development and use of digital technologies. Conventional forms of professional learning such as formal training enable large numbers of people to reach a specific level of competency;

however these forms of learning are unlikely to meet the learning needs of people in these new work contexts. Established forms of professional learning have largely not taken advantages of the opportunities around how people collaborate to learn, emergent knowledge networks, multiple ways in which people and knowledge resources can be brought together to enhance learning, and how digital technologies can extend access to these learning opportunities and resources. A fundamental rethink of how professional learning aligns with current trends in work, technology and society is required.

In this presentation, I will discuss key implications of digital reinstrumentation and the emergent work practices for professional learning. Drawing on four concepts from learning sciences, sociology of work and technology-enhanced learning – self-regulation (Zimmerman, 2006), objectual practice (Knorr-Cetina, 2001), networked learning (Milligan, Littlejohn and Margaryan, 2014) and charting (Littlejohn, Milligan, and Margaryan, 2012) – I will outline some ways in which learning within emergent digitally-mediated work practices may be reconceptualised and fostered.

Dr Anoush Margaryan is a Senior Lecturer and Acting Director of the Caledonian Academy, a research centre for technology-enhanced professional learning she co-founded at Glasgow Caledonian University in 2006. Her research is focused on understanding how people learn in contemporary digitally-mediated, knowledge-intensive workplaces. Anoush has led over 20 collaborative research projects funded by the UK Economic and Social Sciences Research Council, Scottish Founding Council, Shell, BP, Energy Institute, World Bank, UK Joint Information Systems Committee and the Higher Education Academy. Prior to joining Glasgow Caledonian, she was a Research Fellow and an Associate Director at the Centre for Research on Learning at University of Dundee; held research fellowships and visiting lectureship posts at University of Twente in the Netherlands and the European Business School in Germany, and worked as a Research Analyst at Shell Learning and Leadership Development in the Netherlands. Anoush has over 100 publications in technology-enhanced professional learning including two books.

PRACTICES OF AMBIENCE AND AFFECT

Two Examples of Affective Portable Urbanism enacted in Mobile Media Practices: Disruptive Ambient Music and Digital Self-Portraits

Amparo Lasén

The growing presence and uses of digital mobile devices mediate people's relationships with their urban environment, the others and themselves, producing multimedia digital inscriptions of places, bodies, affects, emotions and feelings, as well as contributing to the shaping of localities, affectivity and selves. These digital practices play a main role in the enactment of the urban mood and ambiance, where the online and the urban are intertwined in forms that can be called "portable urbanism". A complex articulation between mobility and attachment emerges: an increasing mobility, not only spatial, but also mobility of thoughts, ideas and feelings, whereas people's uses and social practices of mobile media reveal how they contribute to develop different kind of attachments, to the devices, to the applications, to other people, and to particular online and offline places, in emergent forms of intimacy and public intimacy as well. These aspects will be discussed in two different empirical examples from research carried out in Madrid: the use of mobile phones as portable sound systems and the taking and sharing of

selfies. Digital inscriptions produced in these interactions, in a plurality of forms involving images, texts and sounds, help us to trace territorialisation dynamics and the controversies and power relations mobilised in such practices, connecting contemporary subjectivation processes and affectivity re-mediated by mobile technologies, with the shaping and transformation of urban practices and places as well. As mobile media contribute to shape those spaces and their particular mood through the way we perform, negotiate and share our territories and modulate our presence.

Amparo Lasén, holds a Ph.D. from the University Paris V-La Sorbonne. She is Professor of Sociology at the University Complutense de Madrid. Her research focuses on the social implications of the usages, practices and presence of ICT especially in relationship with affectivity, the configuration of contemporary subjectivities and intimacies, and everyday life. Prior to her current position, she was the Vodafone Surrey Scholar at the DWRC of Surrey University, where she conducted cross-cultural research on mobile phone uses and practices. She has been academic visitor at the Department of Sociology of the LSE and researcher of the CEAQ (Centre d'Études de l'Actuel et du Quotidien) Paris V-La Sorbonne. A list of her publications is available at <http://ucm.academia.edu/AmparoLasén>

Locating the Mobile: Ambient Play

Larissa Hjorth, Sarah Pink and Heather Horst

Contemporary media has been characterized as 'playful' (Sicart 2014). And yet notions of playful are contested across cultural and generational divides. In this paper seeks to utilize the notion of ambient play to think through the complex entanglement between play and creative/emotional labour. Through the lens of ambient play and intimate co-presence we seek to explore how media moves in and out of the rhythms of everyday life. Drawing upon a case study of 12 households in Australia—as part of a broader three-year ARC comparative study between Melbourne, Shanghai and Tokyo—we explore how ambient play might be conceptualized across intergenerational relationships. We argue that ambient play allows for a nuanced understanding of play and playbour beyond work/leisure binaries.

Playful subversions: small children and tablet use

Susana Tosca and Isabel Fróes

Drawing on data from empirical studies with small children (5-8 year olds) using tablets for play and in educational settings, we explore the way they resist and subvert the expected use of the various applications, in order to invent their own forms of interactions. They creatively reshape affordances in various ways, appropriating technology through their language (how they talk about the platforms, the apps and the interactions), through social collaboration, and procedural interaction. We analyze instances of these three kinds of appropriations and investigate their motivations and the inherent pleasures of playful tinkering.

GENDERED AGENDAS

The importance of being human: the paradoxical reproduction of the gendered self in mobile, digital work

Juliet Webster

Social reproduction – the harnessing of the self and of social relations in the service of value creation - has stealthily entered the sphere of productive labour with the growth of virtual work, to the extent that it has now become an essential aspect of almost all forms of digital labour, mobile and otherwise. Classically recruiting class and gendered identities, social reproduction in virtual work takes many forms, including affective and performative labour, and self quantification. This paper explores these forms of social reproduction, and the apparent paradox that they often mask real gender and class relations – for example, upbeat confidence and flexibility may be projected by the most precarious of workers in order to communicate their employability. The paper also explores the question of whether the commodification of the personal signals new, and possibly democratic, forms of creativity, or whether it simply represents people handing over their private and emotional lives to the larger cause of capitalist productivity.

Juliet Webster is an advisor to the Gender and ICT Group at the Internet Interdisciplinary Institute, Open University of Catalonia, and was formerly the Director of this Group. Her research currently focuses on the gender dynamics of digital and virtual work, and she is the leader of the Working Group on Creativity, Skills, Knowledge and New Occupational Identities in the EU COST Action ‘The Dynamics of Virtual Work’. She is the author of several books on gender and information technology, including *Género, ciencia y tecnologías de la información* (2014, with Cecilia Castaño), *The Information Society in Europe* (2000, with Ken Ducatel and Werner Herrmann), and *Shaping Women’s Work: Gender, Employment and Information Technology* (1996).

Beauty surveillance: the digital self-monitoring cultures of postfeminism

Ana-Sofia Elias (1), Ngairé Donaghue(2) and Rosalind Gill(3)

This paper brings into dialogue two bodies of contemporary scholarship – one concerned with the nature and pervasiveness of a postfeminist and neoliberal sensibility in contemporary culture (e.g. Gill, 2007; Tasker & Negra, 2007; McRobbie, 2009), and the other focused on the proliferation of processes of self-tracking in the digital age, which are increasingly understood as giving rise to a ‘quantified self’ (Lupton, 2014). There are a number of productive parallels in these bodies of work, both of which are deeply informed by Foucaultian ideas. Both share an emphasis upon ideas of the personal responsibility and moral accountability of the subject for his or her body or biography; both emphasise the simultaneously pleasurable/playful and disciplinary aspects of self-monitoring; both are built around entrepreneurial modes of selfhood centred on labour, measurement, comparison and (self) transformation; and both are imbricated in relations of ever more intensive and extensive surveillance of the self and others.

In this paper, we examine the intersection of digital self-monitoring with postfeminist beauty culture. Our focus is upon what could be understood as ‘aesthetic self-tracking devices’ concerned with the face, body size or weight, and (anti)ageing. We argue that

in these beauty apps the rationality of relentness and reflexive self-monitoring works not just alongside, but in and through, a distinctively postfeminist ethic.

Ana Sofia Elias is a PhD student at King's College London researching questions to do with embodied subjectivity in postfeminist culture. She recently published an article about "Love your body" discourses (*International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*, 2014) and is co-editor of *Aesthetic Labour: Rethinking Beauty Politics in Neoliberalism*, with Rosalind Gill and Christina Scharff, Palgrave 2016.

Ngairé Donaghue is an Associate Professor in the Social and Political Psychology Research Group at Murdoch University in Western Australia. Her research centres on ideological aspects of gender and subjectivity, with a particular focus on critical feminist understandings of body dissatisfaction and beauty practices.

Rosalind Gill is Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis at City University London. She is currently writing a book about *Mediated Intimacy: Sex Advice in Media Culture* (Polity, 2015, with Meg John Barker and Laura Harvey) and editing a collection about 'aesthetic labour' (Palgrave, 2016, with Ana Sofia Elias and Christina Scharff).

Gender transitions in the Greek gaming community

Nelli Kambouri and Martha Michailidou

The paper discusses gender relations in the Greek gaming community, focusing on the story and perspective of a trans lesbian woman gamer. More specifically, the paper is an attempt to develop an understanding of gendered discourses and hierarchies that prevail in this community, focusing on the contestations regarding Gamergate within the community, but also to address how normalized gender roles and fixed identities are being challenged through gaming.

Nelli Kambouri is a senior research fellow at the Centre for Gender Studies of Panteion University in Athens, Greece. Her publications in Greek and English focus mainly on gender, migration and social movements.

Martha Michaelidou is a lecturer in the Department of Communication, Media and Culture at Panteion University in Athens, Greece. Her research and teaching interests include multimethodological approaches to media and cultural research, emergent and digital methods, the empirical and methodological consequences of the transition from analog to digital media, gender and media, and the creative industries.

QUALIFYING THE QUANTIFIED SELF

Women, Zombies, Running: Interrupting Vulnerability in Public Space with Instagram.

Emma Witkowski

In this study of running with the mobile game and audio adventure app – *Zombies, Run!*, the presentation and perception of women's vulnerability in public space is explored. Through qualitative methods including autophenomenology, observations, interviews and secondary document analysis on Instagram related zombies run hashtags, considerations on women's participation and experience of public running

space is discussed. With this running app in hand, runners voice a deepened awareness of their running locations, and visually represent their pleasures in moving into “unknown territory”, often found within their own local environments – eerie pathways, quiet fields, uninhabited terrain: Terrains which are otherwise broadcast as risky for women to explore alone. Women running with zombies, and posting their representations to Instagram, offer other kinds of embodied perceptions on being in the world and in public space which toy with the notion of adventure rather than being discouraged by positions of vulnerability. Running with zombies is a playful movement practice inciting new feelings and distinctions of body and locality, and offers a lens to consider prevailing cultural structures surrounding “woman’s bodies” running in public.

Emma Witkowski is a Lecturer at RMIT University (Melbourne) and Program Manager of the Bachelor of Games Design Program. She earned her PhD in Game Studies from the IT University of Copenhagen in 2012, taking a phenomenologically inspired sociological approach to the study of high performance team play in networked computer games. She contributes to the Digital Ethnography Research Centre by running the Media Methods node and her most recent research explores the production of masculinities in e-sports, women and game broadcasting, and running with mobile gaming/fitness technologies.

Wearable apps, wearable maps: Smart-watches as mobile playthings

Sybille Lammes and Clancy Wilmott

In this article I will use an auto-ethnographic account of my use of the Apple Watch to analyse a new type of ludic labour that has emerged in recent years. GPS enabled smart-watches and smart-bands invite us to redefine our quotidian environments as laborious playgrounds where leisure activities are redefined in terms of work and quantifiable data. Furthermore they encourage us to share such hybrid practices as spatial stories through social media, thus propagating them as lifestyle. Running is for example translated into a quantifiable track that we can then present to others, merging sports (as play) and work in a single narrative. Not only do such wearable mobile devices offer opportunities to merge mobile play and work and show it to others, they do so through a new kind of cartographical interface. Watches around our arms or devices attached to our lapel are material things that hybridize our physical movements through spaces in performative and processual ways (Thrift 2008) and shape our “spatial self” (Schwartz and Halegoua, 2014).

Building on my earlier work that showed how digital cartographical interfaces are specific kinds of immutable mobiles, processing information from an assemblage of different things (e.g. satellites, cars, speed cameras), I will now ask how the Apple Watch can be further analysed (Latour 1997) while acknowledging its material, hybrid and playful status. For this purpose, this article will approach the Apple Watch as a “play-thing” (Sutton-Smith 2001) and “fluid” object (Laet & Mol 2000). To develop my argument I will combine perspectives from STS, media studies, urban studies and play studies, as well as incorporating literature about the “quantified self” and the “Internet of things”.

Sybille Lammes is associate professor at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies at the University of Warwick. She has been a visiting Senior Research Fellow at The University of Manchester, and has worked at Utrecht University and the

University of Amsterdam. Her background is in media-studies, which she has always approached from an interdisciplinary angle, including cultural studies, science and technology studies, and critical geography. She is co-editor of *Playful Identities* (2015, in print), *The Playful Citizen* (2016 fc.) and *The Routledge Handbook of Interdisciplinary Research Methods* (2016 fc.). She is currently the principal investigator of the ERC project Charting the Digital, examining how and to what extent digital mapping has altered meanings of media and cartography in daily life.

Changing the City One Day at a Time: Making 100 Opportunities for Play in Valparaiso

Felipe Arenas Bahamondes, Claudio Fredes Osses, Leonardo Parra-Agudelo, Jaz Hee-jeong Choi

Throughout history, public spaces have been contested sites for democracy and citizenship. In Chile, there has been a rise in a much more active type of citizenship that makes intensive use of local public spaces. This paper provides an insight into 100 en 1 día Valparaiso (100 in 1 day), an annual urban festival that invites local community members of Valparaiso, Chile, to create, deploy, and share a total of 100 urban interventions across the city in one day. The paper investigates the event as a collective urban play experience for the participants and visitors to explore new ways of inhabiting and re-creating the city. Specifically, the paper presents 14 interventions from the first iteration of the festival in 2014 as a set of exemplars; their strengths and shortcomings in achieving this goal are discussed in the specific social and cultural context of Valparaiso.