

Call for Papers

**Workshop: Media Ethnography – Where Is the Action?
Cooperative Media Practices in Ethnographic Fieldwork**

Collaborative Research Centre (CRC) “Media of Cooperation”, Siegen University
April 19–20, AH-217/218, Herrengarten (CRC only)
June 14–15, Conference Room, Museum für Gegenwartskunst

Research practices are based on and produce distinct forms of cooperation and media. Researchers cooperate with materiality, with each other and with individuals who participate in the research and supply relevant information – e.g. by being observed, by being questioned or by giving tissue samples. While cooperating, researchers necessarily draw on a number of media that are present in their own field, in their research fields and in everyday life – e.g. language, signage, notebooks, documents, protocols, digital traces, pictures, films. Furthermore, researchers create media of their own: such as fieldnotes, indexes, audio and video recordings, slides, texts etc.

This is particularly true for media ethnography (Bender/Zillinger 2015). Media ethnography focuses on the collective and cooperative production and use of media *in situ*. In this perspective, social activities and their media are co-constitutive. The research itself is highly dependent on the cooperation with informants and individuals in the field and draws heavily on already present media. At the same time, research itself constitutes a certain form of cooperation mediated by techniques, artefacts and routines. In constant dialogue, through the juxtaposition of concepts and by engaging in situated practices, it is mutually made and mutually shown to each other what is relevant and meaningful. The data produced during research are thus produced cooperatively, but not without potential conflicts. Once the researcher has left the field, he or she depends on various media and forms of cooperation within the scientific community to analyse and eventually publish the results.

Classic studies of scientific practices have focused on the hard sciences (Latour, Knorr Cetina, Lynch, Heintz, Star etc.). So far, there is little systematic research of the research processes of qualitative social research and media studies. However, there is an ongoing reflection concerning the “poetics and politics” (Clifford/Marcus 1986), the ethics and epistemology of ethnographic methods within the fields of anthropology (e.g. Lave 2011) and sociology (e.g. Hitzler/Gothe 2015) as well as a growing interest in studying doing sociology (Meyer/Meier zu Verl 2013, Engert/Krey 2013, Schindler 2017). Further, the status of ethnographic participation and observation in digitally networked media has been discussed as digital ethnography (Pink et al. 2016), virtual ethnography (Hine 2000), webnography (Strübing 2006), ethnographic research in a pluri-local and computer-mediated field (Greschke 2007), and netnography (Kozinets 2015). Also, attention has been paid to the status and role of cameras and visual data (e.g. Mohn 2013, Schindler 2012, Hoggenmüller 2016, Meyer 2015) in ethnographic methods.

In this vein, our two workshops aim at analysing the ways cooperative media and mediated cooperation are produced in media ethnography; we suggest to discuss the research focus of the Siegen Collaborative Research Centre – media of cooperation as ongoing mutual accomplishments – in relation to our own everyday research practices. Which kinds of cooperative media and mediated cooperation are used and created in participant observation and connected forms of research methodologies? How do media used in the field relate to the various media of research? How to deal with conflict, friendship, collaboration, bodies as media of cooperation, and the multiplication of situations via screens and their mediations as text, (recorded) sounds and (moving) images – in relation to on- and offline practicalities of doing research? How do these practices of cooperation inform our understanding of the fields and objects of study and lead to theorisation?

The workshop in April is for CRC members only. For the workshop in June, one-page abstracts for presentations or working papers should be sent to medienethnographie-sfb1187@listserv.uni-siegen.de. Deadline is May 6, 2018. English and German language entries are accepted.

Organisers: Clemens Eisenmann, Inka Fürtig, Simon Holdermann, David Waldecker.

References

- Bender, C. and M. Zillinger (2015) 'Medienethnographie: Praxis und Methode', in Bender, C. and Zillinger, M. (eds), *Handbuch der Medienethnographie*. Berlin: Reimer, pp. XI–LII.
- Clifford, J. and G.E. Marcus (eds) (1986) *Writing Culture. The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Greschke, Heike (2007): 'Bin ich drin? – Methodologische Reflektionen zur ethnografischen Forschung in einem plurilokalen, computervermittelten Feld.' *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 8 (3), Art. 32.
- Hoggenmüller, Sebastian W. (2016): Die Welt im (Außen-)Blick. Überlegungen zu einer ästhetischen Re|Konstruktionsanalyse am Beispiel der Weltraumfotografie 'Blue Marble', in: *Zeitschrift für qualitative Forschung* 17 (1+2), pp. 11–40.
- Hine, C. (2000) *Virtual Ethnography*. London: Sage.
- Hitzler, R. and M. Gothe (eds) (2015) *Ethnographische Erkundungen. Methodische Aspekte aktueller Forschungsprojekte*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.
- Engert, Kornelia & Krey, Björn (2013): 'Das lesende Schreiben und das schreibende Lesen. Zur epistemischen Arbeit an und mit wissenschaftlichen Texten.' *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 42 (5), pp. 366–384.
- Kozinets, R.V. (2015) *Netnography: Redefined*. London: Sage.
- Lave, J. (2011) *Apprenticeship in Critical Ethnographic Practice*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Meyer, Christian (2015): 'Mikroethnographie: Praxis und Leib als Medien der Kultur.' In: Bender, C. and Zillinger M. (eds): *Handbuch Medienethnographie*. Berlin: Reimer.
- Meyer, Christian and Meier zu Verl, Christian (2013): "Hermeneutische Praxis. Eine ethnomethodologische Rekonstruktion sozialwissenschaftlichen Sinnrekonstruierens." *Sozialer Sinn* 14 (2), pp. 207–34.
- Mohn, B. (2013): 'Differenzen zeigender Ethnographie.' *Soziale Welt* (1-2), pp. 171–189.
- Pink, S. et al. (2016) *Digital Ethnography. Principles and Practice*. London: Sage.
- Schindler, Larissa (2012) 'Visuelle Kommunikation und die Ethnomethoden der Ethnographie.' *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 37, pp. 165–183.
- Schindler, Larissa (2018): 'The Ethnomethods of Ethnography: A Trans-situational Approach to the Epistemology of Qualitative Research.' In: *Human Studies* 41 (1), pp. 103–120.
- Strübing, J. (2006): 'Webnografie? Zu den methodischen Voraussetzungen einer ethnografischen Erforschung des Internets' in: Rammert, W. and Schubert, C. (eds): *Technografie. Zur Mikrosoziologie der Technik*. Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, pp. 249–274.