



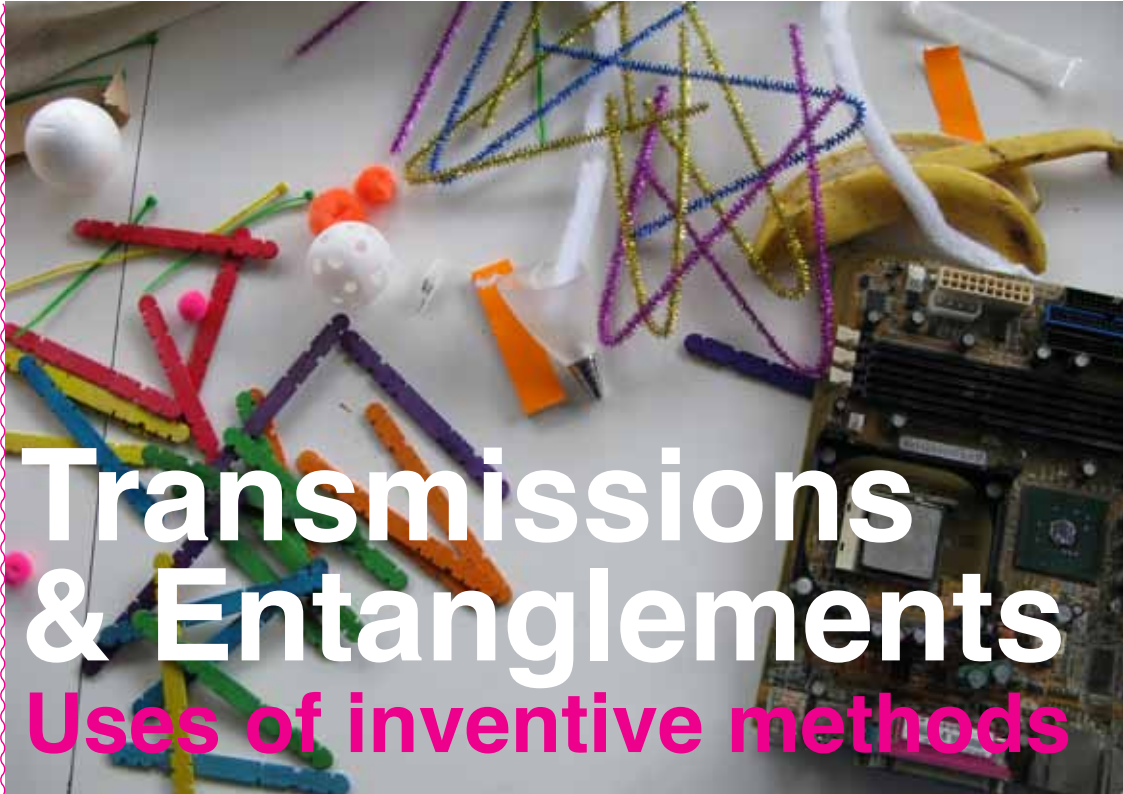
Participants

Christina Agapakis | Postdoctoral Research Fellow | Synthetic biology, UCLA
 Chima Anyadike-Danes | PhD candidate | Cultural Anthropology, UCI
 Tom Boelstorff | Professor of Anthropology | UCI
 Geof Bowker | Professor of Informatics | Information and Computer Science, UCI
 Jed Brubaker | PhD candidate | Informatics, UCI
 Ben Cox | PhD candidate | Cultural Anthropology, UCI
 Paul Dourish | Professor Informatics | Information and Computer Science, UCI
 Mel Gregg | Senior Researcher in Residence | Intel and ISTC, UCI
 Ellie Harmon | PhD Candidate | Informatics, UCI
 Corey Knoebel | Assistant Adjunct Professor | HCI Social Informatics, UCI
 Max Liboiron | Postdoctoral Research Fellow | ISTC, UCI
 Alexandra Lippman | PhD candidate | Cultural Anthropology, UCI
 Victoria Lowerson | PhD candidate | Social Ecology, UCI
 Scott Mainwaring | Senior research scientist | Intel Labs
 Connie McGuire | Postdoctoral Research Fellow | Anthropology, UCI
 Michael Montoya | Associate Professor | Anthropology, UCI
 Dawn Nafus | Anthropologist | Intel Labs
 Taylor Nelms | PhD candidate | Cultural Anthropology, UCI
 Joanne Nucho | PhD candidate | Cultural Anthropology, UCI
 Katie Pine | Postdoctoral Research Fellow | ISTC, UCI
 Beth Reddy | PhD candidate | Cultural Anthropology, UCI
 Nick Seaver | PhD candidate | Cultural Anthropology, UCI
 Leah Zani | PhD candidate | Cultural Anthropology, UCI

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 Lury, C and N. Wakeford. (eds) (2012) *Inventive Methods: The happening of the social*. Routledge, UK
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Transmissions & Entanglements

Uses of inventive methods

Ellie Harmon and Christina Agapakis presented a collaborative piece (anthropology/ synthetic biology) of research on DIRT. They focused on the differences between interdisciplinary languages and how some concepts cannot be exported across disciplinary boundaries without assistance. Collaborative practice requires new ways of not only working but also thinking.

Ben Cox presented his research into piracy in the Indian ocean and insurance practices, with a focus on methods including legal anthropology and archival work. He asked what What is Piracy?, What is counter piracy? He found that the pirates were absent, yet their presence loomed in the context of the 'high seas', media representations and changing insurance policies.



Jed Brubaker's research explores digital identity, social media, and human centered computing. He talked about the methodological challenges of researching death on social media (particular on Facebook), raising the critical issue of representation: social media draws attention not only how we represent ourselves in life but also in death.



Max Liboiron talked about the intersection of art and science and technology practice in relation to her trash based social economy project. She makes installations of found objects (rubbish) and people are invited to take what they see as valuable to them as long as they exchange it with something of perceived value. Max raised issues of contrasting ideas of rigor across disciplinary boundaries.



Joanne Nucho talked about her research into sectarian violence in Lebanon, in an Armenian community, using ethnographic film. She showed clips from her documentary films and discussed how these observational methods combined with interviews enabled a way to develop a sense of space. An insight from this approach for her has been to stop imagining a final product and to engage with what the camera enables.



Nick Seaver presented his work on 'Anthropology and Algorithms'.



Introduction

Transmissions and Entanglements explores inventive methods and modes of knowledge exchange; the critical importance of how we make, share and exchange knowledge with others.

The project emerges from the idea that the popularity of digital technologies has transformed not only the subject matter for many researchers but greatly expanded the possibilities of communicating and circulating findings to new audiences. Yet debate and discussion about the tactics and techniques of translation has lagged behind their widespread use.

Despite pressure to open up access to data, innovative findings are predominantly transformed back into conventional presentational formats (eg conference papers and powerpoint presentations) with far less attention focused on the possibilities of other forms of knowledge transmission.

A key objective is to trace how inventive methods and modes of knowledge transmissions engage researchers and their audiences in new ways, inside and outside traditional research settings. By recognising the shift from digital technologies as subject matter and method to critical transmission tools and sites of knowledge it goes beyond simply including visuals or materials in research outputs, to consider them central to new forms of knowledge. This research zine documents the first of a series of events that fall under this theme.

Key questions:

- + How can we best exploit new digital technologies for maximum research impact?
- + What can we learn from other ways of working?
- + How do we increase the use of new methods?
- + How do we teach/develop interdisciplinary research projects?



Event #1

Transmissions and Entanglements: Uses of inventive methods was held on Monday April 8, 2013 at the School of Information and Computer Science, University of California.

It was first event to launch the larger research project. The initial plan was to hold just one event, but co-ordinating teaching timetables, flights and diaries to get US, UK, EU and Australian speakers and participants together turned out to be challenging. Instead, an alternative emerged - we would host smaller, distributed events.

This first event was designed to bring together Intel, UCI and ISTC (Intel's Science Technology Centre for Social Computing) researchers, faculty and students engaged in interdisciplinary practice involving inventive methods and modes of transmission. The afternoon took the form of two framing talks and response, discussion, followed by a short break and a speed methods session.

Time: 13.00- 17.50
Location: UCI, Donald Bren Hall room #5011

13.00-13.15: Kat Jungnickel – Welcome

13.15-13.45: Nina Wakeford – What is an inventive method for social research?

13.45-14.15: Kat – Transmission of ideas and practice through projects

14.15-14.45: Geof Bowker – Response in relation to interests of STS/ ISTC

14.45-15.00: Dawn Nafus - Discussion

15.00-15.15: Break

15.15-16.45: Speed methods session

16.45-17.30: Mel Gregg – Discussion

People

KAT JUNGnickel is a Research Fellow in studio INCITE (Incubator for Critical Inquiry into Technology and Ethnography), Goldsmiths Sociology Department. This project emerged from over a decade of engagement (and entanglement) with inventive methods and modes of transmission in and out of academia. This involves reflexively approaching the production of knowledge by rendering visible and material her own practice – websites, blogs, machines, films, printed materials, photographs, exhibitions, installations and other events. Kat's Sociology Ph.D (Goldsmiths) and postdoc research (UEL) used ethnographic methods to explore hands-on/DiY making cultures, digital technology practices and innovative methods. 'DiY WiFi: Re-imagining Connectivity' will be published by Palgrave in 2013.
www.katjungnickel.com

This project provides further opportunities to explore interdisciplinary intersections in collaboration with clever people. Collaborators include **Melissa Gregg**, **Genevieve Bell**, **Nina Wakeford** and **Paul Dourish**.

MELISSA GREGG is a Senior Research in Residence at Intel's Science and Technology Centre for Social Computing (ISTC) at University of California, Irvine. She has a background in interdisciplinary methods – gender studies, cultural studies, literary theory and sociology. Much of her writing has experimented with styles of address, pushing the sobriety of scholarly modes to introduce affect and intimacy to empirical discussions. Her interest in transmission and creating new publics for research has been enacted for many years on her blog - www.homecookedtheory.com – a mix of research notes, politics and personal commentary. As a cultural theorist and ethnographer for Intel, her aim is to help shape the conversation between industry, government and academia as collectively we explore the opportunities afforded by social computing. See <http://socialcomputing.uci.edu/>

THE PROJECT IS SUPPORTED BY Intel's Interaction and Experience Research Lab (Portland, Oregon), ISTC, University of California, Irvine and INCITE, Sociology Department, Goldsmiths, University of London.



It is not possible to apply a method as if it were indifferent or external to the problem it seeks to address, but that method must rather be made specific or relevant to the problem...

Inventive methods are ways to introduce answerability into a problem... if methods are to be inventive, they should not leave that problem untouched (Lury and Wakeford 2012:3).

Framing talks I

- NINA WAKEFORD: INSTALLTION AS INVENTIVE DEVICE

In her talk, Nina gave examples to illustrate alternative ways of transmitting research findings, including a sound installation she produced for Said Business School. *Here Comes Experience* (2008) used a parabolic speaker with multiple translations from Mandarin to reflect the social and economic conditions underpinning the Business School itself. This example enacts what Andrew Abbott calls 'lyrical' rather than 'narrative sociology' with its emphasis on 'present-ness' and intensity.

Nina also described previous exhibits – e.g. work on bike couriers, which Intel funded – where ideas were brought 'inside Intel'. Quotes and objects from a bike courier's typical day were placed in and around office cubes and work spaces. This helped to convey the feeling of being a courier for those who may not be used to the narrow streets of London let alone riding a bike.

Meeting desks were covered with visuals of tools in the courier's kit, juxtaposing different infrastructures for labor. Life size cut-outs of buses that couriers squeeze through were installed to create a sense of compressed mobility and temporality. A phenomenological experience is here suggested if not necessarily experienced.

Nina's talk concluded with provocations:



Framing talks II

- KAT JUNGnickel: MAKING THINGS TO MAKE SENSE OF THINGS

I presented examples of previous work - www.73urbanjourneys.com and my PhD research on wireless activists in South Australia - to bring to life my engagements and entanglements with ideas, objects, people and places. 'Making Things to Make Sense of Things' means being faithful to experiences of mess, ambivalence, elusiveness and multiplicity (Hine 2007: 12) and using methods that are shaped by and in turn shape the problem at hand (Lury and Wakeford 2012). Embracing mess (Law 2004) does not mean just adding pictures to traditional research. It means asking what new forms of knowledge production are possible to capture the complexity and dynamism of social worlds.

I described hosting backyard BBQ with research participants as an inventive method: photos, writing and other objects from the study were pegged around the suburban context (house, fence, garage)

to facilitate responses, reflections and engagements. I also discussed and distributed 'Bus Boxes' which provided alternative ways of engaging with data for new audiences. In this case the researcher and the researched each 'hang out' with the data.

My work follows others who are interested in thinking against the narrative, linear path for writing results (Law 2004; Latour and Yaneva 2008; Lury and Wakeford 2012). Presenting ideas in new forms enables a process of 'journeying through the data'; actually entering in to the research as a way of making sense of it. My approach plays on the punk/hacker ethic of DIY to describe a process of DIT - or doing it together.

These methods attract people in to the research - people who might not otherwise be involved. This preference for involvement overcomes the solitary nature of the writing process.



Creating a situation vs. participating in a situation already happening

What do disciplines still have to offer?
What work do methods do to shift boundaries?

Interdisciplinarity is mining for methods
'Validity after poststructuralism'

What are the normative effects of the term 'inventive'?

Methods are formulaic; methods are used as recipes (except people often use recipes inventively!)

Vulnerable to being transformed by the field site in every way

Writing and ethnography: capturing more data than you realize you are capable of

Recognising that the world is messy is an analytical choice.

The labor of installation
Methods render visible the process of producing knowledge

'tactical orthodoxy'

Online analysis is 'temptingly accessible'
– the problem of 'weekend ethnography'?

How a university – or a bus – becomes a 'world'?

You hit someone with impact
Entanglement is involvement

What is the labor of rigor?

Validity in excess



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Speed Methods Session



Alexandra Lippman's research explores how alternative intellectual property practices impact creativity, access to knowledge, media, and music in Rio de Janeiro. Her impasse involved sound and space. She talked the critical importance of sound in her research and the difficulty of writing about it. It is also hard to visualise, to photograph. She started to capture sound files and established a sound anthropological project site - <http://soundethnography.com>

This Session was comprised of 10 x 8min rapid presentations: "A methodological proposal or problem"

Each participant had 8 minutes to present their research topic and a methodological challenge in relation to the empirical process of their work (actual or anticipated).

We asked them to focus on one current problem/ impasse they are tackling, with regards, for example, to problem definition, data collection analysis, presenting results, etc. Given the theme of the workshop we were particularly interested in the possibilities of re-imagining methods and their 'inventiveness'.

Beth Reddy presented her research on seismic science and seismic politics in Mexico. It involved risk modelling and getting training in earthquake science. She talked about the impasse of the ordinary and everyday nature of earthquake preparation and the urgent/emergency of an earthquake. Part of being prepared involved acting and performing scenarios – 'thinking with and through other people's imaginations'.



Taylor Nelms presented work on the 'Aesthetics of Debt'. Located in Ecuador, his research explores how people access the flow of economic life and what is the everyday doing of obligations and payment of debt



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RESEARCH ZINE BY KAT

WWW.KATJUNGNICKEL.COM

www.transmissionsandentanglements.com

Discussion

- MORE AT WWW.HOMECOOKEDTHEORY.COM

The following are notes from the discussion, including contributions from Geof Bowker, Tom Boellstorf and other staff and students affiliated with the ISTC. The impressionistic style is acknowledgment of the main point and revelation of the workshop – that there is value in transferring knowledge in all of its mess.

What is an univentive method?
What would a disappointing method look like?

Inventive methods introduce answerability to a problem
Methods are about changing a problem as it performs itself

An installation might be seen as the creation of a 'situation' (referencing Berlant in Cruel Optimism: 'we have a situation here')

On art installations – see Claire Bishop (2005)

Clough (2009) and the empiricism of sensation (not of the senses) – the inexpressive of the reaction

Generalization which is not universalism

Mike Michael – on anecdotes

The consultant's duty to industry: 'just give me the nugget'. Nina, remembering a conversation with Kris: What kind of nugget? A gold nugget? A chicken McNugget?! What about instead of a nugget, a piece of lego?

You can't do one without the other. You can't have new technologies without new forms of developing and engaging and bringing new knowledge in to the world.

There is as much complexity in the model as in the world itself

Why do we need to contort it into a form that is a shadow of the original when we can go directly from one to another?

Radical multiplicity of what it means to be in the world
The story/the anecdote that allows a jump shift. Michel de Certeau: the revolution begins with telling the story

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