



The Social and Political Life of Methods

5th Annual Conference for the Doctoral Programme in Political, Societal and Regional Change and the Doctoral Programme in Social Sciences

University of Helsinki
Time: 22-23 October 2018
Venue: Metsätalo, Unioninkatu 40

Keynotes by

Assoc. Professor Jennifer Holt (Film and Media Studies, University of California):

Dr. Jennifer Pybus (Digital Humanities, King's College):

Assoc. Professor Olli Pyyhtinen (Sociology, University of Tampere):

MONDAY October 22, Metsätalo

9:00-10:00 Registration open (3rd floor lobby)

9:30-10:00 Tea /Coffee

10:00-11:00 (room 6)

Opening Words: Professor Sarah Green, Director of the Doctoral Programme in Social Sciences

Keynote: Associate Professor Olli Pyyhtinen, University of Tampere

Doing theory with pictures and stories: how to visualize and "fiction" social theory?

11:00-12:00 – Lunch (3rd floor lobby)



12:00-14:30

Workshop 1:

Limitations and opportunities of computational methods (room 7)

Chair: Johanna Nurmi

Sibinescu, Laura-Elena: "Where computers fall short: five question of social science research and how computational methods address them"

Ylisiurua, Marjoriikka: "Towards zero – Social media data revealing "the other side" of vanishing popularity"

Soila, Tuomas: "Performing the future by participating in future creation and values attached lexical choices"

Koljonen, Juha: "Let the cat out of the bag – Limitations and opportunities of methods with bag-of-words presupposition"

Commentator: Mika Pantzar

Workshop 2:

Narratives, power and the construction of reality (room 8)

Chair: Aino Koskenniemi

Klimova, Anna: "'It was an unplanned pregnancy': Narratives on becoming a foster parent"

Guxholli, Aurora: "The Emergence and Professionalisation of Psychotherapy in Albania"

Seelinger, Ilana: "The Populist Radical Right in the Czech Republic: Summing Up the Situation So Far"

Commentator: Miira Niska

14:00-15:00 Registration open (3rd floor lobby)

14:30-15:00 – Coffee

15:00-16:00 Keynote: Dr. Jennifer Pybus, King's College (lecture hall 2)

When I hacked my smartphone: a techno-cultural method



(Introduction by Minna Ruckenstein)

16:00-18:00:

Workshop 3:

Research as co-production: potentials, perils and dilemmas (room 7)

Chair: Atte Vieno

Krivonos, Daria: "Negotiating insider/outsider status in ethnographic fieldwork"

Kallius, Annastiina: "Establishing rapport through Instagram. Reflections on ethnographic fieldwork with liberal Hungarian youth"

Merikoski, Paula: "Talking about difference and the risk of othering. Doing qualitative research on/with migrants"

Paksi, Attila: "Photovoice – Participatory Photography for research"

Commentator: Elina Paju

Workshop 4:

Assumptions and politics in the production of quantitative evidence (room 8)

Chair: Liina Junna

Heino, Matti: "The Assumptions Which Must Be Named. Studying complex systems in the post-replication crisis era of social science"

Kiiskinen, Merja: "Knowledge beyond the digital, cultural, and quantitative"

Nurmi, Johanna: "Precious n-of-1 trial. how repeated within-person measurements are necessary for understanding the relationship of daily physical activity and its psychological determinants"

Valdur, Mari: "Unattainable Data. An Ethnography of Abortion Numbers and Failure in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia"

Commentator: Hanna Konttinen

18:00 – 20:00 Conference Reception, Metsätalo (3rd floor lobby)



Tuesday October 23, Metsätalo

9:00-10:00 Registration open (3rd floor lobby)

9:30 – 10.00 Tea/Coffee

10:00-11:00 (room 6)

Opening Words, Professor Anja Nygren, Director of the Doctoral Programme in Political, Societal and Regional Change

Keynote: Assoc. Professor Jennifer Holt, University of California

Cloud policy: researching a regulatory crisis

11:00-12:00 - Lunch

12:00-14:30

Workshop 5: Methodologies in the investigation of conflict (room 7)

Chair: Laura Nordström

Heikkinen, Anna: "A Multi-method Approach to Examine Water Conflicts and Vulnerability"

Salmivaara, Anna: "Doing research in the context of – and about - a political and economic conflict in Cambodia"

Kazimuddin, Ahmed: "Performing identities: using participatory video to understand complex conflicts in India"

Commentator: Markus Kröger

Workshop 6 Evidence, interpretation and the position of the researcher (room 8)

Chair: Paula Merikoski, Jenni Savonen

Juvenius, Jutta: "Whose voice is speaking? Limitations of the interview data collected among the residents of the mixed housing company"

Urbanowicz, Roman: "“Why are you still interested in this rubbish?” or to be a researcher vs. to be normal"



Toro, Aleksis: "Limits for evidence: negotiating restrictive affinity in rural Mapuche religiosity"

Korhonen, Salla: "Fieldwork drawing: a new hype in anthropology in the contemporary competitive, under-funded research environment or a relevant form of knowledge production?"

Commentator: Antero Olakivi

Special Workshop

Methods in action - journeying with social media data (room 6)

The aim of this session is to present findings from two projects that work with large social media datasets, with a particular emphasis on the conference theme - the social and political life of methods. *Citizen Mindscapes* takes advantage of the discussion forum Suomi24 ("Finland24") data, opened for research purposes in 2015. The data covers a time period of more than fifteen years and consists of tens of millions online messages in topics such as local affairs, health, food, religion, and celebrity gossip. Its sister project, *Smarter Social Media Analytics*, studied and developed methods to identify trends and phenomena using a database of one billion Finnish social media messages from various platforms. We bring together scholars with disciplinary backgrounds ranging from statistics and machine learning to sociology and media studies with the aim of demonstrating the consequences that methodological choices have for exploring large digital datasets and subsequent knowledge production. We will show how methods enable us to "see" what is in the social media data by revealing the particular nature and quality of social media discussion data. We emphasize how important it is not to lose sight of the ways in which and by whom the data has been produced. While we present our findings regarding particular datasets, we discuss the strengths and weaknesses of digital methods and demonstrate how by comparing methods and using them alongside each other, we can highlight the different epistemologies and economic and political aims that research on large datasets promotes.

Chair: Minna Ruckenstein

Auli Harju: "Peer support and colliding views: Online survey of Suomi24 discussion forum users"

Jussi Pakkasvirta: "How to analyze nationalist stereotypes from social media data - from quantitative to qualitative"

Laura Savolainen: "The messiness of online forum data as its definitive feature: Trash talk and hyperbole in Suomi24's discussions on binge eating disorder"

Juha Alho: "Missing data from the perspective of statistical science"



Mika Pantzar: “Crawling in big data: Unifying and dividing methodological aims in Citizen Mindscapes”

Minna Ruckenstein: “Mixed methods and unintended research findings”

Mikko Jauho, Salla-Maaria Laaksonen & Juho Pääkkönen: “The social life of visualizations in data-intensive social research”

Discussants: Jennifer Pybus (Kings College, London) and Julia Velkova (University of Helsinki)