2nd Ph.D. Summer School of Cultural Transformations:

Cultural Im/materialities:
Contagion, Affective Rhythms and Mobilization

International PhD course, 23-27 June 2014, Aarhus University, Denmark

The summer school is funded by the Ph.D. programmes Art, Literature and Cultural Studies and ICT, Media, Communication and Journalism and by Centre for Sociological Studies Aarhus University (all Aarhus University). The event is part of a cultural studies summer school network with Warwick University, University of Southern Denmark, Södertörn University and Aarhus University as partners. The first event in 2013 was hosted by Warwick University.

Organisers
Associate Professor, PhD, Britta Timm Knudsen
Associate Professor, PhD, Mads Krogh
Assistant Professor, PhD, Carsten Stage
Associate Professor, PhD, Anne Marit Waade

Partners: Warwick University, UK, University of Southern Denmark, DK, Södertörn University, SE, CESAU, DK, Copenhagen Business School, DK

Confirmed keynotes
Professor Georgina Born (Music and Anthropology, Oxford University), UK
Senior Lecturer Tony D. Sampson (Digital Culture and Communications, University of East London), UK
Professor John Protevi (Philosophy and French Studies, Loyola University Chicago), US
Senior Lecturer Luciana Parisi (Cultural Studies, Goldsmiths), UK

Lecturers / workshop organizers / discussants
Jenny Sundén, Södertörn University
Nathaniel Tkacz, Warwick University
Christian Borch, Copenhagen Business School
Representative from University of Southern Denmark
Anne Marit Waade, Aarhus University
Description

The summer school wants to explore the role of affect, suggestive rhythms and contagion for the somatic mobilization of agents across a range of socio-cultural situations (e.g. protest events, dance halls, online forums, catastrophes), practises and processes (e.g. political mobilization and engagement, school bullying, youth loneliness, xenophobic/nationalist panics). In recent years an increasing interest in materiality, space, technology and embodiment has developed in the humanities and social sciences combined with an ‘affective turn’ (Clough, Massumi, Thrift, Seigworth and Gregg, Ahmed) to immaterial dimensions of these phenomena.

This has re-actualised early sociological theories about affective suggestion, contagion and imitation (e.g. Gustave Le Bon and Gabriel Tarde), which offer valuable insights to the analysis of a contemporary cultural landscape characterised by for instance viral/memetic phenomena, mediated/networked/rhythmically coordinated crowds, affective online communication and political modulation of citizen affects (Blackman, Borch, Gibbs, Sampson, Butler). During the summer school we wish to collectively explore the immaterial dimensions of the material social world and vice versa, discuss the potentialities, implications and risks of such analysis in an open interdisciplinary environment.

The event will attract PhD students from a range of academic fields (anthropology, geography, media, cultural studies, aesthetics, sociology, political science etc.) interested in, and doing research on, the affective turn, processes of imitation/suggestion/contagion, the rhythmically attuning mobilisation of bodies, and the im/material dimensions of culture and the social world.

Possible areas/topics:

- The affective dimensions of materiality, space, technology and things
- Aesthetics and affectivity, sensual design
- Mobilization within public and private spheres of action
- Viral communication, virality in the media, memes, social media
- The methodological challenges of analysing cultural materialities and immaterial processes
- Theoretical legacies to the ‘affective turn’ and new materialist orientations within the humanities and social sciences; early sociologies of contagion, suggestion and imitation
- Moral, media and financial panics
- Music culture, sound, dance and rhythm
- Industries of affect, affective consumption
- Tourism, black spot/dark tourism
- Artistic agency, idols and fandom
- Crowds, protest culture, social movements, (creative/eventful) activism, political events
- Depression, loneliness, bullying, affective exclusion
- Charity, empathy and sympathy
- Affect, emotion and power, war and affective modulation
- Xenophobia, nationalism, the strategic production of fear and hate
- Atmosphere, aura, prestige
- Sexuality, porn, love and care
- The affectivity of catastrophes
- Blasphemy, fanaticism and provocative politics

The Ph.D.-summer school will be based on keynote presentations, workshops and students’ own project presentations and organized feedback sessions.

Exam:

The examination will consist of three parts: 1. Full paper hand-in (deadline May 15); 2. Attending workshops and doing group assignments; 3. Paper presentation and discussion of papers.

Deadline for submission
Deadline: March 1 2014
Send an email to: Marianne Hoffmeister mho@adm.au.dk
Attach a description of your research topic and project (max. 300 words).

March 15: You will get to know if you participate, and you will be asked to confirm your participation.

Preparation for PhD students
April 1: The organizers will form groups out of the participants (5 in all) and each group has to organize a slot of one hour each with a social and/or academic content (e.g. academic speed-dating, guided tours in Aarhus for strangers by strangers, exercises between the slots).

May 15: Deadline for submitting a full paper (10 pages)

Preparation for teachers
March: Organizers must read the abstracts and form participants groups.

Medio May: The group of teachers will be responsible for 3-4 papers, that he/she has read carefully in advance in order to 1) place the paper within the theme of the summer school 2) to be a discussant of the paper and to give an open and constructive feedback at the summer school

About the summer school network (SSCT)

The series aims at creating an international environment of constructive academic discussions in the field of cultural studies in order to strengthen this discipline in our respective academic communities and to develop the discipline of cultural studies according to actual developments and new theoretical paradigms. The series aims at improving teaching in cultural studies through a meticulous work on theoretical, methodological and empirical challenges. It is also our intention to build stronger research relations and exchange opportunities between the involved institutions and participants. Network coordinator: Carsten Stage (norcs@hum.au.dk).