Working Group Media Anthropology

Multimodal Digital Curating
19 – 20 January 2023 | Online Workshop | AG Medien | DGSKA

Outline:

In recent years, digital practices of curation have found increased interest in the field of (media) anthropology. Anthropologists and ethnographers developed online exhibitions, created web sites, or used social media platforms as research tools and means to produce and present their research in multimodal digital formats, and to a broader audience.

Digital curating not only encompasses a broad variety of curation technologies such as audio-visual media, VR-video, blogs, podcasts/videocasts, design-based web-applications, social media platforms or the critical use of AI technology, but also addresses hybrid formats and offline spaces. Digital exhibitions are inherently multimodal as they often reflect diverse modes of fieldwork, production, and representation and go beyond the often implied online/offline divide.

Digital Curating ideally involves collaborative processes with research partners, but also with designers, programmers, and other institutional actors. As such, digital curating not only transgresses the diverse modalities of production of what is exhibited, but is in itself a mode of knowledge production and social practice.

Multimodal forms of digital curating allow for a more experimental use of audio-visual media – (moving) images, drawings, designs, and sounds can be (re)combined and presented in novel ways to foster different kinds of experiences. They also relate, reflect, and expand analogue forms of exhibitions, not least due to their reach beyond geographic locations. During the workshop, we want to focus on practical and hands-on perspectives, and at the same time critically engage in the challenges of digital curating, such as economic constraints, bias in digital technologies, sustainability and archiving of digital environments, as well as asymmetries and power dynamics in collaborations between diverse actors and professional spheres.

We therefore invite researchers, curators, and artists to share their experience of digital curating and explore questions such as, but not limited to:

- How to conceptualise a digital exhibition?
- Which technological skills and infrastructures are required? Which platforms can be useful? How to decide on particular technologies? How can digital devices be made accessible and practical (economic, technological) problems be addressed?
- How can collaborations between researchers, artists, curators, designers and programmers be adjusted to academic research and funding structures, and vice versa?
- How can/does digital curating influence and transform ethnographic research in terms of methodology as well as epistemology and knowledge production?

To explore these questions, we suggest the following perspectives on knowledge production and multimodal digital curating:

- *digital curation as (re)presentation:* online exhibitions as curatorial practices of exhibiting (ethnographic) research
- *digital curation as everyday practices*: social media users as curators in popular culture and participatory research strategies
- *digital curation as research practice:* researchers as curators

The workshop *Multimodal Digital Publishing* is part of a series of workshops and lectures, focusing on different multimodal digital formats such as presenting, publishing, displaying, archiving, gaming, designing, etc. This series is aimed to serve as a platform for scholars and practitioners working on multimodal digital experimentations to share practical experiences and theoretical insights.

It brings together researchers and curators from anthropology and related fields to share their experiences with multimodal and experimental forms of digital curating in formats like websites and social media platforms.

Website: https://agmedien.de/multimodal-digital-curating/

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