

Workshop

Opening Research Data

Amplification and Reduction within Media Research Practices

1st Workshop of the Open Media Studies interest group of the German Society for Media Studies (Gesellschaft für Medienwissenschaft – GfM), in cooperation with **Wikimedia Deutschland e. V.**

Workshop: Wikimedia Deutschland e. V., Berlin, **March 21, 2019**

Statements of interest/registration by **Feb 15, 2019**

Open by default? The open data discourse suggests that it is always better to “open up” research data; hidden datasets do not help anyone besides the producing researchers themselves. Data produced with the support of public research funds must not be rotting away in a (depreciating) hard drive, a PDF table, or –beware– on an analogue piece of paper. Rather, research data should adhere to the FAIR data principles - hence, being searchable, accessible, interoperable and re-usable (Wilkinson et al. 2016).

However, as sociologist Bruno Latour highlights (Latour 1999), opening up (amplification) always comes with a trade-off (reduction). In the process of data mobilization and standardization, we may gain compatibility and relative universality, but lose qualities such as locality, particularity, materiality, context and diversity. As much as FAIR data is a noble objective and promising way to strive for open science in many academic fields (e.g. biology, computer science, physics), these principles may seem hard to work with for people handling qualitative or mixed (quant/qual) data, small data, highly heterogeneous, unstructured data, or analogue data.

In our workshop, we would like to assess what “opening up research data” can mean for media scholars, and more generally for the humanities and some fields of the social sciences (e.g. anthropology, Science & Technology Studies). What are opportunities for open data methods? Which challenges are we facing? What is at stake for a particular research project?

The aim of the one day-workshop is to apply a very open definition of *research data*, not limited to stabilized data in research infrastructures (e.g. metadata within digital media archives). Rather, this can also include data appearing as social media tag, ethnographic field note, or diagram, gathered through qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods.

Possible topics include:

- **Standardization vs. diversity.** In what cases can standardization offer a productive way of collaborating? Where does it risk to work against or even efface diversity? To what extent can crowdsourcing be a meaningful practice for organizing data in research objects?

- **Categorization and labeling.** How does our (meta-)data, our data codes and labels change within the process of opening up research to the public, e.g. when categorization is delegated to algorithms, e.g. by machine learning and automated bots in environments such as Wikidata. How do we know today what kind of metadata is needed for questions in the near future?
- **Open infrastructures.** Given a relational and temporal perspective on infrastructures (Star and Ruhleder 1996), what may “open infrastructure” mean?
- **Openness and digitality.** As relevant literature of the field suggests (see e.g. Bartling and Friesike 2014), the political discourses of open science and digitalization are closely interwoven. But is this mandatory for a true open science? Can there be open data beyond digital data?
- **“Big Data”.** What changes with data of high velocity, volume, variety, resolution, indexicality, relationality, and flexibility (Kitchin 2013), e.g. data sourced from social media networks, transformed, analyzed with scripts in a hackathon or data sprint? Are these too unstable to be archived and re-used?

We aim to discuss these and other questions from a conceptual point of view. Our goal of the workshop is not so much to evaluate the application of specific tools or infrastructures, but to rather think about open research data theoretically, though concrete examples are desirable. The focus of the workshop is on data in media research, however not limited to media studies as a discipline. We welcome researchers from other disciplines and fields (e.g. STS, anthropology, information science, etc.), as well as practitioners (librarians, science communicators, archivists, research data managers etc.).

As part of the workshop, we will conduct a live experiment in opening research data by gathering literature references on digital media research, sharing them and making the collection available online. In line with efforts of the Forum Digitalization of the GfM, the aim is to gather literature on digital media research and open up this bibliographic collection for all interested parties. If you'd like to join this initiative, but can't participate in the workshop, drop an email to simon.hirsbrunner@uni-siegen.de and get access to the relevant **Zotero Online group** and (work-in-progress) collection. Looking forward to see how the process of 'opening up' works of our own (bibliographic) data!

We are looking forward to **statements of interest** for workshop participation, including conceptual questions illustrated by a concrete example of one's own research and a short bio (300-500 words).

Please send your statement not later than February 15, 2019 to both organizers:

Dr. Sarah-Mai Dang: sarah-mai.dang@uni-marburg.de

Simon Hirsbrunner: simon.hirsbrunner@uni-siegen.de

Participants will be provided with further information by **March 4, 2019.**

For questions please feel free to contact us.

The workshop will take place from 11h to 19h at Wikimedia DE headquarters in Berlin followed by a casual dinner (self-payment basis). The event will be conducted in English, but German submissions are also welcome.

Very much looking forward to your contributions and participation!
Sarah-Mai Dang (Philipps Universität Marburg) and Simon David Hirsbrunner (Universität Siegen) and Sarah Behrens (Wikimedia e. V.)

Time

Workshop: March 21, 2019; 11 – 19 h

Registration deadline: February 15, 2019

Place

Wikimedia Deutschland e. V.
Tempelhofer Ufer 23/24
10963 Berlin

Organization

Dr. Sarah-Mai Dang (Philipps University of Marburg), Simon David Hirsbrunner (University of Siegen) and Sarah Behrens (Wikimedia Deutschland e. V.)

Selected sources

Bartling, Sönke, and Sascha Friesike, eds. *Opening Science*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2014.

Kitchin, Rob. "Big Data, New Epistemologies and Paradigm Shifts." *Big Data & Society* 1, no. 1 (2014).

Latour, Bruno. *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*. 1 edition. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Star, Susan Leigh, and Karen Ruhleder. "Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure: Design and Access for Large Information Spaces." *Information Systems Research* 7, no. 1 (1996).

Wilkinson, Mark D., Michel Dumontier, IJsbrand Jan Aalbersberg, Gabrielle Appleton, Myles Axton, Arie Baak, Niklas Blomberg, et al. "The FAIR Guiding Principles for Scientific Data Management and Stewardship." *Scientific Data* 3 (2016).