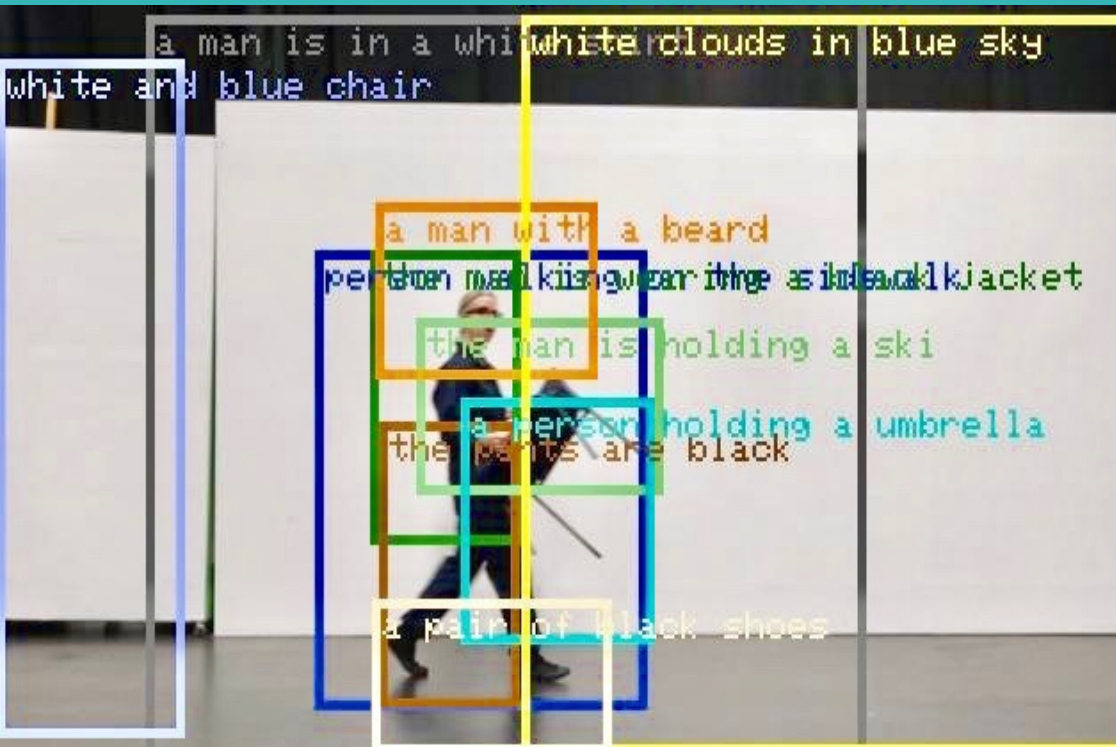


GSAH | Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies |  
Key concepts - lecture and colloquium

# Mediality

Prof. Dr. Kate Hennessey, Simon Fraser University

Public lecture: 3 November 2022, 4.15pm–5:45pm, Online  
Colloquium: 4 November, 2.15pm–6.00pm, Online



Video still, 'white clouds in blue sky', 2021. Kate Hennessey, Trudi Lynn Smith, and Steve DiPaola.

# Mediality

3. November 2022  
(public lecture)  
4:15pm–5:45pm

4. November 2022  
(colloquium)  
2.15pm–6.00pm

Online via Zoom:  
<https://unibe-ch.zoom.us/j/62339443187?pwd=TkhVU3NoV2czWEoVUkZOWnZGeUtlQT09>

Meeting-ID:  
623 3944 3187  
Kenncode: 969099

1.5 ECTS  
(Pflicht- oder  
Wahlpflichtbereich  
ICS / Wahlpflicht-  
bereich GS, SLS,  
SINTA)

Registration: via  
KSL und E-Mail to  
[mike.toggweiler@unibe.ch](mailto:mike.toggweiler@unibe.ch)

Public lecture: **Sensing the Cloud: On Mediality, Multimodality, and AI-generated Images**

**Prof. Dr. Kate Hennessy**  
Media Anthropology, School of Interactive Arts & Technology, Simon Fraser University

Moderation: Prof. Dr. Michaela Schäuble  
Media Anthropology, Institut for Social Anthropology, University of Bern

From galaxies to pixels; from flowing rivers to humming server farms; from family image archives to AI-generated compositions; from a mountain goat to a woven blanket to its representation as a 3D model stored in the cloud: the contemporary media environment is deeply relational, material, and political. While these relationships are largely opaque, encapsulated in black boxes, I highlight the work of artists, ethnographers, and research-creation scholars who are interpreting the ways in which emergent medialities are sensorial and entangled with human agencies, fugitive memory, relations of power, and capitalocene-era (Demos 2017) climate emergency. I look to the adjacent turn in anthropology towards multimodality (Westmoreland 2022) and argue for a greater orientation towards the mediality of new ethnographic forms to counter the problem of unreflexive technofetishism, or our *bad habitus* (Takaragawa et. al. 2018). I explore the current massive proliferation of AI-generated images (Crawford and Paglen 2019), their socio-technical infrastructures, and ubiquity of cloud-based computing (Hu 2015) through recent collaboratively produced research-creation works that offer perspectives for understanding our sensory engagements with the cloud.

## Online Colloquium

### For PhD students and advanced Master students of the University of Bern

Part 1 of the colloquium is dedicated to the discussion of the lecture and the texts suggested by the guest. In Part 2, a core group present their PhD thesis, speaking for about 20 minutes on how concepts like "Mediality" and related concepts connect to their research questions and which aspects of the texts are of particular relevance to their own work. The presenters raise questions for the discussion with their peers, which should contribute to the development of their thesis. Finally, in Part 3, the conversation will open up again so that the other PhD or advanced MA-students have an opportunity to address issues related to their projects.

Required reading:

*Westmoreland, M. (2022). Multimodality: Reshaping Anthropology. Annual Review of Anthropology (51):173-94*

*Crawford, K. and V. Joler. (2018). Anatomy of an AI System. <https://anatomyof.ai/>*

*Takaragawa, S., T. Smith, K. Hennessy, P. Alvarez Astacio, J. Chio, C. Nye, S. Shankar (2019). Bad Habitus: Anthropology in the Age of the Multimodal. American Anthropologist 121(2):517-524.*

*Hennessy, K. and T. Smith (2018). Fugitives: Anarchival Materiality in Archives. PUBLIC 57 (Archive/Counter-Archives):128-144.*

## Kate Hennessy

Kate Hennessy is an Associate Professor specialising in Media at Simon Fraser University's School of Interactive Arts and Technology. As an anthropologist of media and the director of the Making Culture Lab, an interdisciplinary research-creation and production studio, her work uses collaborative, feminist, and decolonial methodologies to explore the impacts of new memory infrastructures and cultural practices of media, museums, and archives in the context of technoscience. She is a founding member of the Ethnographic Terminalia Collective.





Video still, 'white clouds in blue sky', 2021. Kate Hennessy, Trudi Lynn Smith, and Steve DiPaola.

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