

Halmstad Colloquium

Seminar, April 29, 2016, 13:15

School of Information Technology

Becoming Real in Virtuality: Cyborgian Identity in Second Life

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As people spend more time online and invest more of themselves in virtual communities and relationships, they become increasingly entangled with the digital material that results from their online activities. Who they are, what they can do and who they can become is inextricably intertwined with the identities their virtual bodies (e.g., emails, texts, images, videos, profiles and avatars) afford. They are cyborgs, that is, human beings whose bodies and identities are inextricably intertwined with and extended through technology.



IS research, particularly research on social media, needs to grapple with the fragmented, multiply-embodied and hybrid identities of users as cyborgs. This requires theoretical lenses capable of accommodating and illuminating the numerous entanglements (e.g., social and material, human and technological, actual and virtual) that characterize life in a post-human era. Relying on research into identity performance in the virtual world, Second Life, this talk will outline and empirically demonstrate a number of theoretical lenses suitable to studying cyborgs. These include symbolic interactionism, performativity, agential cuts and dialectics.



Ulrike Schultze is Associate Professor in Information Technology and Operations Management at Cox Business School. She also has a visiting appointment at Lund University, Sweden. Her research explores the complex relationship between information technology and work practices. She has studied the work practice implications of knowledge management technology and of Internet-based self-service technology, as well as the implications of social media technologies, specifically the virtual world Second Life, for identity work. More recently, she has been exploring issues related to digital innovation and the sharing economy.

**Wigforssalen, Visionen,
April 29, 13:15. Welcome!**



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