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Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract <p>New media technology and software play an ever more important role in social practice. Yet software or the principles of new media have seemingly not been discussed in sociological theory. This study aims to provide new theory on the subject by suggesting that users exist in two different forms while using new media for social purposes. On the one hand the user is a social actor, following established social norms and structures, but on the other hand the user simultaneously exists as a digital entry in a database, subjected to a completely different set of rules based on new media technology. The study aims to explore the tensions that arise from this duality.</p> <p>The study proposes a morphological, conceptual analysis to explore the interaction between social practice and new media, but does not include an empirical part. Sociality is conceptually defined as Manuel Castells's notion of networks, while new media technology is treated as the database, which Lev Manovich argues to be the central form of contemporary culture. These forms are complemented with their respective logics or patterns of action, network sociality and the principles of new media, respectively. The understanding of new media is further developed by exploring the academic field of software studies.</p> <p>The results of the conceptual analysis, formulated as a theoretical framework, suggest that networks and databases differ in their understanding of time and space, their functioning logic, and the basis on which their respective units react and reason. Lev Manovich's notion of transcoding then implies that the technological and cultural levels in new media interact and modify each other. The results of the conceptual analysis are reflected upon through existing studies on social networking services and new media.</p> <p>The identified processes are then further formulated into suggestions on how social practices may change if they were to be more heavily aggregated through new media. These developments include trends of quantification and automation, changing rules of social space, and an increased emphasis on information exchange in both practice and theory. Lastly, the discussion chapter situates the findings next to earlier research, which has reflected upon the database as a form that defines social surveillance and the formation of identity. The capability to conceptually separate social norms from the affordances suggested by new media may be useful for a meaningful interpretation of everyday social practice.</p> <p>Central references: For new media: Manovich, Lev: The Language of New Media (2001); Fuller, Matthew (ed.): Software Studies – A Lexicon (2009). Beer, David: Power through the algorithm? Participatory web cultures and the technological unconscious (2009); Boyd, Danah: Facebook's Privacy Trainwreck. Exposure, Invasion, and Social Convergence (2008). For networks: Castells, Manuel: The internet Galaxy (2001), The Network Society: A Cross-cultural Perspective (2004); Stalder, Felix: Manuel Castells: The Theory of the Network Society (2004); Wittel, Andreas: Toward a Network Sociality (2001); Miller, Vincent: New Media, Networking and Phatic Culture (2008).</p>			
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