

ASU Tempe campus

School for the Future of Innovation in Society

Innovations Talk

Ulrike Felt

The internet of fashion-able things: Responsibility in a real-world experiment

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In many segments of industrial production and distribution, as well as a variety of workplaces, the idea of the “internet of things” (IoT) is gradually being realized, with Radio-frequency Identification (RFID) being a core enabling-technology. The promise is an effortless tracing of all tagged objects in an environment, which is envisioned to raise all sorts of efficiencies but also create a quasi-perfect order.

Taking the case of fashion retail, I study how IoT implementation acts as a form of socio-technical experiment with managers, salespersons, apparel and customers getting connected in new ways. In particular I am interested in understanding the vision being scripted by system builders into these infrastructures. What are the promises and imagined futures projected? What questions of responsibility are being, or need to be, asked?



Ulrike Felt is a professor of Science and Technology Studies and head of the research platform „Responsible Research and Innovation in Academic Practice“, both at the University of Vienna. Her research addresses questions of science, public participation and democracy, governance of new (and old) technologies as well as on time and future in research and at the science/ society interface. She has been editor of one of the core journals in STS as well as of the most recent Handbook of Science and Technology Studies (MIT Press). Currently she is president of the European Association for the Study of Science and Technology (EASST).

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