<u>**Lecture 5 - 14/11/2024**</u> - **Reem Talhouk**

<u>Title:</u> Digital Civics Research In and Through Universities

<u>Abstract:</u> The talk will take the concept of 'civic universities' as a starting point. We will first present research conduct around migration, social movements and technologies at the American University of Beirut, Lebanon, and highlight the ways through which we enact civic research as a means of activism and reform. We will then trace how the research evolves once re-located to UK Universities where we contend with new framings of civically-motivated research as well as the role of western universities in global research. The talk will highlight how such framings restrain/open up varying research narratives and the alternative ways of doing research we are currently exploring (e.g. <u>DCitizens</u>, <u>CCAI CDT</u>)

Research that the talk will draw on:
Talhouk, R., Akik, C., Araujo-Soares, V., Ahmad, B., Mesmar, S., Olivier, P., ... & Ghattas, H. (2020). Integrating health technologies in health services for Syrian refugees in Lebanon: qualitative study. *Journal of medical Internet research*, *22*(7), e14283.

Ghattas, H., Choufani, J., Jamaluddine, Z., Masterson, A. R., & Sahyoun, N. R. (2020). Linking women-led community kitchens to school food programmes: lessons learned from the Healthy Kitchens, Healthy Children intervention in Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. *Public Health Nutrition*, *23*(5), 914-923.

Talhouk, R., Balaam, M., Toombs, A. L., Garbett, A., Akik, C., Ghattas, H., ... & Montague, K. (2019, June). Involving Syrian refugees in design research: lessons learnt from the field. In *Proceedings of the 2019 on Designing Interactive Systems Conference* (pp. 1583-1594).

Mesmar, S., Talhouk, R., Akik, C., Olivier, P., Elhajj, I. H., Elbassuoni, S., ... & Ghattas, H. (2016). The impact of digital technology on health of populations affected by humanitarian crises: Recent innovations and current gaps. *Journal of public health policy*, *37*, 167-200.

Talhouk, R., & Syed, H. A. (2023). Becoming Western: Reflections and Stories of Being in Western Academia. In *Torn Many Ways: Politics, Conflict and Emotion in Research* (pp. 187-198). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Talhouk, R., & Armouch, S. (2022, August). Dialogues on decolonial participatory design praxis during a revolution. In *Proceedings of the Participatory Design Conference 2022-Volume 2* (pp. 52-57).

McClearn, J., Jensen, R. B., & Talhouk, R. (2023). Othered, silenced and scapegoated: understanding the situated security of marginalised populations in Lebanon. In *32nd USENIX Security Symposium (USENIX Security 23)* (pp. 4625-4642).

McClearn, J., Jensen, R. B., & Talhouk, R. (2023). Security Patchworking in Lebanon: Infrastructuring Across Failing Infrastructures. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2310.16969*.

The role of civic universities in addressing today's socio-environmental challenges
Liesbeth Huybrechts

This lecture investigates the possibility of civic universities as interdisciplinary research environments to support collaboration not only with the private sector, but between researchers, governments and communities to face today's socio-environmental challenges. To exemplify this, we will focus more specifically on a case study in UHasselt in the field of Participatory Design research that deals with scarcity as a growing challenge, characterising current urban contexts, and more particularly the transition of an old pastoral house as a sustainability Living Lab in Helchteren through a process of reusing materials from obsolete infrastructure. Public governments are confronted with handling increasing public infrastructure challenges (e.g. floods , energy transitions etc) with little resources (means, time, material resources). This motivates governments with public care responsibilities to innovatively work with design researchers to involve communities in these public caring processes. Although framings and ways of working of civic universities in Belgium can offer many opportunities in engaging with the interrelations between public governments and communities, there are also many challenges hindering this potential. The lecture makes a plea for conscious "institutioning", designing institutional changes in university contexts to support their roles as civic universities.

Research that the talk will draw on:

Huybrechts, L., Benesch, H., & Geib, J. (2017). Institutioning: Participatory Design, Co-Design and the public realm. *CoDesign*, *13*(3), 148–159. https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2017.1355006

Huybrechts, L., Devisch, O., & Tassinari, V. (2021). Beyond polarisation: reimagining communities through the imperfect act of ontologising. *CoDesign*, *18*(1), 63–77. https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2021.2001537

Liesbeth Huybrechts, Mela Zuljevic, Oswald Devisch, Virginia Tassinari, Anna Seravalli, Ann Light, Seppe De Blust, Antoniadis Panagiotis, Chiara Bassetti, Nicola Bidwell, Maurizio Teli, Cristiano Storni, Gabriela Avram, Mark Marshall, Filip Majetic, and Joachim Declerck. 2022. Reworlding: Participatory Design Capabilities to Tackle Socio-Environmental Challenges. In Proceedings of the Participatory Design Conference 2022 - Volume 2 (PDC '22), Vol. 2. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 173–178. https://doi.org/10.1145/3537797.3537870

Bios

I am an Associate professor at the School of Design and Centre for Global Development at Northumbria University. With a background in nutrition, public health and Human-Computer Interaction, I draw on multiple design methods to investigate how technologies and design methodologies can be used in humanitarian contexts. I have used Experience Centered Design methods to work with Syrian refugees in Lebanon to design technologies for food security and community resilience. I have also conducted research in the Middle East, Europe

and Australia on the role of technologies in improving refugee and asylum seekers' health, wellbeing and their everyday sense of security. I am interested in working with humanitarian innovators to understand their practices and work towards integrating design methodologies and principles in to humanitarian practices.

I am an active member of the Refugees & Human-Computer Interaction and the HCI4D communities. I am also affiliated with the Center for Research on Population and Health at the American University of Beirut.

I have also been awarded the 2020 Young Digital Leader award in recognition of my work. Liesbeth Huybrechts is Associate Professor and works in the areas of participatory design, design anthropology and spatial transformation processes in the research group Arck, University of Hasselt, Belgium. She has developed a research interest in the design for/with participatory exchanges and processes of capacity building between human and the material/natural environment and the "politics" of designing these relations.