TECH--- NOLOGIES
OPTIMIZATION

September 12 – 13th 2019
Odeons kvarter 1, 5000 Odense C , Denmark

Key note speakers:
Kane Race, University of Sydney
Linda Hogle, University of Wisconsin
Joanna Cook, University College London

Organizers:
Dorthe Brogård Kristensen, University of Southern Denmark, Aja Smith, University of Southern Denmark, Margit Anne Petersen, University of Southern Denmark and Maja Hojer Bruun, Aalborg University

The conference is a collaboration between the research project ''Optimization: The Self as Laboratory'' and the Research Network of Anthropology of Technology, both funded by the Independent Research Fund Denmark.

Optimization was originally a concept used within the field of mathematics and computer science to denote efficient maximization of desired outputs. However, increasingly the term has entered both popular and academic discussions, here covering everything from modes of living and strategies for ''making the most'' of life to manners of improving businesses, organizations and societies. Anthropologists have, for long, been interested in the concept of technology, and in recent years contributed to the growing research field of optimization technologies. Common examples include studies on medical technologies such as plastic surgery, and pharmaceuticals used non-medically, spiritual technologies such as mindfulness, meditation and psychedelic drugs, and tracking technologies such as devices, apps, wearables and computer programs. Regardless of the specific technologies engaged, optimization pursuits are often associated with neoliberal regimes and are as such either celebrated or criticized in academic and public discourses alike. With a point of departure in the anthropology of technology, and the concept of optimization, this conference addresses one of today's major trends, namely, human pursuits of improving, perfecting and making efficient. But rather than celebrating or critiquing these efforts and conceiving of them a-priori as predominantly neoliberal, the conference aims to serve as a platform for explorations of the historical, social, political, economic, and cultural particularities of optimization pursuits and their myriad of effects on people, places, organizations and societies.

We therefore invite papers that explore the use of optimization technologies, their moral and ethical implications and the way these technologies profoundly affect societies, organizations, political and economic life and, more fundamentally, what it means to be human.

Abstract deadline:
May 1 2019
200-300 words to be sent to the following email: Optimization@sam.sdu.dk
Notification of acceptance: Early May 2019

Please register for the seminar here:
https://www.tilmeld.dk/Optimization2019
The number registered participants will be limited to 60 .

Deadline for the registration is 30th June 2019

Participation is free and coffee and lunch will be provided during the two-day event. Registration is required.
***Students** can participate but can not register for the event and lunch.*

DANMARKS FRIE FORSKNINGSFOND
INDEPENDENT RESEARCH FUND DENMARK