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Atmospheric video blogs on infertility

Abstract

This paper explores how the presence of bodies, objects and spaces in a video blog on YouTube about infertility attunes the viewer. The paper questions mediated experiences as matters of reflexivity and image value and points to how the aesthetic dimension of mediated experiences with infertility is of experiential value. I begin by discussing the relevance of aesthetics and the concept of atmosphere in relation to mediated experiences in new media. I then illuminate how the atmospheric body, technology and time, space and particular modalities of everyday life and their constellation are significant for the viewer's involvement in the mediated fertility project.

Introduction

In Silvia and Peter's video blog (vlog) on YouTube¹ the viewer follows an American couple in front of a transportable video camera, webcam, or mobile phone as they talk and move around in their home, car, and fertility clinical surroundings. The vlog is produced by, distributed by and revolves around the couple as they undergo in vitro fertilization (IVF).

In the following I will discuss Silvia and Peter's vlog in relation to the philosopher Gernot Böhme's (1995) theory of aesthetics and concept of atmosphere and media theorist André Jansson's (2002) perspectives on mediated consumption. The concept of aesthetics in the field of new technology is, according to André Jansson, to be abandoned in order to understand new topologies and genealogies characterizing mediated experiences and consumption. Mediated experiences are make-believes; they do not refer to an original concrete experience, but consist of fragments transformed into new meaning and hence are 'anti-aesthetic and non-narrative' (Jansson, 2002: 18). By expanding the classical concept of aesthetics to aesthetics concerned with experience, the possibility arises to address the significance of the experience of the mediated presence of persons, objects, and environments. Echoing Böhme, I suggest that the body, spaces and technology in Silvia and Peter's vlogs are orchestrated² in order to attune the viewer affectively. The experiential qualities of these atmospheres are understood to be significant for the viewer's involvement in the couple's fertility project.

My reading of the vlog suggests how the expansion of aesthetics, rather than abandonment, offers insight in individual's valuations of the body and mediated experiences of people, space and technology as shared points of reference. The vlog does not express an 'attrition of collective forms of life' as Lauren Berlant (2011: 11) states, but is a result of increasingly individualized and differentiated ways of living. On the contrary, the possibility of involvement of the viewer in the individual fertility project arises through the atmospheric body, technology and everyday time, space, and

modality. Thus the aim is to illuminate how the aesthetic dimension becomes the link between people and how relatedness is expressed through the intensification of the usual unseen and undetected aspects of a fertility project. The vlogs and the atmospheres orchestrated by Silvia and Peter offer, as coined by Mike Featherstone, 'greater possibilities for these affective intensities to be transmitted and experienced' (Featherstone, 2010: 212).

Silvia and Peter's vlogs

The video blog by the American couple Silvia and Peter consists of 20 videos uploaded since May 31, 2009 with durations between 38 seconds and 11 minutes. In the vlog *IVF 14-Embryo Transfer* the viewer is introduced to the system of assisted reproduction; the terminology and clinical approach to a blastocyst transfer.³ The vlog consists of almost two minutes of complicated medical terms, a picture of a petri dish showing 'their babies' and a comment on the fertility clinic's discarding of their embryos as a way of 'producing the highest live birth rates they can to attract business.' In accordance with Jansson's concepts this mediated experience with the system of assisted reproduction exemplifies the reflexive accumulation characterizing mediatization of consumption. Furthermore the re-encoded experience and the couple's reflection on their experience contain an image value, as Silvia and Peter's consumption and reflection become important fragments in their expression of a cultural belonging. However, I argue that this perspective neglects the significance of the experiential quality generated by the presence of 'their babies', petri dish and description of the realm of assisted reproduction. The two minute long vlog ends with Silvia's birthday filmed in their kitchen. She is filmed just as she receives a birthday cake resembling a buttock with 31 needle marks and a needle in it, with 'Happy birthday' written across. These two atmospheres offer different aesthetic experiential qualities, which nevertheless affectively involve the viewer through the presence of the body, technology, and spaces. Relatedness is orchestrated through a presupposed shared experience of the presence of persons, objects and environments and their experiential qualities (Böhme, 1993).

In *IVF 4-Drugs and background*, Silvia is being filmed by a friend while introducing the viewer to cost and effect of her hormone stimulating medication, as well as tips for which size of needles to use for the injections. Similar to *IVF 7-Follicle Stimulating Hormones*, Silvia and Peter film three injections of hormone stimulating medication, where Peter shows how to assemble the needle and extract the medicine. The video combines this content of the filming with stills that add explicatory written and drawn comments on the effects of the injection, including bruising and bleeding. Not only the informational and cognitive levels of this vlog, but also the fact that the vlog consists of remediation of music, text, sound effects and comics, appears to make it seem anti-aesthetic. The mediation as re-encodings of fragments in Jansson's perspective creates the illusion of a direct experience. In this sense, the vlogs express the convergence between media culture and consumer culture, as well as the dynamic interaction between simulation and interpretation, which, as Andre Jansson argues, characterizes contemporary 'image culture'⁴ (Jansson, 2002: 11).

The question remains whether the value of the mediated experience of IVF is purely communicational and reflexive, or whether the re-encodings are orchestrated in order to attune the viewer in a specific way by expressing norms and values in a sensuous form. In the following I will elaborate on Jansson's perspective on contemporary mediated experience/consumption as anti-aesthetic.

Vlogs as mediated experience

In *The Mediatization of Consumption: Towards an analytical framework of image culture* (2002), André Jansson argues that the distinction between consumer and producer in image culture is increasingly blurred creating 'closer and closer webs of intertextuality' (Jansson, 2002: 19). In order to encapsulate what characterizes cultural production and reproduction, Jansson expands on cultural theorist Stuart Hall's classical model of encoding/decoding (Hall, 1980). Mediated consumption, Jansson stresses, is continuously created and re-created, which must be contextualized as a process of decoding/re-encoding; interpretation/ expression. Thus, collective forms of life take form as webs of intertextuality and in consequence, do not refer to an original concrete experience. Cultural meaning is, as a result of the constant fragmentary transformation into new meaning, a negotiated business in which 'the fixation (however temporary) of cultural meaning is established through interpretations made by consumers in contexts' (Jansson, 2002: 19). This indicates that orchestrations of relatedness in Silvia and Peter's vlog depend on what Jansson puts forward as 'the subject's cultural frame of reference in order to (perhaps) function the way intended' (Jansson, 2002: 19).

Accordingly, the orchestration in Silvia and Peter's vlog depend on the viewer's ability to decode the individual fertility project in relation to its cultural frame. Following this perspective the complicated medical terms and clinical surroundings in *IVF 14-Embryo Transfer* suggest that these are part of the viewer's cultural frame; that individuals increasingly perceive themselves in relation to the biotechnological perception of the body and subject (Rose, 2007). Moreover, Jansson's perspective suggests that the mediation of the fertility project itself is a means to an end; a negotiation and transformation of the couple's cultural frame. As such, concrete experiences with assisted reproduction become part of a culturalization process predominantly characterized by 'simulations' (Jansson, 2002: 16). In this sense, Silvia and Peter's mediation of their experiences with assisted reproduction do not consist of stable signifiers, as their fragmentary characteristics are detached from referents in the real world. By consequence, the vlog does not offer information on reality because reality itself does not exist. The cultural meaning derived from the decoding/re-encoding is solely of de-materialistic value. What Jansson highlights is how the process of re-encoding is characterized by floating interpretations with a non-narrative logic and anti-aesthetic intertextuality. The media in this regard is significant, as it provides the means for circulating discursive knowledge and self-reflexivity.

The divergence between Jansson and Böhme's perspectives is not related to the accumulation of reflexivity. Both emphasize how individuals are actively involved in the encoding, decoding, and re-encoding of experiences and atmospheres. The divergence

is, rather, connected to Jansson's exclusion of the significance of the *presence* (perceived reality) in mediations endowed by people, objects, and environments in the generation of (cultural) meaning. In the following I will expand on Böhme's (1993) concept of atmosphere and discuss the relevance of the orchestration of the atmospheric vlogs as possibilities for the viewer to relate to the mediated fertility project.

Atmospheric presence

Through a combination of Walter Benjamin's (1979) production of atmosphere (Aura) and Hermann Schmitz's (1964) phenomenological conceptualization of the experience quality of atmospheres, Böhme suggests 'a reconceptualization of the classical concept of aesthetics' (Böhme, 1993: 114). In line with Richard Shusterman (1999) and his concept of soma-aesthetics, Böhme (re)turns to aesthetics as an 'art of living'. The human is perceived as essentially a bodily being and our mood (*befindlichkeit*⁵) is a result of our sense of bodily presence, which is endowed by 'the experience of objects, spaces and people' (Böhme, 1995: 27). Atmosphere and aesthetics is related to our senses, to our bodily being in the world, to everyday life, and is 'concerned with the relation between environmental qualities and human states' (Böhme, 1993: 114). Opposed to Jansson, Böhme is not interested in the image value, but in the value of the experience generated by the perception of people, objects, and spaces as present.

Böhme is particularly interested in the setting of our emotional state by tuned spaces. From his perspective, the new aesthetics is a critical aesthetics; it turns attention to the aestheticization of everyday life in terms of a focus on tuned spaces, as well as on how production of atmospheres puts the subject in a mood for consumption. This inclusion of everyday situations and their sensuous conditioning of our actions and reactions requires a break with 'the question of real, true, high art, of the authentic work of art, the work of art of distinction' (Böhme, 1993: 115). This new aesthetic is a general theory focusing on the production of atmospheres where perception equals the experience of the presence of persons, objects and environments. As such the concept of atmosphere is diffuse and yet powerful, 'something beyond rational explanation and with an emphasis which suggests that only there is the essential, the aesthetically relevant to be found' (Böhme, 1993: 113). As I will show in what follows, the indeterminate quality of affectivity and emphasis on the body, technology, time, space and modality of everyday life in Silvia and Peter's vlog conditions the viewer's perception of the fertility project.

The atmosphere in Silvia and Peter's vlogs presupposes a common reality of the perceiver and the perceived. What coincides is 'the reality of the perceived as the sphere of its presence and the reality of the perceiver, insofar as in sensing the atmosphere she/he is bodily present in a certain way' (Böhme, 1993: 122). Rephrasing Benjamin, Böhme suggests that to perceive an atmosphere is to absorb it into one's own bodily state of being. Although the atmospheres in the vlogs emanate from people, objects and environments and require bodily presence in order to be perceived and experienced, the specific object of affectivity remains diffuse. In opposition to Herman Schmitz's aesthetics of reception, Böhme argues that despite this ontological uncertainty, atmospheres are not free floating in space. On the contrary, 'they proceed

from and are created by objects, persons, and their constellations' (Böhme, 1993: 122). The presence of persons, spaces, and objects in Silvia and Peter's vlog thus endow weight and orientation; an involvement through the orchestrated experiential qualities. Thus, tuned spaces must be approached twofold, with a focus on affect (the subject's experience/reception) as well as the production itself; the presence of specific objects, people and spaces and their constellations (Böhme, 2008).

By addressing the vlogs as a production of atmospheres, a possibility arises to follow a bodily attunement as a result of the presence of objects, spaces, people and their constellations. This requires an investigation of the sensuous conditions that are orchestrated to set the viewer in a specific emotional state in terms of the interaction between body, technology and everyday life, which will be addressed in the following sections.

The atmospheric body

IVF2-First Lupron injection is a 1 minute and 15 second vlog where Silvia receives an injection from Peter containing a drug that stimulates hormones, called Lupron. At the opening, Silvia films Peter as he asks her whether she wants to film 'all of it'. He looks worried. As they proceed with preparation for the injection, she films him close up as he extracts the drug for the injection with great care and attention. As he is about to inject Silvia in the belly, he squeezes the belly, and laughs nervously. What follows is a close up of his concentrated facial expression as he injects the needle. We see how the needle meets resistance as Peter slowly pushes it into Silvia's flesh. We see how he empties the needle. Peter then comments: 'that was not so bad,' but falls down, as if he is about to faint, indicating relief.

The orchestration of the atmospheric body; its attunement by its presence is no coincidence, neither in its constellation with fertility hormones or the surrounding environment of the couple's bathroom. Before turning to how these aspects condition our sensate experience (which I will return to in the following sections), I want to elaborate on the immediate aesthetic experience that the atmospheric body brings about. It is, following Böhme, on an atmospheric level that Silvia and Peter's expressions affect the viewer. In *IVF2-First Lupron injection* Peter is insecure about what to record, worried about the injection and nervous about injecting the hormone the right way, as well as being nervous about hurting Silvia. The viewer absorbs Peter's disorientated emotional state, his facial expression, his tone of voice and his laughter into his/her own bodily state of being. The viewer becomes Peter, uncertain about what to feel. But the close ups of his concentrated facial appearance and his expression of relief supersedes the uncertainty. His shift in emotional register is intensified by the close ups of his facial appearance, voice and bodily movements. These suggestions of tension and emotional shifts enable involvement in their fertility project by drawing on recognizable states of being.

In the same manner, the haptic quality of Silvia's body as Peter squeezes her belly and slides the needle hesitantly into her flesh creates the perception of a shared bodily

being of the perceived and the perceiver. The close ups intensify the experience as it magnifies our perception of the needle and the feeling of it sliding into the body. However strange the injection with hormone stimulating drugs may seem to the viewer, the experience of injection and the anxiety about the potential pain is perceptually recognizable, familiar. The atmospheric body of Silvia and Peter thus involves the viewer in a multisensory way and changes their perceptual register; it sets the viewer in a specific mood by orchestrating recognizable spheres of involvement. Moreover, the atmospheric body has the power to intensify or diminish our emotional states. In *IVF10-HCG*⁶, the vlog opens with a written comment describing what we are about to see: Silvia's 'absolute look of horror.' Following on from this, a video clip of the couple in clinical surroundings shows them making their way in to the fertility clinic for Silvia's ovulation inducing injection. In the same manner as *IVF2-First Lupron injection*, an experience of uncertainty is created; the viewer does not know what to expect. The specific object of affectivity is indeterminate. In the following video clip, the uneasiness of the couple is intensified by Silvia's numb facial expression and Peter's tight embrace, as well as their mumbling and nervous laughter as they explain what they are about to undergo. Their feeling of uncertainty sets the viewer in an uncomfortable but also intrigued state. This feeling of uncertainty attunes the viewer to the following sequence, where Silvia is injected in her buttock. The video shows a close up of a circle drawn by the nurse on Silvia's buttock to indicate where the injection is to be done. What follows is a close up of the needle as it enters Silvia's flesh. The vlog ends with a written comment on a video clip showing Silvia after the injection, stating: 'Wow, I look tired, sick, and pasty.' Her body attunes space and the experiential quality of the presence of her body becomes the link between people. The way Silvia and Peter orchestrate the vlogs and succeed in intensifying and diminishing the viewer's possibility to react echo their own experience of emotional distress, pain and uncertainty about the hormone injections and fertility project in general. As part of media technology, vlogs offer a possibility for Silvia and Peter to transmit and let their fertility project be experienced by intensifying and diminishing the atmospheric attunement (Featherstone, 2010: 212). As such, they reveal how the atmosphere of assisted reproduction also encompasses an aesthetic dimension. In the following section I will elaborate on how the presence of assisted reproduction technology and medicine attunes space.

Atmospheric technology

The extension of aesthetics to encompass people, objects and environments enables the possibility to address the atmosphere produced by the re-encoding of medical terminology related to assisted reproduction, procedures, injections, clinical surroundings and personnel. As noted by Carl Elliott in his *Better than well: American medicine meets the American dream* (2003), 'there is a sense of uneasiness related to enhancement technologies and the source of this worry is indeterminable' (2003: xx). My aim here is to illuminate how this worry is present in Silvia and Peter's vlog and how this attunement is related to the atmosphere produced by complicated medical terms, a petri dish, and a picture of embryos.

The atmosphere produced in the vlogs through encounters with assisted reproduction fills the receptive space with a certain tone of feeling, evoking a very specific perceptive encounter. I suggest that the atmosphere produced in the vlog entries on drugs, hormones and embryo transfer enable connectivity through worry in a twofold manner. As the petri dishes, injections, clinical procedures, surroundings and terms in Silvia and Peter's vlogs are linked to the realm of assisted reproduction, the vlog first of all contains an element of unfamiliarity for the viewer whom is not accustomed with this domain. The strangeness is connected to a worry, echoing Elliot's (2009) diagnostic approach, about the influence of technology on human interaction and human experience. Secondly, there is an element of uncertainty linked to the enthusiastic consumption of drugs, procedures and services expressed by the couple. It is an enthusiasm linked to Silvia and Peter's pursuit of fertility despite their worry about their engagement with the realm of assisted reproduction.

In their orchestration of events, Silvia and Peter emphasize an atmosphere of ambiguity by placing the experiential quality of assisted reproduction technology and medicine at the fore. The atmosphere of the couple, the clinical staff, objects (needles, medication) and surroundings attune the viewer as they are made perceptible by their presence. As the aesthetic 'contains our norms and values in a concrete sensuous form' (Böhme, 1995: 31), the atmosphere of petri dishes, injections, clinical procedures, surroundings and terms contain the concern about the attrition of collective forms of life. Thus the state of affective disorientation is not just negative. Rather, it enables a different connectivity; an investment in the values, norms and ideals of collective forms of life through fascination of the state of atmospheric ambiguity. By making something that usually remains unseen and undetected (their own sense of ambiguity about the fertility project), Silvia and Peter influence the viewer's sensate condition and mood. I read this orchestration of the atmosphere of assisted reproduction as a presupposition of uncertainty/worry, an awareness of the common reality of the perceiver and the perceived. The orchestration of the atmospheric presence of assisted reproduction and medicine orients the viewer towards lived experience: the norms, values and ideals of technology in relation to collective forms of life. Silvia and Peter reveal a conscious awareness of their worries and focus upon how this connects to the consumption of technology through their intertwining orchestrations of atmospheric body, time, space and particular modalities of everyday life.

As the vlogs consist of fragments or re-encoded experiences, they offer, as Mike Featherstone (2010) suggests, a possibility to engage the specific potential for aesthetic experience offered by digital computer technology. According to Featherstone we have to consider ways in which new information technologies offer greater possibilities for these affective intensities to be experienced (Featherstone, 2011: 210). As such, the re-encodings, atmospheric presence of objects, people and spaces in the vlogs bring about a synesthetic experience. This experience of relatedness is brought about via the atmospheric body and the atmospheric realm of assisted reproduction. As I will elaborate in the following section, time, space and particular modalities of everyday life reveal how Silvia and Peter are intersubjectively oriented.

The vlog of Silvia and Peter offer encounters with collective forms of life in the sense of body, space and technology as shared lived experiences. In line with Böhme and Jansson, Featherstone suggests that contemporary individuals, rather than being considered as passive and manipulated by technology, actively engage themselves in revealing 'a new register of affect previously undetected in the flow of facial and bodily movements' (Featherstone, 2010:211). The atmospheres of the vlog are not just perceptible as distant subjective experiences, but present, attuning the viewer through atmospheric encounters of the usual unseen. Through the re-encoding of experiences with body, technology and everyday life, Silvia and Peter expand the atmosphere, surrounding the viewer, as they undergo IVF treatment.

Thus the aesthetic dimension offers insight into the role of an aesthetic-affective dimension through the formation of knowledge in terms of the role fertility treatments or the realm of assisted reproduction technology plays in human-world relations. The vlogs reveal reflexive individuals involved in how their life is conditioned through the sensate body as well as how they reflect individuals 'enjoying a new register of affect' (Featherstone, 2010: 211). The re-encodings of experiences with IVF in vlogs promote the aesthetically relevant, as they offer insight into how the conditions lived under are valued. The re-encodings' fragmentary composition brings about shifts in affective intensities, since they are generators of atmospheres by means of media technology surrounding the viewer and involving them at a bodily level.

The atmospheric everyday

According to Böhme the classical concept of aesthetics has primarily focused on three atmospheres; the beautiful, the sublime, and the characterless atmosphere; aura (Böhme, 1993: 122). Thus the significance of how the everyday production of atmospheres and the qualities of objects are linked to their atmospheric influence has been neglected. Extending this to Silvia and Peter's vlogs, the orchestration of time, space, and particular modalities of everyday life are bearers of mood. The orchestration of the ordinary allows for an investigation of the less conspicuous but nonetheless aesthetic-affective. It allows for a view into how the aesthetic-affective dimension conditions the viewer's perception of Silvia and Peter's fertility project.

Rita Felski (2013) suggests that the definition of everyday life is grounded in three key factors: 'time, space and modality' (Felski, 2000: 18). She argues that 'temporality of the everyday is that of repetition, the spatial ordering of the everyday is anchored in the sense of home, and the characteristic mode of experiencing the everyday is that of habit' (Felski, 2000: 18). As noted earlier, the vlog *IVF 14-Embryo Transfer* consists of two atmospheric attunements: the aesthetics of assisted reproduction and a birthday party in Silvia and Peter's kitchen. The couple intertwines the realm of the ordinary with medical terms and petri dishes. The re-encoded experiences with IVF express 'displacement from the ordinary but at the same time reveals our normal way of being by pushing it to its limits' (Carel, 2013: 346). In the vlog the realm of the ordinary in the form of a birthday cake is expressed as 'cute in a twisted way.' Something usual in terms of its yearly repetition, spatial arrangements, and particular modality is thus

infiltrated by feelings of ambiguity; their everyday life has become twisted. By orchestrating the atmosphere of the ordinary through a cyclic temporality exemplified by the birthday cake, the scene becomes opposed to the realm of assisted reproduction as futuristic and worrying.⁷ As such the quotidian reveals its powerlessness in relation to these twisted elements. But the alteration of these experiences the ordinary also calls for a state of alert; it sharpens the senses. The atmosphere of 'the cute art of living in a twisted way' facilitates an awareness of the formation of everyday practices as it is organized around the realm of assisted reproduction.

However, the intertwining of the realm of assisted reproduction with the mundane does not express subordination to the forces of biotechnology or biomedicine. What is expressed is the couple's engagement with and response to their environmental expansion, a way of familiarizing themselves with the repetitions, space and particular modalities related to assisted reproduction. As Felski notes: 'everyday life is characterized by a concentration of emotional energy; a belonging so profound that it functions as an extension of ourselves' (Felski, 2000:26). Hence the aesthetic attunement of this intrinsic aspect of human life is powerful. The cuteness of the cake expresses the changeability of the ordinary, but also reminds us how new routines, spaces and particular modalities related to assisted reproduction are disarmed. The two atmospheres bridge past and present aspects of everyday life and express a search for contingency, which link people together. Silvia and Peter's change in atmospheric setting creates an unstable narrative forcing the viewer to relate to the mediated experiences anew. The shift in atmospheric attunement edifies the sensate conditions of the realm of assisted reproduction and its impact on the organization of the everyday. The presence of people, objects and spaces in the vlog thus locate the couple; disclose their norms, values and ideals in a sensate form, affectively connecting them to the viewer.

Outro

In this paper I have suggested that an expanded concept of aesthetics, which encompass objects, people and space, addresses more properly the perception of the fertility project in the vlog. To speak of vlogs as production of atmospheric bodies, technologies and everyday space, time and particular modalities is not only to speak of image value, but also of the production of experiential qualities that at the same time locate us and connect us to one another. Analytically, the presence of the everyday life and its aesthetic-affective tuning of mood have been neglected, as pointed out by Felski and Böhme. The infertility vlog, as well as health vlogs on Cancer, HIV, chronic illnesses (Liu et al. 2013) and body modification vlogs (Modblogs), share commonality by the way in which they are orchestrated. Not only do they express biocentric and biogenetic conceptualizations of life experiences, they also simultaneously offer ways to relate through the presence of usually unseen aspects of collective forms of life; the familiarity of time space and the particular modalities of the everyday that such experiences instill. What is needed is not only a consideration of how the presence of bodies, technology and spaces in mediated form spurs on consumption, accumulates reflexivity or functions as representations of medical perceptions of the body, norms and

ideals. The individualized and differentiated mediations in vlogs, which document bodily experience, produce a resonance with the contingency of relatedness, which in turn are woven into the fabric of vlogs and mediated as expressions of the polyrhythmic aspects of everyday life.

¹ I have chosen to keep the authors of the vlog featuring in this article anonymous in light of the private content.

² I use the term orchestrated in order to highlight the production side of the way the vlogs are composed. But I also use the term in order to underline the attunement of the specific composition of objects, people and environments in the vlogs.

³ With blastocyst transfer, embryos are cultured in the laboratory incubator to the blastocyst stage before they are transferred to the womb.

⁴ According to Jansson media products are commodities 'which in some way function as mediators of meaning (...) embedded in complex intertextual patterns, which in turn interact with the practices and communities of everyday life. They are part of a developing image culture' (2002: 11)

⁵ Böhme uses Heidegger's term '*befindlichkeit*' (1995: 27).

⁶ HCG is short for *human chorionic gonadotropin*, which relates to assisted reproduction and is a drug injected to stimulate ovulation.

⁷ Sianne Ngai (2005) has worked with the significance of the expansion of aesthetic categories of judgment.

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Biography

Nathalie W. Soelmark is a Ph.D. student at the Department for the study of Culture at Southern University of Denmark (SDU). Her research focuses on the aesthetic dimension of mediated experiences within infertility projects and assisted reproduction in video blogs, art installations and film documentaries. In particular, she is interested in how such experiences might inform connections between people and spur relatedness. Soelmark has taught the course 'The Humane Technology' (spring 2013, SDU) and has given papers on the aesthetic-affective dimension of mediated experiences within infertility projects at conferences, including: Critical Themes in Media Studies, The New School, NY, 2013 and the Asian Conference on Cultural Studies, Osaka, Japan, 2013.