

A digital textural sociological exploration of alternative modes of 'touch' and 'contact': Lessons from queer digital spaces

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This paper explores the transformation of socialisation processes due to the digitalisation of entertainment and community formation in the current pandemic. In line with de la Fuente (2019), we question how the world is *shaped* and *sensed* in a post-COVID-19 society. We focus on queer digital spaces since touch and contact have been historically policed for queer people in a variety of modes. Our aim is to develop a digital textural sociological understanding of both current and historical experiences of queer resilience and creativity in mobilising digital technologies to create digital entertainment spaces that engage artists, creatives, organisers, promoters and audiences. Following Barad (2012), we consider the vast alternative possibilities of intimacy through imagining a diversification of modes of haptic encounters. We argue that the queering and digitalisation of interaction, touch and contact requires creativity, resilience, and courage.

References:

- De la Fuente, E. (2019), After the cultural turn: For a textural sociology, *The Sociological Review*, 67(3), pp. 552-567.
- Barad, K. (2012), Nature's queer performativity (the authorise version), *Women, Gender & Research*, 1(2), pp. 25-53.