

## 11 Collaborative Design and Grassroots Journalism: Public Controversies and Controversial Publics

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Many hoped that the advent of networked media would lead to the democratization of media. Media being central to democratic practices, there was also hope that more democratized media, in turn, would nurture civic engagement that would lead to more distributed and democratic decision making. Now that we have lived with networked media for some time, belief in the democratic potential of networked media has diminished. New media public spheres quickly develop their own hierarchies, and small elites control the debates. The impact of these new practices and public spheres on the larger media landscape is often meager and easily ignored, effectively attacked, or subsumed by larger media forces. Yet even though the new practices and public spheres face internal and external difficulties, many still believe in their importance.

The two design cases analyzed in this chapter involved public experiments in which new forms and practices of mobile-media broadcasting were co-developed to support grassroots journalism. The cases thus deal with the making of new media public spheres that build on civic engagement. They explore more decentralized media practices and civic political engagement conducted outside the official political system and outside and at the periphery of the established media landscape. The first case involved an arts and performance center,<sup>1</sup> cultural workers, an IT company, and university researchers; it explored how the arts and performance center could become a grassroots producer of critical media broadcast dealing with cultural and societal issues. The second case involved public service radio and TV broadcasters, a small media company, a grassroots hip-hop organization, and university researchers; it explored how a small grassroots broadcaster could adjoin, albeit at the periphery, a mass-media production by large public radio and television broadcasters. The cases will be analyzed from a co-design and innovation perspective. The focus is thus on how broadcast formats and civic media practices and public spheres were co-developed and what happened during the broadcasts.

The concepts of open innovation, co-design, prosumers, user-generated content, and a read-write culture have become widely accepted in business and in academia. These terms suggest an erosion of older distinctions such as those between the professional and the amateur, between the designer and the user, and between mass media and grassroots media. It suggests the collapse, or at least the blurring, of established institutional and professional boundaries. Whether these boundaries are more blurred now than they were twenty or thirty years ago can be debated, but during the last two decades these tendencies, which previously existed only at the margins, have become prominent in business, innovation, and academic discourses. The aim of this chapter is to shed light on what these changes may imply.

Specifically, what will be addressed is how roles and responsibilities are negotiated and distributed across competences and practices as new forms of publics are explored. Here “publics” is defined, as by Foucault (1973, 1977) and by Barry (2001), as an expanded form of governing and the political in which governing of public concerns generates multiple terrains made by particular actor networks that blur traditional distinctions between public and private and between the state and the market. For example, Barry (2001) points out that requiring seat belts in automobiles is a regulatory practice that cuts across state law, car manufacturing, and citizens’ behavior. In the cases discussed here, the experiments are made possible by both public (national, regional, and municipal) and private funding. Similar to Barry’s seat-belt example, broadcast technologies and broadcast and copyright laws cut across international and national laws, as well as the rules set up by the collaborating partners. This chapter focuses on how the initial issue is negotiated, defined, and redefined as organizations, people, and technologies are enrolled and made to perform. Thus, how knowledge and power intertwine and affect what spaces for negotiation are made possible, what possibilities are closed down, and how the users challenge these decisions are central issues—issues that have to do with distributed decision making, with infrastructuring, and with the everyday politics of public spheres. Another central issue is how different perspectives on innovation (future-making) are negotiated—for example, how the various partners imagine the future, how willing the partners are to imagine themselves as something else or someone else, and how willing they are to become the other as they imagine and try out future media practices and future forms of communication. The chapter also addresses how these distributed processes produce particular working relations and divisions of labor. The assumption is that the design process should be seen as prototypical exploration of future possibilities and practices (Björgvinsson 2008). Thus, the chapter addresses the question “What are the futures of such production and what do they say about division of work and responsibilities, about the politics of work, as future possibilities are imagined?” Finally, the chapter discusses what happens when research experiments enter various public spheres full of conflicting heterogeneous perspectives that are constantly becoming and constantly intersecting.

### Open innovation, co-design, infrastructuring, and democratic innovation

A central assumption made by proponents of open innovation and co-design is that no partner alone has all the knowledge needed to develop new products, services, or experiences. Working across institutional and professional borders is thus necessary. How open innovation and co-design should be done and for what reasons is, however, debated. Chesbrough (2003) has studied how enterprises have come to rely increasingly on external ideas when innovating, rather than only on internally generated ideas. By combining internal and external ideas, enterprises are able to evaluate ideas on the basis of their commercial viability. The paradigmatic change from internal and closed innovation to open innovation, Chesbrough argues, is due in part to an increase in the mobility of labor. Surowiecki (2004), Howe (2008), and Brabham (2008) have argued for the harnessing of “the wisdom of the crowds” through so-called crowd-sourcing, while Petersen (2008) has argued that crowd-sourcing is a way for companies to piggyback on users and gain access to free labor. Etzkowitz and Leydsdorff (2001) have argued for the value of so-called Triple Helix incubators where universities, industry, and the public sphere intersect and engage in innovation processes. Proponents of “living labs” have criticized such traditional innovation milieus and incubators for being too closed and too far from the market and for stifling the innovation potential of Triple Helix incubators (CoreLabs 2006; Stålbröst 2008). Various “living lab” initiatives have therefore argued for situating innovation in real-world environments where user-driven innovation is carried out as research organizations, companies, public institutions, and the civic society develop new products and services together with end users (CoreLabs 2006; Stålbröst 2008). Leadbeater (1999, 2008), Leadbeater and Miller (2004), and von Hippel (2005) have argued that entrepreneurial individuals and groups residing outside more formal innovation structures are more innovative, agile, and open to collaborating and sharing competences and resources. To Leadbeater (1999), these entrepreneurs largely “live on thin air”—that is, make their living by producing ideas and realizing them through their know-how. Some critics point out that “living on thin air” is often not done by choice and is a highly insecure form of work (Born 2000); others point to the uneasy relationship between small independent actors and large corporations, noting that large corporations tend to court and seize products and competences generated by smaller companies (Wark 2006). The cultural anthropologist and feminist scholar Angela McRobbie (2009) has pointed out how Charles Leadbeater and others with allegedly neoliberal views idealize creative practices as a source of economic growth at a time when cultural practices are increasingly expected to become entrepreneurial and to be self-supported rather than funded by government grants (which has led to increased individualization, competition, instability, and mobility), when societal structures supporting young creative talent have diminished considerably, resulting in fewer small start-ups and the quick turnaround of young creative

talents in multinational corporations, as McRobbie states, and when “convergence” mainly means that multinational enterprises become bigger and bigger as they acquire smaller companies. The relationship between large and small actors is therefore an uneasy one. Wark (2006) argues that the “vectoralist class,” which controls, owns, and monetizes flows of intellectual property, persistently courts the “hacker class,” which refines information into affective and desirable products. That big media corporations acknowledge the value and the power of independent culture, cultural resistance, and grassroots media is well known in the field of critical media studies. Enzensberger (2001), for example, pointed out how powerful enterprises aim to trap less powerful forces—media activists and grassroots media—so as to appropriate their verve. Open innovation across institutions of varying sizes is thus not always an easy match.

Research that demands extensive collaboration across professional and institutional boundaries is not only multi-sited, but also multicultural. Various institutional cultures—with distinct values and norms—need to learn how they differ and how they can collaborate. Distributed innovation, as one might call it, therefore demands that differences be acknowledged and that people with conflicting views and practices settle on what to agree upon and what to disagree upon. This means resolving conflicts on a paradigmatic level—for example, what is considered new and what the focus should be—as well as resolving how resources and competences should be organized, distributed, and shared. Of fundamental importance to such research and development projects—as Pedersen (2007) argues, building upon work by Callon (1986)—is paying attention to how the initial object of design is constructed: Is it, for example, a discrete new marketable object, or is it new ways of thinking and behaving? It is important to consider how the participants should work together, how the issues to be looked into are initially defined, and how interests, enrollments, and mobilizations of allies are carried through, as well as how moldable and open to controversy the objects to be tried out are. Unless discontinuities between contexts are resolved, collaboration will be difficult.

Resolving discontinuities between local contexts and global needs has been defined by Star and Ruhleder (1996) as the making of infrastructure, and by actor-network researchers (Latour 1999a,b, 2005a; Law 1991) as the gradual coming-together and stabilization of actor networks and black-boxing of the negotiations—or, in Latour’s (2005b) words, the Things—or socio-material political assemblies—where “matters of concern” have been addressed and resolved. These perspectives acknowledge that design and innovation is, as Suchman (2002) writes, a collective interweaving of people, artifacts, and processes. This view, as Suchman notes, stands in stark contrast to views—popular in the fields of design and IT development—of innovation as the making of discrete objects and as networks of devices, rather than as networks of relations. Even though both Star (1996) and actor-network researchers emphasize that a stabilization of the actor network or infrastructure is needed, they also note

that actor networks are constantly performed and are in constant “becoming” or evolving. Hence, it is more correct to speak, as Karasti et al. (2010) do, of infrastructuring as well as actor networking. Upholding relations, consequently, demands ongoing negotiations.

Latour (1999b) humorously suggested that actor-network theory could be renamed “actant-rhizome ontology,” and Law and Mol (2000) pointed out that some networks are more like fire and fluid spaces, as they are simultaneously stable and unstable as they diverge and change. In view of this, “intersecting rhizomes” (Deleuze 1980; Deleuze and Guattari 1984) is a more useful term than “infrastructuring.” It suggests that various networks or infrastructuring processes are less homogeneous, as they have various roots rather than one root or truth, and it suggests that certain rhizomes intersect—and thereby affect one another—but aren’t necessarily aiming for stability across contexts. This is particular true when infrastructuring processes enter public spheres.

The question of democracy in relation to innovation hasn’t been addressed much within the innovation discourse. However, von Hippel (2005) claims that innovation has become more democratic as access to information and to advanced production tools has become more available, enabling lead users to innovate. If that is the case, lead users can play a role in competitive elite markets (an argument that is contested in chapter 10 of this book).

Infrastructuring, or actor networking, says little about how power could or should be distributed. In fact, early actor-network research was criticized for being apolitical and for focusing too much on large and powerful actors. Star (1991) argued that actor-network theory did not take into account who benefits and who is marginalized when socio-material relations are made durable, and that we could benefit from looking at the margins where actors struggle to redefine pre-existing categories. Deleuze (1980) and Deleuze and Guattari (1984) suggested, along similar lines, that we should aim at “performing the other”—for example, being a woman, or being marginal—if we want to create new societal orders that go beyond the dualistic thinking so prevalent within Western societies.

Building upon work by Star, a few researchers, including the author of this chapter, have aimed at intertwining the notion of infrastructuring and actor networking with the Scandinavian tradition of Participatory Design. Participatory Design is a perspective that early on emphasized the political aspects of design (Ehn 1988), arguing that all partners affected by design—including those typically marginalized (e.g., blue-collar workers)—should participate in the shaping of how the tools and practices are to be combined. More recently, as Participatory Design no longer solely is engaged in design for workplaces and has entered design in and for public spheres, some proponents of Participatory Design (Björgvinsson et al. 2012b; Ehn 2008) have viewed distributed design work as a balancing act between infrastructuring (which aims at resolving conflicts across contexts) and socio-material debates, or what Latour calls “Things” (which

are socio-material political assemblies). The newer Participatory Design perspective thus acknowledges, in line with Mouffe's (2000) notion of agonism, that design should not aim solely at resolving conflicts and reaching consensus, but should acknowledge that disagreement and conflicting perspectives are fundamental features of a democratic practice. Thus, how access to and sharing of knowledge can be supported, as well as how knowledge is controlled (who gets to speak, who gets to influence what is being developed, what is inscribed into the socio-technical arrangements), is central to various co-design initiatives, particularly Participatory Design initiatives.

### **Live mobile video reporting from a city festival**

Each of the two design cases analyzed in this chapter involved public experiments in which new forms of mobile-media broadcasting formats were developed to support grassroots journalism. The first case, described here, involved an IT company, an arts and performance center, seven cultural workers, and a number of researchers from the university. This constellation of partners conducted a one-week experiment during the annual Malmö City Festival. Seven cultural workers broadcast live videos that viewers could interact with through the Web and their mobile phones. The Malmö City Festival features free concerts by international, national, and local performers. It also has art, design, film, and theater shows. In the center of the city, food stands serve foods from all parts of the world. The experiment happened because all of the partners saw that they could gain knowledge of new forms of broadcasting, increased public exposure, and the development and testing of new mobile phone audience-interaction features for live video broadcasts.

### **Co-design as the reproduction of established knowledge and power relations**

The idea of setting up an alternative broadcast space originated at the arts and performance center. Members of the staff wanted to explore how a cultural center could be engaged in producing grassroots radio or television in which current events were dealt with from artistic and critical perspectives, with high aesthetic quality and with social relevance. According to them, traditional Swedish broadcasters ignored important sub-cultural expressions and perspectives. They were interested in what it could mean to a cultural center to be an independent media publisher. The IT company, which wished to be an anonymous partner in the experiment, was interested in exploring the use of mobile interfaces to enable viewers to be in direct dialogue with the broadcasters during live broadcasts, a feature that fitted well into their design portfolio and that was of interest to their customers. It was important to them that the video broadcast would be live and personalized. They argued that news today is instant and becomes obsolete quickly and that viewers want to be able to select and personalize what they consume and be in direct contact with the broadcasters. A broadcaster, they argued, must be

first with the news or else it will lose viewers. The IT company made a non-negotiable demand: it would participate only if the video broadcast from the festival were broadcast live. The researchers were interested in studying how such a collaborative design and media experiment could be staged and what new broadcast forms could be developed, and in working with the IT company to develop new mobile-video interfaces. The cultural workers' interests were not clearly stated at the beginning. They joined in the experiment mainly because they found it interesting and thought it might provide them with new insights and new contacts and because they were supporters of the arts and performance center.

The staff of the arts and performance center did the initial framing. In their view, the Swedish media lacked diversity, didn't cover Swedish subcultural activities adequately, and didn't have a subcultural view of popular culture and current events. For the arts and performance center the speed of broadcasting was not important, which it was to the IT company as they saw a new form of broadcasting emerge. Both the arts and performance center and the researchers thought that live broadcasting might be too demanding on the cultural workers, that it would compromise the quality of the content, and that the video quality of the broadcasts would be too low. (At the time, live mobile-video streaming yielded blurred and pixelated images and metallic sound.) The IT company, however, was able to reframe the problem and enroll and mobilize both the arts and performance center and the researchers to adopt its agenda. This shift came about partly because the IT company made its demand a prerequisite and partly because the arts and performance center would not be able to broadcast without the assistance from the IT company and the researchers. For the researchers, who could have set up a less technologically advanced broadcast solution, the participation of the IT company was essential from a funding point of view. The grant funding the researchers' salaries explicitly stated that prototypes for new media production were to be developed in collaboration with companies and it was therefore important that the collaboration did not collapse. The cultural workers were not on board at this stage and therefore couldn't affect the framing of the problem. Thus, the partner with advanced knowledge of mobile media, which also controlled the technical infrastructure and was economically the strongest partner, was able to fundamentally shift the direction of the collaboration and, consequently, making it more difficult for the arts and performance center to produce well-planned artistic and visually pleasing broadcasts.<sup>2</sup>

Although the arts and performance center's initial framing had been redefined, the center still had a considerable opportunity to influence the experiment—for example, who would be recruited to report, how they would report, what the broadcast would be titled, and how to shape the media outlets on the Web and in their festival café tent. The editorial strategy of the head of the arts and performance center was to recruit seven prominent figures from the local cultural scene to work *pro bono* and give them free rein in covering the festival.



The seven cultural workers—henceforth referred to as “the bloggers”—were Roger, the artistic director of The Chamber, a controversial theater company; Nouri, a leader of the grassroots hip-hop organization Elementz of the Street; Rebecka, a journalist for the biggest newspaper in southern Sweden; Julia, an actor and a filmmaker; Frida, a “club arranger” (that is, a person who arranges for bands to play in nightclubs) and the The Diva Duo (Maria and Elin), an art-and-design duo. The bloggers had no experience with live video broadcasting, and only one of them was a trained journalist. A dedicated webpage named Bloggen (meaning The Blog) was designed and programmed, and the video clips were also put on YouTube for later viewing. During the live broadcasts, viewers could communicate with the bloggers via text messages. A café tent, located at one of the central areas of the festival, was given a graphical profile clearly associated with the cultural center, and was where festival visitors could watch the broadcasts projected on a large screen. Both the webpage and the café clearly indicated the arts and performance center as the publisher.

In six days, the bloggers broadcast nearly 200 two-to-three-minute video clips. As the experiment unfolded, it yielded considerable insights into central qualities and problems of the new broadcast format as well as new design solutions—for example, that the live audience feedback was engaging to the reporters, but that texting was too slow and emotion icons would work better. Also, that the broadcasters needed visual feedback of the status of the live screen on their phones, and that the broadcasters could announce to each other a few minutes before going live that they planned to do so. It also revealed that the bloggers felt constrained by and tried to redefine and reposition themselves in relation to inscriptions—or socio-material decisions—made by the IT company, the arts and performance center, and the researchers before they came on board. Decisions such as that they were expected to do live broadcasts, that the broadcast was personalized by enabling the viewers to subscribe to individual broadcasters, that it was named Bloggen, which also signaled that their broadcast was personal, as well as their working terms. The experiment pointed out how infrastructuring, or agreement across contexts, is not only technological inscriptions, but how the technological constraints intertwine with division of labor and working conditions, the branding (the visual aesthetics and naming of the project), the bloggers’ construction of a broadcast persona, so as not to confuse their role as festival broadcasters with other professional commitments and their private identity, and the audience’s perception of the broadcast.

### **The construction of media personas and broadcasting tactics as features of infrastructuring**

Infrastructuring, the aligning of inscribed norms and values across contexts, as Star and Bowker (2002) and Karasti et al. (2010) point out, involves socio-material negotiations in which ideas and material fuse into particular configurations. Whether we name



them infrastructuring or actor networks is perhaps less important than the observation that they come about through the fusion of relations that are constantly in motion, that are constantly becoming, as Karasti et al. (2010), Suchman (2002), Deleuze (1980), and Deleuze and Guattari (1984) emphasize. As will become clear, infrastructuring at the intersection between the academic and professional fields of interaction design and media and communication studies is not simply a matter of what is often delimited to the material inscriptions in technical protocols and interactive interfaces, but includes the configuration of the broadcasters in relation to established inscriptions, other roles and obligations that they hold, and in relation to their fellow broadcasters. This in turn points toward why it is difficult to draw clear borders between design and use, and designer and user. In relation to innovation, and research and development, it points to the importance of co-developing the social and technical, rather than delimiting questions that concern content, identity, and roles to the later phases of development.

The bloggers, as was previously stated, had not been members of the team during the concept-development phase and the building of the prototype. This meant that the technical infrastructure and the framing, naming, and visual expression of the project were already in place when they joined. They were therefore bound by considerable constraints, which in turn meant that they needed to invest significant time thinking through, struggling with and working around these constraints as well as configure their relations to each other, as well as define and position their role as “bloggers” in relation to their professional and private identity and roles. Although not traditionally acknowledged as design work, their struggle with the inscriptions—naming and categorizations—demanded considerable “designerly” work. Categorizations and selection is thus not only a question of interface design or technical inscriptions, but also includes positioning-strategies in relation to what roles and identities are taken by the broadcasters.

The expression “video bloggers” suggested that the broadcasts were the bloggers’ personal perspectives on the festival. Today, blogging consists of various genres (Sarrimo 2012). However, during the heyday of video blogging, or vlogging, of which Steve Garfield is considered to be one of the instigators (Ressner 2004; Wikipedia 2013), video blogs were thought of mainly as personal visual essays (Sydell 2005). The link between video blogging and direct cinema, personal cinema, and the cinema vérité of the 1960s is made apparent by the work of Jonas Mekas, who in the 1960s made personal documentary films and who later embraced video blogging.

Most of the bloggers gave considerable thought to what role and position they should take on, a role that was neither their personal nor their professional selves. It was also important to them that the media personas chosen not resemble one another. The journalist Rebecka, who writes mostly on cultural issues, often with ethnic and gender perspectives, only once did a traditional journalistic broadcast. Instead, many of her broadcasts were artsy short films as well as snapshots of everyday “poetic” activities

that had nothing to do with the festival. This made her video blogging distinct from her professional journalistic work, while not venturing into a private blogging style. Roger, who had recently been a subject of heated debate in the Swedish media because of his controversial theater pieces, decided to take on what he called a “folklig Svensson” persona—that is, an ordinary-Swede persona. Frida, although not a journalist, took on a traditional journalistic role aiming at more factual and contextualized reporting. Maria and Elin reported as The Diva Duo, wearing hip-hop-oriented outfits and acting with overwrought gusto and often with slapstick humor. Nouri was the only one of the bloggers who pretty much was himself, the grassroots hip-hop education-ist. Julia, who made rather personal visual essays, was the only one who refused to broadcast live; she saved her black-and-white films on a mobile phone and uploaded them later.

The bloggers did not intend to give personal reports of the sort typically associated with private blogs, yet there was a tendency by the audience to view their reports as personal reflections. This was because the inscriptions to some degree overpowered the bloggers’ reconfigurations. The organizational arrangements—that they mainly blogged on their own—and the constraints of mobile media, which favored extreme close-ups, since the bloggers acted both as cameraman and bloggers, signaled a personalized media space. That the audience could subscribe to a particular blogger suggested, furthermore, that the viewer could enter a more personal relational media space instead of a more shared collective space. The naming of the project as Bloggen, and perhaps the newness of blogging (which was then still perceived by many to belong to private and even confessional essays) to some degree overpowered the bloggers intentions, as the reading or reception of the broadcasts is perceived as personal, even narcissistic. Even though they did not fully succeed in relation to their audience to completely reconfigure the inscriptions in place, their aim to reconfigure it shows how the bloggers saw their participation not as an isolated instance, but that their participation in the experiment and the reporting connected to wider social systems, in particular to their public roles and responsibilities within their professional domains. For them, it was important to pay attention to the symbolic or cultural significance of their broadcasts, which demanded that they spend considerable time thinking through how they would present themselves and what the “tones” of the broadcasts should be; a form of work that is often made invisible, marginalized and comes often too late in the developmental phase of design research projects, perhaps because it is highly performative and ephemeral, and because of the lack of knowledge and the importance of these issues by IT developers and designers.

### **Rhizomatic intersection and spatial reconfigurations through erasure**

Infrastructuring, as we have seen, involves power struggles around what is to be inscribed into the sociomaterial mediascape. Previously, it has been briefly touched

upon how needs are silenced, for example the need to have a say on the broadcast quality, which was erased in favor of live broadcasting. It has also been briefly touched upon how the *mise-en-scène*, how the mobile interaction, the close-up recording and the design of the website shaped the experiment. It has furthermore briefly been discussed how selection, for example the selection of bloggers, is a central feature of infrastructuring. In relation to this, it is worth noting that many of the bloggers in turn relied heavily on their own cultural networks when deciding what to cover. It has also briefly been pointed out how infrastructuring connects to wider social systems, for example the bloggers professional identity, as they are public figures.

What is to be emphasized here is that the *mise-en-scène* also includes spatial reconfigurations through erasure conducted by cropping, as well as by overlaying. Within film and photography, these are often used and are well-known features, but are perhaps less addressed in design discussion on infrastructuring. Another central feature of infrastructuring is that it is continuously in becoming and changing, for example by connecting to other infrastructures.

That particular infrastructuring processes perpetually connects to other infrastructuring processes, as well as includes silencing through cropping and overlaying, became evident during a broadcast done simultaneously by local newspaper *Sydsvenskan* and the hip-hop blogger Nouri, at the time working for Elementz of the Street. *Sydsvenskan* had asked Elementz of the Street if *Sydsvenskan's* youth section, *Postis*, could broadcast a poetry reading and a poetry prize ceremony outside Elementz of the Street's festival tent. Elementz's tent was chosen despite the fact that—or perhaps because—*Sydsvenskan's* new online youth community venture Nellad had a festival tent, which was for the most part empty, close to Elementz of the Street. At the same time, Elementz of the Street's tent was crowded with teenagers attending activities run by teenagers for teenagers. (The online youth community Nellad flopped and closed down a few months later.) That *Postis* used Elementz of the Street's tent made sense since they needed a *mise-en-scène* of teenagers. It did not matter that the Elementz of the Street teenagers weren't *Postis* readers and weren't participating in the poetry competition. In line with *Sydsvenskan's* need for a backdrop of energetic teenagers, not Elementz of the Street as such, the *Sydsvenskan* photographer arranged the camera in such a way that Elementz of the Street's logos were cropped out of the frame, while clearly displaying *Sydsvenskan's* mobile *Postis* banner. (It is, of course, difficult to confirm that this was the explicit intention, but it appears to be so; every camera angle avoids the Elementz of the Street logos, which were all over their tent.) This appropriation created an exclusive *Sydsvenskan* mediascape that effectively and pristinely erased Elementz of the Street from the *mise-en-scène*.

Nouri's live coverage of the *Postis* broadcast also involves erasure as he, for the most part, displayed the poetry reading as a backdrop to his broadcast, explicitly overwriting or erasing *Postis'* poetry broadcast. He begins his coverage by explaining that Elementz

of the Street is being visited by a *Postis* journalist, who is there to read poems, and that he will show the crew filming the event. He ends the introduction with a brief glimpse of the poetry reading and a joke. After remarking “Here is the camera crew, they wanted to do a story on me, but unfortunately that is not happening,” he turns his camera toward the camera crew. After panning the camera over the area, he asks some visitors if they have written any of the poems (the answer is “No”), which leads into a discussion of teenage poems. Next he moves away from the poetry reading and starts talking to two girls in the vicinity trying out foil fencing. He then returns to the woman reading poetry and says “I am not sure, from my mouth,” whereupon he starts beatboxing “Ajaw ajaw, bam bam, boom, chick ... ” and drowns out and thus silences the *Postis* broadcast.

In the broadcast, which is layered on top of another broadcast, Nouri is critical of the *Postis* broadcast several times. When he jokingly states that they had planned to interview him, he points out that Elementz of the Street’s activities, which he thinks deserves coverage, are ignored. When he starts beatboxing, he is further commenting that hip-hop is street poetry that is not acknowledged by *Postis* and that it is far from the self-centered existential teenage poems being read. Just as *Sydsvenskan* silences and erases the presence of Elementz of the Street by consistently cropping Elementz of the Street’s banners no matter what camera angle is used, Nouri silences *Sydsvenskan*’s poetry reading by layering his voice over their broadcast. The viewer gets only a fragmented view of it and a general feeling that Nouri is bored by the event as he jumps from one thing to another, moving farther away from the *Postis* event. Thus, while *Sydsvenskan* erases Elementz of the Street’s presence quietly through cropping and excluding Elementz of the Street logos, leaving no trace of it visible to the viewer, Nouri explicitly puts his act of silencing and erasure on display.

Distributed innovation across professional borders in real-life settings consequently and continuously evolves, connects, and intersects in unpredictable ways. Infrastructuring mediascapes rhizomatically connect to other mediascapes and therefore are volatile and need to again and again engage in new problematization, interessement, and enrollment (Callon 1986; Pedersen 2007). What intersection of time and place will occur is, however, impossible to predict. The case also shows the uneasy relationship between professional media and grassroots media, although they are able in different ways to gain knowledge and “products” from the collaboration. The professional media companies, be it the IT company or *Sydsvenskan*, through their power and importance, are able to get what they need by engaging in a quasi-problematization, interessement, and enrollment process, as it is valuable for an organization such as Elementz of the Street to be on good terms with them. *Sydsvenskan*, however, is not able to mobilize Elementz of the Street as their allies, as they do not become active participants and supporters of the broadcast. Instead the enrollment results in a media battle, which *Sydsvenskan* is unaware of and which doesn’t lead to a constructive public dispute.

The struggle is thus one-sided, and the grassroots mediascape and the professional mediascape are like two mirrors placed back to back, one of them (the professional mediascape) without any transparency and one of them (the grassroots mediascape) quasi-transparent, allowing the professional mediascape to appear in the background.

### Reproducing labor politics

Just as the design decisions reproduced existing power relations in which the IT company had the most to say about the design direction, the arts and performance center and the researchers less, and the bloggers the least, the experiment also reproduced existing working relations and labor politics. Members of the IT company's staff would work on the experiment only as part of their paid work. However, the bulk of the work hours carried out by the IT company was done by a student who worked long days as it was part of her exam project. The time put in by the staff of the arts and performance center staff and by the researchers was paid for, although the researchers needed to put in a lot of extra hours so as to ensure that the experiment would not collapse; helping out both the student at the IT company and the cultural center, and functioning as a middleman between the two. The bloggers, who represented the project's image and risked their standing the most, were the only people that were expected to participate for free, as neither the cultural center nor the research project had a budget for their participation. Thus, the experiment reproduced a form of labor common within the cultural sector.

Before the festival, several of the bloggers commented on the work burden that the broadcast would entail and the fact that the work was *pro bono*. Frida demanded a salary, or at least a free mobile phone. When the cultural center turned down her demands a day before the opening of the festival, she stated that she would not participate, but later the same day she reconsidered. Rebecka and Nouri were both concerned that the task would be too demanding, insofar as they would simultaneously be working full time. Rebecka stated that her participation would entail a lot of thinking and planning in addition to the reporting. Four days into the festival, she ended her participation after consulting with her chief editor, as it occupied her thoughts too much and infringed on her regular work. During the festival, Nouri was frustrated by the need to alternate between reporting and running activities in the Elementz of the Street tent.

Although all of the participants adjusted to the cultural center's *pro bono* demand, many of the bloggers used the broadcasting opportunity to make public their frustration with the city's cultural funding policies. Frida did a broadcast in which she stated that she opposed the festival and suggested that it would be better if the city used the money to subsidize local initiatives that arrange cultural events throughout the year (an argument also made by many of the small commercial music venues and festival arrangers, as it makes it difficult for them to book popular acts during the fall or to arrange commercial music festivals in Malmö) (Oscarsson 2010). Roger, in one of his

broadcasts, tried to force the leader of a local band to reveal how little the band was paid to play at the festival, so as to expose how—according to him—the city exploits local musicians.

Frida's demand for a salary clearly shows how our experiment presupposed that cultural workers will work for free. Several of the bloggers also pointed out that their commitment to the experiment would double their workloads, as they already had other commitments, which, as McRobbie (2009) has shown, has become the expected way of living for many cultural workers. The means of production is even more problematic in the light of Thrift's (2006) argument that many businesses today have blurred the distinction between prototyping and release of products. It is worth noting that in the case being discussed here the cultural workers were well established and weren't hunting for jobs; they participated because they considered the cultural center an important alternative cultural venue. However, the experiment still shows that issues such as workload and financing are central aspects of infrastructuring, and that cultural workers are more often expected to work *pro bono* than are people in other professions. It also points to the uneasy relationship between grassroots media and large media companies. The cultural center and the IT company had quite different views on what constituted a valuable media practice, and Elementz of the Street and *Sydsvenskan* erased each other. The "new" thus turned out to be quite familiar, just wearing slightly different shoes as it strolled into the future.

### The Musikhjälpen experiment

Innovation across contexts—be it open innovation or various co-design approaches—have arranged and described collaborations between various partners as structured and planned processes in the sense that what partners, what issues, and how to organize the design process, is to some extent planned in advance. The outcome of a collaboration, however, is not known in advance and is open-ended. Brandt (2001) sketches how co-design processes can alternate between field observations and collaborative design workshops, and later on between contextual design interventions and collaborative design workshops. For Binder (2007), the lab is a temporary suspension from everyday activities at work as the partners need a "what if" space in which future possibilities are explored and decisions are delayed through a defined research program. My fellow researchers and I (Björgvinsson, Ehn, and Hillgren 2012b) have argued for mixing "what if" spaces with real-life experiments. We have also argued for a more radically open-ended approach in which even what partners are involved and where and when the design activities happen are defined along the way.

In 2006, Malmö University researchers started what would become a long-term engagement with Elementz of the Street, an organization the researchers got to know because it held monthly events at the cultural center. Elementz of the Street is

a grassroots hip-hop youth organization that has strong ties to *folkbildning* (popular education) and to *folkrörelse* (Söderman 2013; Sernhede and Söderman 2013), traditions that are in line with the education tradition of DuBois (1973/2001) and Dewey (1916/1999). Many of Elementz of the Street's members are children or grandchildren of immigrants, and the organization's philosophy is that multi-ethnic encounters should happen through cultural activities. Societal inclusion is addressed indirectly through rap, dance, and graffiti, rather than being explicitly on the agenda. Elementz of the Street also emphasizes active engagement, be it in the urban environment or in the Swedish media landscape. The activities of Elementz of the Street's members often counter negative images projected by mass medias.

The collaboration with Elementz of the Street started without pre-defined ideas of what to focus on in relation to new media practices, or what constellations of partners would be formed. It has led to several research and development projects and experiments in which representatives of Elementz of the Street worked with the researchers and various partners on new forms of local media distribution, experimental remix interfaces, urban games (Björgvinsson et al. 2012a), and grassroots journalism.

### **Musikhjälpen and the partners' agendas**

In connection with a fundraising campaign called Musikhjälpen (Music Aid), a week-long street-journalism experiment was carried out in which Elementz of the Street collaborated with the researchers, with the media company Paradise Production, and with Swedish public television and radio broadcasters (SVT and SR). The collaboration, which was initiated by Paradise Production, came about just a month before the launching of the Musikhjälpen campaign.

The experiment shows how uneasy the relationship between grassroots media and larger media companies and public institutions is. It also shows that the various partners' constituencies have internal conflicts and are not as homogeneous as they often are portrayed to be, and how volatile and "constantly becoming" infrastructuring processes are when they are carried out in public settings. Furthermore, it reiterates how selection, constraints, exclusion, and branding are central to infrastructuring and how design decisions—which are also about selection, constraints, exclusion, and branding—corresponds in many ways to categorizations and selection of who participates in the design and development phases of the cases.

The purpose of the Musikhjälpen campaign was to raise awareness and money for humanitarian projects. In Malmö's main square, three radio hosts were locked in a glass cage, without solid food, for six days. The campaign was broadcast on radio and television around the clock. Its theme was "Människor på flykt," meaning "refugees." Listeners could request songs and could donate money to a bank account or leave cash near the glass cage. The aim was to attract people younger than those a traditional fundraising gala would attract.



SVT and SR broadcast from the glass cage, but also from the streets of Malmö. They outsourced to Paradise Production the task of organizing events to be put on by humanitarian and grassroots organizations in a marquee tent near the glass cage. Paradise Production's tasks were to draw people to the square, to raise awareness of refugee issues, and to make visible grassroots initiatives in Malmö. The activities were to create a closer connection between the broadcasters, non-governmental organizations engaged in refugee and immigrant issues, and the audience; a connection that the fenced-in glass cage achieved poorly. Paradise Production was hired because it had proposed not only to house arrangements by humanitarian and grassroots organizations, but also to engage Elementz of the Street in street journalism together with Malmö University researchers.

The partners in this constellation had quite different representatives, constituencies, accountabilities, and protocols. Elementz of the Street was represented by its leader during the early part of the design process. Its constituency consisted of teenagers engaged in rapping, music production, and dancing. Elementz of the Street was accountable to its members, to the municipality of Malmö, and to the general public when broadcasting during the experiment. The protocols guiding Elementz of the Street during the experiment were that it should promote meetings across cultures through cultural activities, give voice to those not heard in the public sphere, and keep its activities informal. Paradise Production was represented by its CEO; its constituency included both the temporary employees engaged in Musikhjälpen and its permanent employees. Paradise Production, as a media production company, was accountable to its employees, to SVT and SR, to film funders, and to the society, as it aims to engage in productions that make a societal difference. Its guiding protocol was to make profitable or at least break-even productions. Nouri, the leader of Elementz of the Street, reluctantly accepted a double role, as he represented not only Elementz of the Street but also himself as an artist and a public debater. His constituency consisted of his family, and he was accountable to his audience and to other artists. Nouri's protocols were to make a living through socially engaged music and public debating and to become part of the established media and music landscape in Sweden. SVT and SR were represented by the producer of Musikhjälpen; their constituency consisted of their employees and the citizens of Sweden. Their protocol was to provide public service productions from the whole of Sweden, in this case from Malmö, and broadcast media that took into account the diversity of the Swedish population. Malmö University was represented by three researchers; their constituency consisted of fellow researchers at their university, and they were accountable to their national and international research communities and to their funders. Their protocols were to see to it that their research and development activities would benefit all involved (especially those with few resources), to maintain good relations with their partners, and to explore and develop media practices, products, services, interaction design perspectives, and methods through real-life prototyping.

With this arrangement, Paradise Production saw the potential to make the fundraising campaign genuinely street-based, and to promote Elementz of the Street and Nouri. Giving Nouri more broadcast experience was important because Paradise Production, together with the researchers, had worked hard on pitching a television program idea to SVT, with a prospect of success if Nouri acquired more media experience. SVT found the campaign concept presented by Paradise Production attractive, and the researchers were enrolled and aligned to Paradise Production's problematization and interestment (although they found many aspects of the fundraising campaign problematic) and helped in the setting up of a mobile broadcasting facility. The mobile-video broadcasts by Elementz of the Street and Nouri were published online under their own domain name, but were hyperlinked to and from the official campaign website run by SVT and SR. Having Elementz of the Street's broadcasts published on the official website would have been problematic for both parties since that would have made SVT and SR the legal publisher of the broadcast, which would have entailed that SVT and SR would have to exercise more control over what would be broadcast.

Constituencies often consist of people with conflicting views, a fact that became apparent when designing the Elementz of the Street website. The double agenda of promoting both Elementz of the Street and Nouri caused a discussion among the researchers, Nouri, and Paradise Production about the choice of a domain name and the structure and visual identity of the website. Three alternatives were discussed at meetings held at Paradise Production and at the university—meetings to which the Elementz of the Street youngsters had not been invited. One proposal was to have one domain name for Nouri and another for Elementz of the Street, since they had somewhat different audiences and purposes. An alternative proposal was that Elementz of the Street and Nouri should share a domain name but have separate webpages. Yet another alternative was to have Elementz of the Street and Nouri broadcast under the same domain name and on the same webpage. The third solution was adopted, and the website was launched as [nouritv.se](http://nouritv.se) with the heading Nouri-Kåren (Nouri Brigade) and with the subheading Elementz of the Street. This solution considerably diminished Elementz of the Street's role in the broadcast while foregrounding Nouri. Thus, the broadcast officially became primarily a vehicle to promote Nouri, so as to potentially increase the chance of selling the previously mentioned television program idea to SVT. At first the researchers and Nouri opposed this solution because it breached accountabilities and protocols upheld by both the researchers and Elementz of the Street. It also mixed Nouri's different roles and responsibilities as the leader of Elementz of the Street and his own artistic career, a mix he was uncomfortable with.

Several of the constituencies had internal conflicts but ended up aligning to a design decision that focused more on future possibilities, in this case a new SVT production, than on the immediate experiment. This points at how small actors—a small media company, grassroots media, and the researchers—align the direction of their work so as

to enable a future enrollment of SVT, a large and resourceful actor, into their problematization and interessement. Thus SVT's previous statement that Nouri needed to gain more media experience had a direct impact on the design direction of the experiment. SVT, although not present, figured indirectly from a distance as a powerful actor in problematization, interessement, and enrollment.

During the six days of Musikhjälpen, Nouri and eight street journalists affiliated with Elementz of the Street broadcast 120 reports from the streets of Malmö. The broadcasts included interviews with teenagers, rapping, dancing, parlor performances, and an exclusive interview with Petter, one of Sweden's best-known hip-hop artists. All video clips were streamed live on [nouritv.se](http://nouritv.se), and the best clips were published on Elementz of the Street's YouTube channel.

Many Elementz of the Street members stated that it was interesting and enriching to participate in the fundraising campaign as street journalists and believed that the broadcasts made them more publicly visible. Some members also stated that during breaks between classes they would go to YouTube to watch some of their own video clips, and that the clips made them proud of what Elementz of the Street had accomplished. Many of them also said that they had learned to become more skilled reporters. At the same time, they tended to judge their broadcasts as substandard in comparison with professional mainstream broadcasts.

### **Infrastructuring as fleeting rhizomatic collisions of imaginaries**

The real-life context of the experiment led to a volatile infrastructuring process in which unexpected disturbances in the district of Rosengård forced Elementz of the Street and Nouri to deal with conflicts both within Elementz of the Street and with the municipality. Simultaneously, Nouri battled the mass media's imaginaries of the turmoil, the stereotypic image of Malmö, and immigrants in Sweden in general. Again, this points at how infrastructuring is constantly becoming as it connects to other infrastructuring processes and, in the words of Appadurai (1996), are made up of negotiations between "sites of agency" and "globally defined fields of possibilities" that, in turn, are made up of imaginaries consisting of ethnoscaples, mediascaples, technoscaples, financescaples, and ideoscaples. These imaginaries affect our perception of the world, and thus they have to be counted as social facts. This again points at how infrastructuring and design decisions play central roles in the making of these imaginaries.

Two days into the Musikhjälpen campaign, Rosengård—Malmö's most infamous district—was in turmoil. For several nights in a row, a small group of young people set fire to rental trailers at a gas station and trash containers. The conflict began when a mosque was closed down; however, any explanation of it must mention the long-term frustration and dissatisfaction in the district, where an extremely high percentage of adults were unemployed, sub-standard housing conditions were regularly reported in the media, and there was a long history of conflict between the police and young immigrants.

The conflict in Rosengård directly affected the street-journalism experiment. That summer, Elementz of the Street had been given a building to use for street-dance classes and weekly street-journalism meetings, and a recording studio was under construction. During the Rosengård turmoil, the municipality of Malmö began to pressure Nouri to speed up the construction of the studio, threatening to revoke permission for Elementz of the Street to use the building. Suddenly, the municipality felt that Elementz of the Street had too few activities going on in Rosengård. It did not matter that dance classes were held there and that quite a few youngsters were involved in the street-journalism project. Given how the mediascape mainly portrayed the turmoil as an ethnic problem rather than as a socioeconomic issue, it catered to the mainstream imaginaries of ethnoscapings and ideoscapes of a Malmö. Imaginaries that saw immigration as the cause of the problem. It was important for the municipality to be able to show that it supported constructive youth activities in Rosengård.

To someone not aware of the street-journalism activities, which did not take place there except for the weekly meetings, and because the dance classes happened only a few times per week, the building and thus Elementz of the Street's activities appeared to be dormant. The dominating mediascapes, ethnoscapes, and ideoscapes thus forced Elementz of the Street to temporarily redirect its energies and activities to the building and to mass media. Because Elementz of the Street, and in particular Nouri, were under pressure, Nouri asked the researchers to transport some recently purchased studio equipment to the building. Hastily, Elementz of the Street set up a basic recording studio and scheduled an interview with *Sydneytt*, a regional TV news program, at the building at a time when it was full of activity, so as to show an alternative image of Rosengård, to satisfy the municipality, and to minimize the risk of losing the building. Shortly thereafter, Nouri appeared on several morning television programs and made efforts to counter the image of Rosengård that was being presented by the mainstream media.

The conflicts in Rosengård contributed to the tensions within Elementz of the Street's constituency and showed how those tensions were related to larger forces. Some Elementz of the Street members who lived in Rosengård saw in the Musikhjälpen campaign an opportunity to give their version of the turmoil in the district and perhaps to counter the dominating mediascapes and ideoscapes—an opportunity they missed out on, because the mobile phones used for reporting were collected after each broadcasting session. When they contacted one of the researchers to see if they could get the phones, access to the area had been closed off by the police. These youngsters were not in conflict with the street-journalism experiment or with Elementz of the Street. Nevertheless, a few youngsters from the Rosengård section who weren't participating in the street-journalism experiment used the conflict to criticize Elementz of the Street's engagement in Rosengård, thinking they might be able to use the conflict to take over leadership of Elementz of the Street and run the activities in the building as employees of the municipality (as one of the dissatisfied members had been promised).

According to Nouri, the municipality had not wanted to support the Elementz of the Street leaders by employing them, even though they had ran successful summer activities in Rosengård that had attracted a lot more youngsters than those arranged by the municipality. In fact, a common strategy of the municipality, according to Nouri, was to recruit engaged grassroots individuals rather than to help the grassroots organizations uphold their activities and maintain their independence.

The conflict within Elementz of the Street was exacerbated by another powerful force: mass media. Elementz of the Street's dissatisfied faction in Rosengård demanded a meeting with Nouri. At that meeting they expressed their frustration with Elementz of the Street's supposed lack of activities in the building, and they expressed suspicion that Nouri had become more interested in promoting his own career than in taking care of Elementz of the Street. Unfounded rumors circulated that Nouri had made quite a bit of money from his engagement in Musikhjälpen. The faction demanded that *nouritv.se* be shut down, but agreed that the videos on the Elementz of the Street YouTube channel could remain there. The main broadcasting website was shut down, and Nouri reduced his direct involvement in Rosengård. These disagreements did not end the collaboration between Elementz of the Street and the researchers, however. Later, for example, that constellation worked together on developing broadcast formats for Elementz of the Street's local talent competition *Jalla Upp På Scen (Jalla On Stage)*, a talent competition whose main purpose was to enable youngsters from different neighborhoods to meet one another in a constructive way.

The imaginaries produced by the faction saw the mediascapes Nouri was involved in solely as self-promotion and a means of entrance into professional mediascapes and lucrative financescapes. The faction's assessment that the Musikhjälpen broadcasts had been framed partially as promoting Nouri was correct, but that framing increased in importance and shaped the faction's interpretation of what Elementz of the Street's broadcast signified when the mass media began to cover the turmoil.

The accounts presented above point at the uneasy relationship between grassroots initiatives and more powerful actors (the municipality, specific mass-media companies, the mass media at large). These actors, both directly and indirectly, affected the space of possibilities and the design decisions, and they contributed to the conflicts that arose as the experiment unfolded. At times, professional media exercised indirect or implicit power on the smaller and less resourceful actors in this experiment. For instance, although decisions about website design and branding were made without demands from SVT and SR, those powerful media networks exercised their power as they became part of the Elementz of the Street's and the researchers' imaginaries and future plans. Established professional media organizations strongly influence the agenda through their sheer existence; they don't have to express their wishes explicitly, since they are such an important media hub, or in Callon's (1986) terminology an important translation center, which smaller actors feel required to assemble around. These powerful

media networks are present at a distance and influence the problematization processes, as when small local networks feel forced to funnel their views and activities into a united stance so that it aligns with the requirements set up by the translation center and passes through what Callon (1986) calls the obligatory points of passages.

Even though powerful media organizations exercise power, that doesn't mean that marginal and less powerful actors are to be seen as disempowered wretches or victims. More marginal actors often show considerable agency and decision-making power and are also accountable for their decisions—to their constituencies—and the conflicts these decisions generate. This account also points at how those who are being decided over simultaneously decide and exercise similar power over others less empowered, such as the Elementz of the Street youngsters.

Just as in the previous case, the Musikhjälpen street-journalism experiment points at how branding through the naming of Internet domain names, logos, and the structuring of websites is a central part of the infrastructuring of media practices. The categorization, selection, and exclusion directly correspond with selections and exclusions of participation in the design and development process. The Elementz of the Street teenagers were, for example, not included in important decisions such as the naming and structure of the online broadcast space. Thus, their marginalization from the design process was evident in the end result and contributed to the conflicts that surfaced. The design researchers disagreed on the naming and structuring, but none of them questioned the absence of youth representatives. They had paid too little attention to the initial organization and decision-making arrangement of the design process, such as who should be included and how much power each participant should be given.

More powerfully than the Bloggen experiment, the street-journalism experiment shows how unpredictable and volatile real-life public infrastructuring processes are. None of the participants could have known in advance that the design and media experiment would be directly involved in, and interweave with, wider social systems and imaginaries, other infrastructuring processes, or rhizomes. With the aim of exploring a new relational media space in which public professional media and grassroots media cooperated, exploring uncharted territories in the Swedish mediascape, those territories quickly became reterritorialized by more powerful forces. The reterritorialization by mass media and large media companies changed the meaning of the street-journalism experiment considerably. The work of selecting, categorizing, branding, and naming was not optimal and could possibly have created conflicts later on. The importance of this work, however, increased and became more loaded, in the form of fiercer media-, finance-, and ideoscape imaginaries, when it interweaved with mass-media spaces, municipal politics, and real-world conflicts. Curiously, the media actors—although forcefully affecting the experiment—were not aware of their impact as their power was channeled through and embodied in the reasoning, debates, and

actions carried out by the municipality, the dissatisfied faction within Elementz of the Street, Paradise Production, Nouri, and the researchers.

The Musikhjälpen case also shows how two of the constituencies are not homogeneous, but rather consist of conflicting views. Negotiations are thus not only carried out between different partners, but also within each constituency. The case also shows how “living lab” activities, which are highly distributed in time and space, are simultaneously inclusive and exclusive, as participation in meetings is regulated so as to simplify and speed up decision-making processes. These design processes, thus, may resemble lobbying and fleeting rhizomatic collisions more than they resemble public democratic decision-making processes.

## Discussion

Some of the significant features emerging from the collaborative experiments are that probing into future mobile-media practices through an ongoing and open-ended infrastructuring process—where diverse partners negotiate and collaboratively experiment—yield valuable outcomes in the form of new temporary working relations, which at times led to later collaborations as well as insights into new forms of media practices. It must be noted that all of the partners were willing to chart unknown territories and participate in new collaborations; however, those that have most fundamentally been willing to imagine and explore themselves as something else—or as someone else—have been the small partners. The arts and performance center and Elementz of the Street imagined themselves as small media houses that could play a role in the Swedish media landscape, which was a profoundly new role for them. Similarly, the researchers imagined and tried out a new research role as they explored how media and communication studies and interaction design could connect, as well as how research and development could be conducted in the public sphere. SVT, SR, and the IT company placed their engagement at the margins of their businesses. That said, all the partners have gained new insights, whether through mobile-video audience-interaction prototypes, through prototypical media practices, or through new methods of co-designing in the public. That some partners take larger leaps into the future than others is not a problem. What is interesting to note is that those who take the largest leap into an uncharted future are the partners not typically associated with innovation.

Co-design and open-innovation research into new media and interaction design demand that we consider the grounds and preconditions for problematization, interestment, and enrollment that such research builds upon and what these negotiation processes do to the various partners involved (Pedersen 2007; Ehn 2008). Inherent in co-design and in open-innovation infrastructuring processes are conflicts of interestment as various partners negotiate and align their disparate interests and agendas. In



the cases described above, the initial problematization, interessement, and enrollment were done by the small actors (the arts and performance center and Elementz of the Street) in collaboration with Paradise Production, the IT company, and the researchers. However, as they enrolled and courted larger partners, their initial idea was fundamentally redefined, as they needed to realign to the newcomers' agendas. In the collaboration between the arts and performance center, the IT company, and the university researchers, the IT company had the strongest impact on what type of media infrastructure was to be developed and tried, as people working for that company had more knowledge about and more skill in working with new media than any of the other participants. At times this impact was indirect, as in the case of Musikhjälpen, where SVT and SR implicitly influenced the decisions made. The bloggers, who were enrolled late in the process, had the least negotiation power and could therefore to a limited degree affect the framing of the experiment and how it should materialize, which indicates that one way of regulating decision making has to do with when stakeholders and constituencies are enrolled. However, the order of enrollment is less important than the size and power of the various constituencies. More powerful partners can thus more forcefully define what is to be inquired into and enroll the smaller partners in their problematization and interessement, and thus reterritorialize the deterritorialization aimed for by the small actors, even though the more powerful partners have not defined the initial problematization.

The negotiations, which were dispersed in time and space, consisted of various forms of performing sociomaterial politics within public spheres as broadcast forms were developed. Initial negotiations were typically carried out through meetings at which one or two representatives of each constituency—typically, decision makers—were present. Who should have decision-making power was never discussed. The taken-for-granted norm was that it was the leader from each constituency, with the exception of the researchers who had no clear leader. Nevertheless, issues negotiated were seldom brought back to be debated by their respective constituencies. The underlying assumption was that each representative would represent his or her assumed homogeneous constituency. However, as the cases show, the constituencies were far from homogeneous, and the lack of grounding decisions within a constituency can at times lead to conflicts further down the road. A central reason for conducting the negotiations in such a manner was that bringing back an issue to each constituency would considerably slow down the design process and possibly bring it to a standstill. Furthermore, certain constituencies, such as the video bloggers and the grassroots journalists, were not brought into the decision-making process until very late. One reason for this was that they worked *pro bono*, but two other reasons were that it made the decision-making process easier and that their perspective wasn't acknowledged as important.

Infrastructuring negotiations at the intersection of the fields of media and communication studies and interaction design include the following:

the technical network—in this case, how the streaming and interaction with the audience was enabled through the configuration of software and servers

the framing of the broadcast—that is, who the broadcaster is and the perspective taken on the broadcast

the textual and visual naming, expressed through the graphical user interface and the naming of the broadcast and the Web address

how the reporting is organized—for example, whether it is distributed or happening in one particular place, and whether the reporting is done by one individual or by a team

the construction of media personas by the reporter, the tones chosen for the broadcasts, and the framing of scenes—what is cut out, put in the background, foregrounded, and so on.

Certain of these features, such as the naming and graphical look, are more definitive than others. Other features, such as the framing of the scenes, can be done more on the spur of the moment. Framing is a powerful “tool,” as it can drastically reconfigure the meaning of a broadcast.

When experiments enter the public sphere as socio-material assemblies or Things, it is difficult to predict what shapes and forms of representation and participation they will generate. At times, what happens is neither infrastructuring nor Things, but intersecting rhizomes that affect each other, though not leading to consensus or agreement across contexts. The terms infrastructuring and Things are no longer useful to describe what happens. The two cases discussed in this chapter show that mass media can intersect with municipal organizations or with grassroots politics without knowing that they were doing so. Bombardment by mass media is done from a distance. Much less precise than drone attacks, it is more like cluster bombing that hits unknown targets that can't properly enter into negotiations with the media. In turn, the mass media generate disciplinary relations, as for example when *Elementz of the Street* is forced by the municipality to speed up the building of the recording studio. The mediascapes thus have direct repercussions for urban politics. In other instances, the mediascapes generate a Thing, as happened when the different factions of *Elementz of the Street* negotiated how to publish the street-journalism broadcasts. In yet other instances, there are shadow battles, as happened when *Sydsvenskan* and *Elementz of the Street* erased each other's mediascapes. The variations of political types that intersecting rhizomes can generate are probably endless. Here, I have argued for how cases have generated political types that include direct negotiations within a particular constituency, and direct and indirect disciplining, as happened with *Elementz of the Street* and the municipality and with the mass media and *Elementz of the Street's* grassroots journalism.

Co-design processes of new media practices that are in the public sphere are inevitably more volatile than co-design processes in less sharp settings as they interweave or intersect to a larger degree with other social systems, networks, rhizomes, alliances, and counter forces. As networks or rhizomes constantly become, interweave and intersect, their meaning changes. What from the start was thought of as a culture-based critical perspective on media—the arts and performance center’s motive behind *Bloggen*—was redefined as speedy and interactive news, which is in line with the dominating logic within design firms and many mass-media companies where being first is paramount; what was planned as an alternative and separate media space intersected with mass media and power demonstration through erasure. What was planned as grassroots journalism was partially turned into promotion of a TV persona to increase the chances of a future TV production. And, as it intersected with mass media’s coverage of the turmoil in Rosengård, it turned into a power battle within *Elementz of the Street*. Designing as infrastructuring is therefore challenging, and it also seems to be impossible to design *for* infrastructuring in the public, as it is impossible to regulate how various infrastructuring processes will intersect, as matters of concern quickly change.

As the academic discipline and the practice of interaction design move closer to the domain of media and what is typically categorized as content, they also move away from producing objects to producing experiences and events. Traditionally, design has been concerned with developing objects that can generate multiple marketable objects, whereas content producers are more concerned with selling one experience after another—even though music and films can obviously be mass produced and sold in physical forms or in various online formats. Content, at least up to now, has a shorter life span than design objects, although the life span of design objects is constantly shortened. What counts as infrastructuring processes have become more fluid and temporary, which to some degree has blurred the border between research and development and use. This is in line with Thrift’s (2006) argument that prototyping has become a central aspect of an economy in which many companies push beta products that blur the border between research and development and the market.

Also significant in the cases discussed in this chapter was the uneasy (though somewhat productive) relationship between large media actors and grassroots media actors. The IT company argued for the speed of production and the importance of liveness, while the arts and performance center argued for quality and media criticism. The collaboration has shown how cultural workers, who produce the content, symbolically and meritocratically risk the most: their reputation is at stake as they engage in the broadcasts. At the same time they are expected to contribute for free, which suggests that producers and their content—as infrastructuring material—has less value than more technical material. Both the arts and performance center and other cultural producers have expressed how the researchers and companies do not risk anything, and

that, whatever way the inquiry goes, it will yield research results while they could have hurt their reputation if the outcome has been poor.

Genuine co-creative and long-term engagement needs to be nuanced. Our joint inquiries show that such vast collaborative processes cannot consist of long-term engagements with every partner and every individual that becomes involved. The duration and the depth of engagement must vary. However, the joint inquiries discussed here clearly show that both the research and the collaborative experiments would have gained considerably by engaging in negotiations with the content producers early on. Both of the experiments discussed above clearly failed in this regard, partly because of conflicting agendas but partly because of poor planning and the speed of production.

We need to consider whether open innovation and co-design that involves partners from academia and the private and public sectors is productive or counterproductive, especially for less powerful actors. As we engage in future-making through infrastructuring and deterritorialization, we need to critically ask ourselves if we have unintentionally created an optimized relational space that quickens reterritorialization by more powerful rhizomes that aim for fluid spaces and fast-flowing capital, which was not the aim of the researchers. We also need to ask ourselves when innovation and research and development across contexts lead to network romanticism that pushes the need for accountable intersections of networks to the margins, as well as fencing off certain infrastructures or rhizomes to maintain autonomy through slower and more accountable processes of approaching the future. Because infrastructuring is not inherently democratic and takes on various guises, accountable practicing of the politics of infrastructuring needs to be constantly attended to.

## Notes

1. All names have been anonymized with the exceptions of Malmö, Rosengård, SR, SVT, and Sydsvenskan.
2. The arts and performance center, which initiated the process, had stated that it would host the broadcast on their newly redesigned website to be launched a few days before the festival and the public broadcast at its festival café. The IT company and the researchers would be responsible for developing the mobile interface and the streaming from the mobile phones. The researchers would help the arts and performance center to screen the broadcast in the tent. They, it turned out, did not know that they needed to have a media server on their site to stream the mobile broadcasts, which they did not have, and could therefore not host the broadcasts. The IT company agreed to fix a streaming server, but would not do the website design and stated that it could not host the media server, as its servers were heavily firewalled. The researchers functioned as middlemen and were able to quickly arrange for the media server to be placed at the university and for a former student to be hired to design the broadcast webpage. These infrastructuring activities, which were mainly technical in character, were easily solved, as the IT company and the researchers had the network relations to resort to with the right combination of competence and the resources to temporarily recruit a former student to design the broadcast page.

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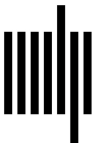
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