The Neural Mechanisms of Psychedelic Drug Action - Talk 5

Speaker: Nicolas Langlitz - The New School for Social Research, RWTH Aachen

Title: Psychedelic Innovations and the Crisis of Psychopharmacology

Venue: Institute of Theoretical Biology, Philippstr. 12, Haus 4, Hörsaal 4, Berlin 10115, Germany
https://goo.gl/maps/uBEkAEksdoxK89ua6

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Time: 17:00

Zoom Link (hybrid event): https://hu-berlin.zoom.us/j/64946983901

Abstract: In the 2010s, psychopharmacological research and development experienced a crisis: since no genuinely new drugs for the treatment of mental illness had been successfully developed for decades, major pharmaceutical corporations decided to disinvest their neuropsychopharmacology departments. At the same time, however, one branch of psychopharmacology began to boom. The FDA declared psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy a breakthrough therapy and hundreds of start-up companies began to compete for this potentially emerging health care market. The talk looks at the case of psychedelic research to examine three different responses to the innovation crisis in psychopharmacology: (1) the resumption of pharmacopsychotherapy as a half-century old but previously marginalized and discontinued practice; (2) the continuation of self-experimentation as a simultaneously repressed and revitalized method of drug development; (3) computational drug design as a cutting-edge approach currently used to create non-psychedelic psychedelics that reduce psychiatric symptoms without any mind-altering effects. These responses point to conflicting imaginaries of innovation that envisage the future of psychopharmacology and thereby provide different diagnoses of its current predicament.

Yours sincerely from the organizing team,

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