

WIJSBEGEERTE *Philosophie* Φιλοσοφία 哲学 *Filosofia* Fi

African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science (ACEPS)

Tuesday, 1 August 2023, 15:00-17:00

UJ on Empire

11th-Floor Boardroom

On Hostile and Oppressive Affective Technologies



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4E approaches to affective technology tend to focus on how ‘users’ can manage their situated affectivity, analogously to how they can help themselves cognitively through epistemic actions, or by using tools, artefacts and scaffolding. Here I focus on cases where the function of an affective technology is to harm or manipulate the agent engaging with it. My opening example is the cigarette, where an accumulation of technological refinements have transformed the affective relationship of smokers to consuming nicotine in ways harmful to users. I proceed to develop case studies of two very different but also harmful affective technologies. Casinos and electronic gambling machines deploy computationally intensive scaffolding to shape the onset and continuation of gambling episodes. High heeled shoes, on the other hand, affectively engineer wearers’ relationships to their own embodied capacities, and are predominantly expected to be worn by women. I conclude with a discussion of the need for study of affective technology to focus other-directed applications, some of which will serve competing or antagonistic interests.

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