



International Conference

The Bright Side of Night – Perceptions, Costs and the Governance of Lighting and Light Pollution

June 20–21, 2013
Erkner by Berlin

Call for Posters

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The introduction of public and private lighting systems in the late 19th and early 20th century contributed to a profound and ongoing change in the socio-economic, cultural and physical realities of modern cities. Working and living routines no longer had to be aligned with the natural rhythm of day and night, resulting in a dramatic increase in the night-time production of goods as well as in the emergence of a bustling nightlife. As a result, the perception and use of urban public space at night has changed fundamentally.

Despite the largely positive connotations associated with lighting and its multiple cultural and social functions, the use of artificial light in public spaces was – and is – neither universal nor uncontested. Negative impacts on humans and animals, on the aesthetic qualities of town- and landscapes as well as the ecological aftermath of energy consumption have been discussed from early on – recently culminating in growing criticism concerning “light pollution”. So far, there are only few general standards or regulations regarding the quantity and quality of outdoor lighting. This is not surprising, as artificial lighting is a highly complex field that involves multiple interests and actors – and empirical research on the topic has only begun in recent years. In order to address the multi-faceted issue of artificial lighting adequately, it must face the challenge of considering the historical, cultural, socio-political, environmental and economic dimensions of light in an integrated fashion.

During the two-day conference focusing on the humanities and the social sciences, various aspects and research approaches concerning lighting and light pollution will be explored and discussed (research fields will include history, literature and arts, geography, urban planning, politics and economics). Each conference panel will highlight a different approach. In the first panel, the main emphasis will be placed on the perception of artificial light, e.g. the genesis, development and change of the symbolic values attributed to light and darkness or the production and perception of spaces and nocturnal cityscapes. The functions and infrastructural provision of artificial lighting as well as public and vernacular lighting practices will be discussed in the second panel. The emphasis of the third panel will be on lighting conflicts and the governance of outdoor lighting with a focus on the limits and



potential of regulating light in public space. The fourth panel will concentrate on methods and research approaches for the assessment of perceptions and costs of artificial lighting, light pollution and the night sky.

Among others, Jane Brox (Maine, USA), Susanne Bach and Folkert Degenring (University of Kassel, Germany), Tim Edensor (Manchester Metropolitan University, UK), Martin Morgan-Taylor (DeMontfort University Leicester, UK), Kenneth Willis (University of Newcastle, UK), and Terrel Gallaway (Missouri State University, USA) will present at the conference.

We particularly encourage junior researchers (postgraduates and postdocs) from the humanities and social sciences to contribute a poster to the conference. The posters will be discussed between the panels to complement the presentations of the invited speakers.

We welcome contributions that address one or more of the following topics referring to past or present:

- Symbolism and perceptions of artificial lighting or darkness
- Infrastructural provision of artificial lighting
- Social uses and functions of illumination and the production and sense of place
- Artificial lighting and environmental sustainability
- Light planning practices
- Governance of artificial lighting and darkness
- Conflicts concerning artificial lighting
- Methods to evaluate perceptions and costs of artificial lighting, light pollution or darkness

The conference marks the completion of a 3-year interdisciplinary research project on the causes and consequences of artificial outdoor lighting entitled 'Loss of the Night' (<http://www.verlustdernacht.de/about-us.html>) which is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF).

Please submit your abstract of approx. 200 words by December 15, 2012 to:

For history and the arts: Ute Hasenöhr (hasenoehrl@irs-net.de)

For the social sciences: Katharina Krause (krausek@irs-net.de)

Please don't hesitate to contact us in case you have any further questions.