

## Truth and Logic of the Series 1850-1930

Weil es unermesslich viele Steine gibt, so kann ich gar nicht voraus sagen, wie groß diese Sammlung werden wird.

Adalbert Stifter, „Einleitung“, *Bunte Steine*

In the “Einleitung” of Adalbert Stifter’s *Bunte Steine* (1853) that follows on the heels of the more renowned “Vorrede,” the narrator describes his life-long passion of collecting, among other things, stones. His childhood drive to accumulate has not abated and he continues to gather stones, draw them, and to thus build an archive to pass to younger generations. From time to time, he lays these stones down in a row, endowing the objects that were collected over time with a spatial order, a practice that provides him with a particular “Vergnügen.” In virtue of being placed in a row, it becomes clear that the stones and their ordering stand in for a manifold of different orders. First, an ordering of nature akin to a geological survey; secondly, a record of the narrator’s life during which he collected these stones: and finally, as standing in for the different novellas “Granit, Kalkstein, Turmalin, Bergkristall, Bergmilch” that constitute the *Bunte Steine*. In that function, they specifically reflect on the publication history of the novellas, each first published individually and then, like the stones, collected as an inheritance in which they are both the same as before and different.

This workshop aspires to examine different practices and formats that construct series—placing in a row—across media of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. At the heart of the inquiry are the ways in which these new practices of serialization renegotiate the relationship between art and truth. How do serial formats lay claim to speaking the truth and how do they, conversely, invite charges of fakery, disinformation, and deception? Particular points of interest are a) what rules might constitute a serial logic and how a series establishes that logic, b) different descriptive vocabularies for that logic, for example, as purely additive, as erotic, as family history, or in relationship to cyclicity and c) if and how serial logic challenges the unfolding of plot in texts and images. The goal of the conference is thus to examine site- and medium-specific relationships between seriality and problems of epistemology.