Universität Bremen

Institut für Ethnologie und Kulturwissenschaft – B.A. Kulturwissenschaft
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Titel:

English Title: Digital media, digital cultures

VAK: 09-50-M2b-3   **Veranstalter: Wittel, Andreas Prof. Dr.**

Kurzbeschreibung:

Imagine for one minute you would have to live, study and work without a mobile phone or a computer. Imagine the complications you would be facing. This thought experiment demonstrates a rather simple but important fact: all aspects of our life are closely connected to digital media. Digital technologies are everywhere, they are ubiquitous. In the 21st century cultures are now predominantly digital cultures. We work, live and communicate using digital media, we use them for sexual pleasures and intimate moments, we even sleep with our mobile phones next to us, perfectly willing to get disturbed in our dreams. This module introduces digital media and digital cultures from an anthropological perspective. This means, in short, that we always focus on the social dimension of digital cultures. What do digital media do to us, what do we do with them? How are we affected by digital technologies, how do we shape them and use them according to our desires and needs? We will discuss issues such as surveillance and data mining, anonymity, online sex and online dating, internet addiction, free culture, copyright, intellectual property, and open access. We will examine more closely iconic platforms such as Facebook, Anonymous, Wikipedia, Wikileaks, and Pirate Bay to explore how the internet produces new forms of interaction, collaboration, journalism, collective action, and sharing (or stealing). We will also look at digital infrastructures and how companies such as Amazon, Google and Facebook increasingly structure and influence how we live our lives. We will do this by exploring the digitisation of the world beyond our classroom walls, by developing scenarios for possible futures and by engaging with little research projects. We will read and discuss academic books and watch and discuss topical films and documentaries. We will also develop an ethnographic research project to explore the digital world in an anthropological manner.