

## Smartphones and contemporary media culture


Basis-Modul 1: Übung

Department of Media Culture and Theater

Thursday, 2 till 3:30 p.m. in S 24

Autumn/winter 2014/15

Instructor: Dr. Peter Scheinpflug

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(Meister-Ekkehart-Str. 11, 4th floor)

The smartphone has revolutionized our everyday life. The device is omnipresent and combines a great number of different media such as telephone, radio, camera, computer, maps, or video games. That being the case, the smartphone has significantly changed the way we communicate, access information or orientate. And the technology has shifted our understanding of crucial concepts such as reality, presence, privacy, or democracy.

Focusing onto the smartphone and discussing the great many different cultural practices and controversial debates concerning this technology, students will achieve a better understanding of media's great impact onto our everyday life, our behavior, our thinking and our social networks. Students will also be introduced to theories and ideas, which are essential as well as characteristic for studying media cultures.

### Suggestions for introductory readings:

- Jon Agar: Constant Touch. A Global History of the Mobile Phone. London et al. 2013.
- Gerard Goggin: Global Mobile Media. London and New York 2011.

## Information ...

### I **participation:**

All students are expected to participate actively in each lesson! Furthermore, it is highly recommended that students take notes in class. The success of this course depends primarily on you. Thus, your attendance and participation in class discussions are very important.

### II **homework:**

**Homework assignments** will consist of readings. These will serve as important preparation for discussions during the subsequent course lessons. Therefore, you need to fulfill your homework assignments!

You are also welcome to **bring materials to class** which you consider relevant or interesting for class discussions!

**The readings** are available online via ILIAS. For joining the group and, thus, having access to the materials, please register to ILIAS using your email-account, then search for the course and join it. The required password is: lol

### III **academic paper:**

You are not free to choose any topic for your academic paper; you have to **pick one** of the following three topics for your paper:

1. Discuss the smartphone based on McLuhan's media theory. / Diskutieren Sie das Smartphone auf Grundlage von McLuhans Medientheorie.
2. Discuss the smartphone in regards to Foucault's understanding of panopticism. / Diskutieren Sie das Smartphone mit Bezug auf Panoptizismus nach Foucault.
3. Discuss the smartphone and its agency according to the ANT. / Diskutieren Sie das Smartphone und seine "agency" im Sinne der ANT.

Regardless of your choice, you are expected to (1) explain the theory using your own words, (2) put it into theoretical and historical context, (3) refer to relevant research/scientific literature in regards to your topic and theory, and (4) to use this theoretical approach for analyzing and discussing smartphones, resp. a specific phenomenon, strongly (!) connected to smartphones. In your final chapter you ought to (5) reflect upon the question, whether this theoretical approach is productive for discussing smartphones and contemporary media culture and which aspects are being highlighted and which are being marginalized or even ignored by using this approach. (6) Your paper should be written in such a way that readers, who have no knowledge of the theoretical approach, you chose, and of smartphones, can easily follow as well as fully understand your explanations.

Failing to cover/include any literature, which has been discussed in class, in your paper, even though the literature is relevant to your paper's topics and contents, will be judged as a grave error and be taken under consideration for grading.

The paper shouldn't exceed a length of **8 pages of text**, not counting literature listing etc. You are free to write your paper **either in German or in English**. Papers written in German have to follow the instructions of the departmental guide lines for academic papers: <http://www.mekuwi.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de/10801.html>. Papers written in English have to meet the requirements of the MLA handbook/style. Please send the instructor a **digital copy** of your paper and hand him a **printed version** of the same paper **no later than March 15<sup>th</sup> 2015!**

### IV **credit points:**

If you are a regular student of media culture at the University of Cologne you will receive 4 CP upon successful completion of the course. If you are an exchange student please talk to the instructor of the course and your Erasmus coordinator in order to discuss the number of credit points you aim to earn.

### V **office hours:**

You need to register for office hours online: [http://phil-services.uni-koeln.de/profile/peter\\_scheinpflug](http://phil-services.uni-koeln.de/profile/peter_scheinpflug). In order to do so, you may have to register; for doing so you find a link "Registrierung Student" on the right side of the page. Office hours are being held in the instructor's office on the fourth floor of Meister-Ekkehart-Straße 11 (location: <http://www.uni-koeln.de/bin2/where.pl?parent.geb112>).

### 3 | WS 2014/15: Smartphones and contemporary media culture

| Lesson | Date   | Topic   | Readings  |  |
|--------|--------|---|---|--|
| 0      | 09.10. | <i>introduction</i>   | ---   |  |
| 1      | 16.10. | media<br>as extensions of man   | Marshall McLuhan: Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man. London and New York 2003. S. 7-23, 45-52.                     |  |
| -      | 23.10. | <b><i>On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, no lesson will be held. Please, use the time for preparing the next lesson!</i></b> |   |  |
| 2      | 30.10. | theoretical concepts  | sociality with<br>objects   |  |
| 3      | 06.11. |   | economy of<br>presence  |  |
| 4      | 13.11. |   | produsage   |  |
| 5      | 20.11. |   | apparatus /<br>dispositive  |  |
| 6      | 27.11. |   | panoticism (2.0)  |  |
| 7      | 04.12. |   | public/private<br>space   |  |
| 8      | 11.12. |   | <b><i>On December 11th, no lesson will be held. Please, use the time for preparing the next lesson!</i></b>                 |  |
| 9      | 18.12. |   | subject/object<br>actor   |  |
| 10     | 08.01. | smartphones & remediation   | remediation   |  |
| 11     | 15.01. |   | (augmented)<br>reality  |  |
| 12     | 22.01. |   | Photography<br>and media history  |  |
| 13     | 29.01. |   | mobile television<br>and the 4 <sup>th</sup> screen   |  |
| 14     | 05.02. |   | mobile gaming   |  |
|        |        |   | <i>During the last 30 Minutes students will be given general information about writing an academic paper in this class.</i> |  |
|        |        |   | <i>During the last 20 minutes students will be evaluating this class.</i>   |  |