Institute for Communication and
Media Science
**Department Media and
Communication Science**

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Seminar: Big city as a media-communicatively networked space
Research Module Digital Media and Networked Communication Practices II
06-005-592 – Media Culture
Monday, 11 to 1 pm, weekly from Oct 16th, 2023, Nikolaistr. , Room 1.01
(last modified: Aug 24th, 2023)

Module: Aims and Content
This module focuses digital media and communication practices and how they can be brought into a relationship with media cultures, everyday practices of social networking, and forms of media use. To that end, the students work in a team/small project in the field of media culture research to develop their professional competencies on topics such as digital media practices, the understanding of public spaces and public communication and the extent to which social media evoke, configure and shape specific forms of networked communication. Network media structures and the social conditions that shape them will be analyzed. Forms of media action patterns and media contexts are learned and critically reflected. Participants will develop an independent research question and a research design and implement their project with the help of empirical work. This affords them to independently and reflectively deal with subject-specific methodology for data generation/data collection. In the report, they argue and reflect on the respective research logic steps.

Seminar description:
Big cities symbolize both attraction and agglomeration. In a way, they are always "full": full of people with stories, full of possibilities and chances, and also full of risks. Big cities are where social movements and demonstrations begin. They are cultural, commercial, governmental, as well as economic hubs. In the seminar we will examine the concept of the big city and how it surrounds us every day as public and private space. Forms of media use and communication practices will be related socio-culturally, politically and aesthetically: How do people use media to move and navigate within a big city? How do the media afford them to relate to a big city? How is the feeling of living in a big city thematized and visualized in the media, for example within discourses on the scarcity of resources (housing, water, climate)? To which extent do city districts already frame the social context for cultural events? With which lifestyle are big cities associated, in a media communicative way? What exactly is it about *Leipzig´s off-space culture*, communicatively seen? And was it the *Killy Willy* that first became a "place to be" or was it already the *Südplatz* before?

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Aims of the seminar:

The project seminar (2 SWS) is accompanied by an exercise (1 SWS). In the seminar, relevant topics in the field of urban communication research are presented and reflected. Hereby, literature will be discussed together in the individual sessions of the seminar. In parallel, the participants work in small groups. They develop a project on a self-selected topic of investigation including its methodical implementation. In doing so, they critically examine objects and topics of urban communication (financing, construction/design, urban aesthetics, urban culture, urban politics, locality, information and navigation) and transfer this to forms of media use and networked communication practices. They discuss a possible transfer to thematically established field(s) of media communication research. Working in project teams enables the participants to train soft skills such as coordination, scientific work, presentation and moderation as well as teamwork.

Participation:

The seminar will be held offline. Please use our time mindfully, which means you know the literature given for each session and provided by the lecturer. In the project phases of the seminar it will be important that the individual landmarks of the project are completed in time. Please signal problems and needs for clarification in a timely manner.

Moodle-Course: https://moodle2.uni-leipzig.de/course/view.php?id=44850

Test performance in seminar + exercise (3 SWS):

In the seminar, a portfolio is prepared as an examination performance according to §11, para.2 of the examination regulations MA Communication and Media Science. A portfolio consists of at least two and at most three partial performances. As a rule, different performances are combined. In Module 592, the portfolio consists of a presentation (seminar) as well as a research report (seminar+exercise), which is submitted by the small groups to both lecturers by Mar 1st, 2024.

Program

16 Oct 2023   *Introduction to the project seminar, Formalities*

23 Oct 2023   **Dimensional Analysis I:** The Big City as Media-Communicative Space
Proximity, Narrowness, Public, Privacy, Isolation, Community
Attraction of the big city as a living space

Willems, W. (2019). 'The politics of things': digital media, urban space, and the materiality of publics. *Media, Culture & Society, 41*(8), 1192–1209. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443719831594

Crang, M. (2000). Public Space, Urban Space and Electronic Space: Would the Real City Please Stand Up? *Urban Studies, 37*(2), 301–317. https://doi.org/10.1080/0042098002203

30 Oct 2023   **Dimensional analysis II:** Feel big cities, feel possibilities
"And as the big cities grew; the means of razing them developed in tandem. What visions of the future this evokes!" (Walter Benjamin, 1938)

Ruckenstein, M. (2023). *The feel of algorithms*. University of California Press.

Oggolder, C. (2013). Losing Centrality: Urban Spaces and the Network Society. In M. Tarantino (Ed.), *Media and The City: Urbanism, Technology and Communication* (pp. 66–76). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

06 Nov 2023   **Dimensional Analysis III:** Coordination and Networking in the Big City, Social Movement(s) Patterns, Data Tracing

Lim, M. (2014). Seeing spatially: people, networks and movements in digital and urban spaces. *International Development Planning Review*, *36*(1), 51–72. https://doi.org/10.3828/idpr.2014.4

13 Nov 2023   **Self-experience – field access**
"You take delight not in a city's seven or seventy wonders, but in the answer it gives to a question of yours" (Calvino, 1997, p. 38).

Aiello, G., & Tosoni, S. (2016). Going About the City: Methods and Methodologies for Urban Communication Research. *International Journal of Communication*, *10*, 1252–1262. 1932–8036/20160005

20 Nov 2023   **Project work I:** Forming groups, finding initial topics; posing first questions

27 Nov 2023   **Semantic Analysis I:** Between Ecological Urbanism and Sociological Urbanism: Urban Space for Sustainability and Innovations

Goodbun, J. (2012). Flexibility and Ecological Planning: Gregory Bateson on Urbanism. *Architectural Design, 82*(4), 52–55. https://doi.org/10.1002/ad.1428

4 Dec 2023   **Semantic Analysis II:** The Rhythm of Urban Advertising

Cronin, A. M. (2006). Advertising and the Metabolism of the City: Urban Space, Commodity Rhythms. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 24*(4), 615–632. https://doi.org/10.1068/d389t

11 Dec 2023   **Semantic Analysis III:** Homelessness, Destroyed Houses, Empty Houses – Big Cities in Crisis Reporting

18 Dec 2023   Intermediate conclusion to clarify themes and topics

8 Jan 2024   **Project work II:** Developing theoretical framework, presentation and discussion in the seminar plenary. You may use the following task piles: 1) check in / aim and interest; 2) status of the project, 3) questions and current challenges, 4) check out / next steps

15 Jan 2024   **Project work III:** Developing methodical implementation in the project group, in the second part of the session: Presentation and discussion of the work status

22 Jan 2024   Project presentation I

29 Jan 2024   Project presentation II

5 Feb 2024   Discussion of the paper ideas, open questions