MA Media Studies: Digital Cultures

Karin Wenz
24 March 2018

General set up

- First semester:
  - Four 8-week modules introducing core questions and issues in media culture and one 4-week module

- Second semester: individual specialization
  One 4-week module, 4 workshops
  - Extensive individual thesis
  - Internship

1st semester

1. Transformations in Digital Cultures (period 1)

coordinator: Karin Wenz

skills:
- Ike Kamphof
- John Harbord
- Annika Richterich
- Karin Wenz

1. Transformations in Digital Cultures

- What does "social" mean in the context of digital technologies and platforms?
- What is the impact of new trends on culture and society?
- Information politics and the architecture of the internet

Aims

- Introduction to central concepts in the field of digital cultures and digital sociology

- Introduction to discussions around digital sociology and user participation

- Research and media skills: PBL and the making of a blog, introduction to Gephi

- Academic skills: academic paper, social network analysis

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2. Real Virtualities (period 1)

coordinator: Ike Kamphof
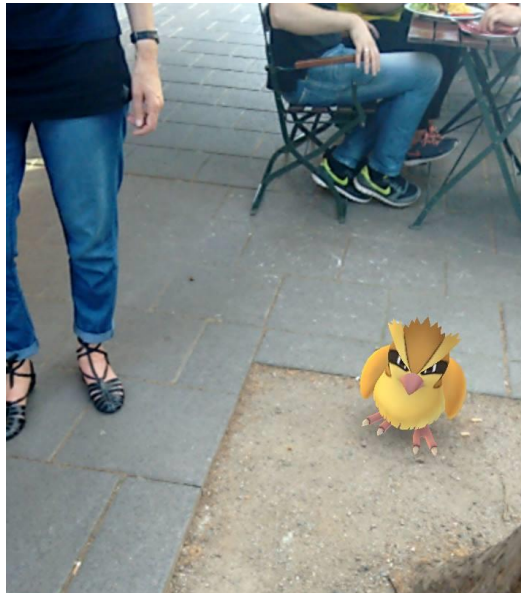
2. Real Virtualities

- How do new media affect our experience of reality?
- What does telepresence do to our sense of the here and now?
- Do we live in a hyper-reality?
- How do we analyze hybridity?

Aims

- Analysis and discussion of concepts and arguments from philosophical texts, sounding out their role in contemporary cultural debates and practices.
- Phenomenological description and analysis of your experience of and through selected media applications.
- Practising description and analysis in a blog post (analogue lab) and an essay.

# 3. Sound Technologies & Cultural Practices (period 2)

coordinator: Joeri Bruyninckx
skills: Joeri Bruyninckx

3. Sound Technologies & Cultural Practices

- How do changes in technology relate to changes in the production and consumption of music?

- What was the significance of different technologies such as the phonograph, tape recorder, mp3, music streaming?

- What happened to notions such as listening, high fidelity, creativity, illegality?
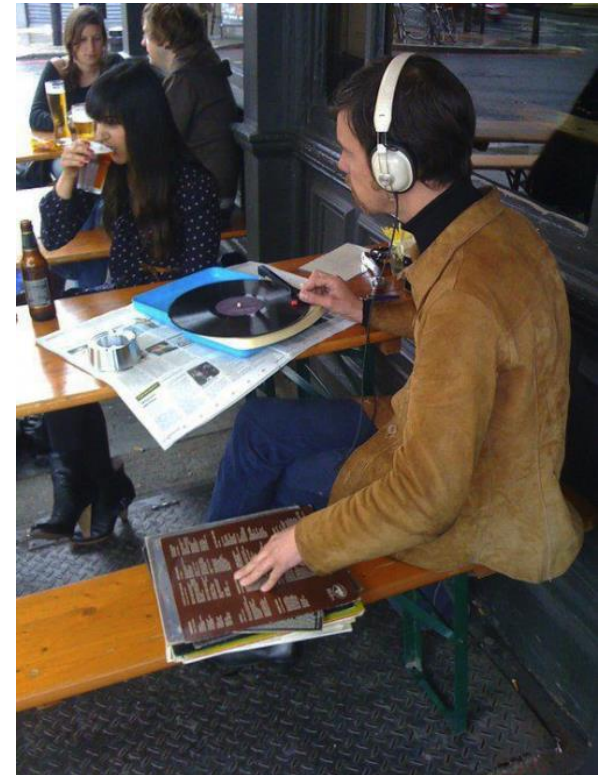
Aims

- Understanding what new sound technologies mean for our auditory culture
- Combined application of media history, theories from media studies and science & technology studies
- Research and media skills: doing ethnographic research; making a short audio documentary
- Working with Digital Audio Workstations.

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4. New Public Spheres (period 2)

coordinator: Annika Richterich

4. New Public Spheres

- What kind of new public spheres are being developed through digital media?
- How do (digital) media affect issues such as power relations, inequalities, and (blurring) boundaries between public and private spheres?
- What does this mean for democracy and the nature of public controversies?

Aims

- Understanding the 'public sphere' as key concept in critical theory
- Apprehending the impact of (digital) media on public spheres
- Examining contemporary cases illustrating new and changing public spheres
- Writing a paper on a public controversy relevant to new public spheres

5. Sharing Practices and Online Communities (period 3)

coordinator: to be announced

skills: to be announced

5. Sharing Practices and Online Communities

- What kind of practices are formed around digital platforms and sharing technologies?

- What is their impact on:
1) social behavior
2) forms of knowledge production
3) arts and culture?

- How can we understand online communities in these domains?

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Aims

- Introducing students to the discourses surrounding the phenomena of digital platforms and sharing practices in online environments.
- Understanding how technologies of file sharing and cloud computing change our social behavior, epistemic cultures and the ways we experience arts and cultural heritage.
- Research and media skills: introduction to virtual ethnography; practicing research and writing a paper; producing a video essay.

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2nd semester

6. Research Design (period 4)

coordinator: Jack Post

Aims

- Recapitulating concepts, theories and methods
- Preparing individual research
- Supporting the search for a topic and research question
- Writing a research plan

Tracks

- MA thesis: research plan + thesis

- Research internship: research plan + internship thesis + internship + internship report
(April and May 2019)

Workshops supporting thesis writing

March
- How to write your introduction
- How to write about methodology
- How to engage with the literature
- How to structure your thesis and develop your argumentation

June
- presentation day (feedback from supervisors and peers)
- How to write your abstract and conclusion

Admission

Applicants have at least fulfilled the following conditions:

- An <u>academic</u> Bachelor's degree with a certified list of grades and a CV indicating relevant working experience

- A letter of motivation indicating why you wish to study Digital Cultures at the Faculty of Arts and Culture and why you expect that you will be able to successfully complete the program.

- IELTS Language Test with a score of at least 6,5 (you need to reach 6,5 at least in writing)
  or internet-based TOEFL with a score of at least 92 (you need to reach 24 at least in writing)

- Short academic paper on a topic the faculty provides + skype interview

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Pre-master

1-year programme for students from vocational BAs (e.g. HBO, Fachhochschule)

- passing all modules = automatic acceptance to the MAMC programme

- Admission:
  - apply to the MA DC programme
  - good grades needed to be accepted into the pre-master (GPA 7.5 and higher)

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