

IPKM - Institut für historische Publizistik, Kommunikations- und Medienwissenschaft

Commentary to the following seminar in summer term 2019

Veranstalter*in Prof. Dr. Yannis Theocharis

Titel (dt.):

Titel (engl.): Research Seminar I: Social Media, Politics and Democracy (Part I)

Beschreibung:

Social media have transformed the way we communicate, interact, and consume many kinds of information, including political information. Social media technology is still young, but it has already played an important part in numerous turbulent protests and a highly polarized U.S. election. Most

importantly, this technology has often been at the forefront of the conflict between “good” democratic forces who use social media to make their voices heard and “bad” autocratic and repressive forces who aim to censor this channel to silence these liberal elements. This research seminar will focus on both the challenges and opportunities that social media present for democracy and will be split into three blocks: (a) digital discontent, (b) digital empowerment and (c) research design. The first two blocks will include in-class group-based research sessions as well as lecture-style sessions. The objective is to provide the students with thematic introductions to some of the current debates in political communication so that they get ideas and inspiration – as well as sufficient background understanding – of possible topics they could explore in the rest of the seminar. Topics addressed include social media and political polarization, incivility in political discourse, populism, disinformation, methods of authoritarian control, collective action, electoral campaigns and more. The third block is focused on research design. Students will be introduced to the research process and to diverse data collection and methodological approaches that they can deploy in their project. Most importantly, they will get the opportunity to discuss and present their project ideas and receive feedback, as well as set up their research plan in collaboration with their instructor.

Literatur:

- Settle, J. (2018). *Frenemies: How Social Media Polarizes America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Southwell, B., Thorson, E. & Sheble, L. (2018). *Misinformation and Mass Audiences*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Benkler, Y., Faris, R. & Roberts, Hal. (2018). *Network Propaganda: Manipulation, Disinformation, and Radicalization in American Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Roberts, M. (2018). *Censored: Distraction and Diversion Inside China's Great Firewall*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Stromer-Galley, J. (2014). *Presidential Campaigning in the Age of the Internet*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Noble, S.U. (2018). *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism*. New York: New York University Press.