

Courses in English

Course Description

Department	13 General and Interdisciplinary Studies
Course title	Big Brother is watching you: the culture of surveillance
Hours per week (SWS)	2
Number of ECTS credits	2
Course objective	Upon completion of the course, students will have become more aware of the ubiquity of surveillance in contemporary Western societies. They will have learnt to reflect on basic questions that surveillance studies ask: How does surveillance reflect but also shape power relations? What are the effects of surveillance on our cultures and our (collective) identities?
Prerequisites	excellent English required
Recommended reading	Students are welcome to prepare themselves mentally with David Lyon, Surveillance Studies. An overview (Cambridge, 2007); David Barnard Wills, Surveillance and Identity (Ashgate, 2012)
Teaching methods	The seminar will be held every other week for 4 class contact hours; there will be time for lecture, student presentation, in-class reading and discussion, group work, and film analysis. Students will be required to give one longer presentation and chair a discussion on an agreed-on topic.
Assessment methods	80% attendance mandatory, credit earned through presentation / term paper (based on the presentation), chairing a discussion, and in-class work.
Language of instruction	English
Name of lecturer	Prof. Dr. Silke Järvenpää
Email	silke.jaervenpaeae@hm.edu
Link	
Course content	<p>Remember the days when half of Germany talked about boycotting the census? When the British campaigned against ID cards? – No, you wouldn't. Ideas of privacy, civil liberties and identity are not static, and what was outrageous once is acceptable today. Or is it? Most internet users do feed their facebook accounts regularly, and despite knowing that surveillance of the web is total, they do not use encryption in their mail correspondence; hooligans still pick fights at train stations – in full view of CCTV cameras. Yet Edward Snowden's revelations continue to shock and awe, and popular culture has long discovered that showing the sinister side of surveillance makes for great box office hits.</p> <p>The course will deal with ideas of surveillance and introduce students to some classical debates (e.g. Foucault on Bentham and his Panopticon). It will also explore the evolution of surveillance, not least due to technological progress, and discuss ongoing cases and their media coverage, such as that of NSA/PRISMA. But contributions to the discourse by feature film makers and writers of fiction will be analysed as well.</p>
Remarks	