

Interdisziplinäres Kolloquium HeSe 18/19

U M K Ä M P F T E R Ä U M E

dienstags 18:15 Uhr in HEL 164

Vortrag am 23.10.2018:

Simon Strick (Berlin):

**“An Alt Right Safe Space: RightWing Identity
Politics on Youtube”**

Only 32% of Americans trust traditional media (Gallup 2016), and a vast majority of people has turned to Social Media for political and news-related content. Youtube is second most popular site for political content, and a significant amount of it stems from rightwing and reactionary, to nationalist and racist content providers, or vloggers. The category of 'political commentary' on the platform is predominantly filled with anti-feminist, nationalist, and white identitarian producers, commonly referred to as the Alt-Right ('Alternative Right'). As so-called 'influencers' – people who shape public opinion and advertise goods through the 'conscientious calibration' of their online personae – these Youtubers maintain a crucial role in the current political ecosphere, characterized by an internationally tangible 'Rechtsruck'. Channels like Sargon of Akkad, Millennial Woes or Paul Joseph Watson provide popular, youth-oriented, and 'entertaining' versions of rightwing ideology. They enmesh their political messaging with popculture tropes, forms of comedy or 'edgy' entertainment, and the particular performative scripts of the vlog, with its remote intimacies, affect and authenticity, fan dynamics, and self-branding. The talk will provide a brief historical overview of how and why the 'Alt-Right' emerged from within Youtube, and eventually came to dominate the platform. I will be focussing particularly on issues of gender performance, neoliberal framing, and the reactions to countermeasures (e.g. 'deplatforming') that companies like Youtube and Facebook have taken to stem the deluge of reactionary content.