

Seminar:
Digital Capitalism, AI and Big Data
 Paul Schütze

Course Description

We live in an age of information technologies where advances in Big Data and AI are major drivers of societal change, largely pushed forward by companies such as Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple and Microsoft. Yet, these technologies are not plain and neutral achievements, but they are expressions of economic logics and companies' objectives – they are manifestations of what can broadly be called “digital capitalism”.

In this seminar we want to build on the general understanding that the technologies of AI and Big Data are sociotechnical systems, and as such are always embedded in larger cultural and economic frameworks. Together we will get a better understanding of these frameworks, approaching them from various perspectives broadly unified under the heading of “digital capitalism”. On the basis of a variety of texts, we will discuss questions such as: What is “digital capitalism” and how does it shape and influence Big Data and AI? How do the sociotechnical systems of Big Data and AI fit into the picture of digital capitalism? And what does this influence imply for our understanding of these technologies? In sum, the goal of the seminar is to deepen the understanding and motivate a critical reflection of the societal, cultural and economic contexts in which the technologies of Big Data and AI are situated.

Session	Text
1	Introductory Session
Part 1	
2 12.04.	Timo Daum (2022) - Artificial Intelligence as the Latest Machine of Digital Capitalism - For Now
3 19.04.	Pfeiffer, S. (2022). Digital Capitalism and Distributive Forces . transcript-Verlag. -> Part 2: „Digital Capitalism Revisited“ (pp. 27-45) (Additional resource (for German speakers): Dissens Podcast with Katika Kühnreich)
4 26.04	Pfeiffer (2022). -> Part 2: „Digital Capitalism Revisited“ (pp. 45-60)
5 03.05.	Philipp Staab - In a nutshell: Philipp Staab – The crises of digital capitalism https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQyroHudNGs

	Shoshana Zuboff – The Age of surveillance capitalism : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HzW5rzPUy8
6 10.05.	Zuboff, S. (2019). The age of surveillance capitalism: The fight for a human future at the new frontier of power . Profile books. -> „The Foundation of Surveillance Capitalism“ (pp. 27-62) (Additional resource: Interview with Shoshana Zuboff)
7 17.05.	Srnicek, Nick (2019). The political economy of AI . „Konferenz: Great Transformation // Keynote Nick Srnicek“ YouTube. Vortrag vom 25.09. 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fmi3fq3Q3Bo (Additional resource: Srnicek, <i>Platform Capitalism</i> . pp. 36-92)
8 24.05	Thatcher, J., O’Sullivan, D., & Mahmoudi, D. (2016). Data colonialism through accumulation by dispossession: New metaphors for daily data . <i>Environment and Planning D: Society and Space</i> . 34(6). 990–1006.
9 31.05	Sadowski, J. (2019). When data is capital: Datafication, accumulation, and extraction https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2053951718820549#
10 07.06.	Terranova, T. (2000). Free labor: Producing culture for the digital economy . <i>Social text</i> . 18(2). 33-58.
11 14.06.	1. Coeckelbergh, M. (2021). AI for climate 2. “ AI and Climate Change: How they’re connected, and what we can do about it ”: https://medium.com/@AINowInstitute/ai-and-climate-change-how-theyre-connected-and-what-we-can-do-about-it-6aa8d0f5b32c
12 21.06.	1. “ A feminist action framework for the digital economy ”: https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/17008-20210902.pdf 2. “ Feminist frames for a brave new digitality ”: https://itforchange.net/digital-new-deal/2020/11/02/feminist-frames-for-a-brave-new-digitality/
13 28.06.	Verdegem, P. (2022). Dismantling AI Capitalism https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00146-022-01437-8
14 05.07.	Muldoon, J. (2022). Envisioning Platform Socialism - Podcast https://techwontsave.us/episode/97_envisioning_platform_socialism_w_james_muldoon

Further Readings:

- Schiller, D. (1999). *Digital capitalism: networking the global market system*. MIT Press.
- Peters, M.A. (2017). Algorithmic Capitalism in the Epoch of Digital Reason. *Fast Capitalism*. 14(1). 65-74
- Gregg, M. (2009). Learning to (love) labour: Production cultures and the affective turn. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*. 6(2). 209-214.
- Parisi, L. (2019). The alien subject of AI. *Subjectivity*. 12(1). 27-48.
- Parisi, L. (2019). Critical computation: Digital automata and general artificial thinking. *Theory, Culture & Society*. 36(2). 89-121