



Empathy in the Digital Age

Freie Universität Berlin–Indiana University
Joint Speaker Series
The Role of Media in the Digital Age

Speakers:

Fritz Breithaupt,

Provost Professor, Indiana University Bloomington, Germanic Studies

Jan Slaby,

Professor, Freie Universität Berlin, Institute of Philosophy

Moderator:

Millicent Churcher,

Postdoctoral Research Associate, The University of Sydney, Department of Philosophy

How do the internet and media influence empathy? In this event empathy will be understood as the co-experience of the situation of the other. One could say: The situation and emotions of the other become the medium of my experience. In this sense, empathy requires mediation, raising the question which forms of mediation have which effects. Recent research has presented data about a dramatic decrease of empathy among social-media using college students. Other authors, however, suggest that game playing and virtual reality might provide an excellent basis for empathy. Underlying this debate is the assumption that empathy is usually good.

In response to the recent data and these discussions, **Fritz Breithaupt** will provide a short history of empathy as mediation and discuss the good and bad aspects of empathy in the digital age. In his comments, **Jan Slaby** will voice some concerns about empathy as a basis for sociality and morality in general and reflect on how social media might amplify these problems - notably the bias towards in-group, close or well-known others. The audience will have the opportunity to engage in the discussion during the subsequent Q&A session moderated by **Millicent Churcher**.

The Freie Universität Berlin-Indiana University joint speaker series aims at bringing together scholars from both institutions to discuss current topics of global politics, stir scientific dialogue and research initiatives and trigger public debate.

Tuesday, June 26, 2018, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

**Indiana University Europe Gateway
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Please register at ieurope@iu.edu or +49 30 698078849

Please be advised that photos and video recordings of this event will be taken and might be published for public and non-public purposes.