

DFG-Graduiertenkolleg 1681
“Privacy. Forms, Functions, Transformations”

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE

Passau, 16-18 October 2014

Spaces and Cultures of the Private

Outline

Spatial aspects are crucial to an understanding of the concept and status of the private. Space becomes relevant as a broad category in various privacy cultures. Politically, philosophically and legally, privacy often carries an historical connection to the possession of (private) property, whether in an economic sense as prerequisite for liberal freedoms or in a territorial sense as protection against state intrusion. Metaphors of privacy are also primarily spatially influenced, be it in the literary image of “a room of one’s own” (Virginia Woolf) or the jurisprudential figure of the “inviolable core area of private life” or the home as “refuge”. These are merely single facets of a wider and interactive relationship between space and privacy. For example, while the feminist critique has problematized the notion that private space is due unconditional protection, the sociology of housing and architectural history looks at changes in the urban construction of privacy as well as forms of use and appropriation in the urban environment. Also to consider is the (legal-)cultural relativity of privacy concepts and practices. Nevertheless, with the prospect of all-round surveillance by means of ubiquitous technology, fundamental questions concerning the universality of the value of privacy and protected spaces, and even the need to re-define the value of privacy *per se*, enter the focus of various contemporary debates. Can changes in (legal) cultures and cultivations of the private motivated by this tendency be observed?

Thematic areas

The conference has an interdisciplinary format, bringing together approaches from law and legal informatics with those from the humanities and the social sciences, alongside cultural and media studies. Possible perspectives may include:

1. Spatial and cultural conceptions of the private: Theory, history, discussion

- Interdisciplinary approaches to privacy as a spatial/cultural phenomenon
- Inter-/transcultural perspectives
- Genealogies of spatial privacy concepts
- Legal-theoretical, legal-dogmatic and legal-historical aspects of privacy
- Privacy as constitutional value
- Privacy and changing legal cultures
- Feminist critiques of privacy and current perspectives on gender, space and privacy
- Poetics, metaphors and myths of spatial privacy

- The future of privacy
- (...)

2. Privacy in real and abstract space

- Representations and functions of privacy in virtual spaces
- Virtual spaces as opportunities/dangers for privacy/anonymity
- Surveillance in real and digital spaces
- Privatization and the politics of urban space
- Mediatized representations of private space
- Process of change on the urban construction of the public and private
- The (spatial) organization of work and leisure in post-Fordism
- Digital sovereignty
- Privacy in the “legal space”
- (...)

3. Cultural practices of the private

- The cultural production of private space
- Comparative legal perspectives
- Privacy in the focus of historical anthropology
- The ritual construction of space and privacy
- Privacy and technologies of the self
- De-privatization and “law in action”
- (...)

Information on organization and procedure

The conference will take place from 16–18 October 2014 at the University of Passau. The conference languages are German and English.

Abstracts (including title of the presentation) should be no longer than 1 page (2500 key strokes). Please send abstracts along with a short CV listing relevant publications and presentations as

PDF by email to Privatheit@uni-passau.de by **30 April 2014**. Please observe the following structure: abstract title; abstract text; max. 10 keywords; name; institutional affiliation; email; short CV.

Presentations will last 30 minutes. Speakers' travel and accommodation costs can be covered. A publication is planned.

Please contact us with any questions.

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