

Technology in Fiction and Discourse

Starting on May 6, a Series of Lectures Will Focus on Relationships between Culture and Technology



The relationship between technology and culture is the subject of a lecture series at KIT. (Photo by: photocase.de)

The relationships between culture and technology play an important role in research and education at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology. By its lecture series “Technology Fictions – Technology Discourses”, the KIT makes the public participate in this discussion: This lecture series at the Institute for Literature Science covers the role of technology in fictional texts and discourses from the perspectives of various disciplines. The series will start on May 6.

The scope covered is very large: It will be concentrated among others on studies from the point of view of literature, cultural and media sciences as well as technology history. Fantasies of the technology war before 1914 will be dealt with as well as the popularization of technology in cultural journals. Disciplines will be introduced, which convey technical-scientific expert knowledge and focus on technology assessment. For example, presentations will cover technology utopian thinking or technical discourses in flood protection.

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The lecture series was initiated by a working group of the Institute for Literary Studies. It is mainly active in the field of “Culture and Technology” that is part of the planned KIT focus “Man and Technology”. The group consists of representatives of adjacent disciplines, such as technology philosophy. But also the technology scientist Dr. Charlotte Kämpf has joined the working group. As explained by Dr. Stefan Scherer from the Institute for Literary Studies, the working group and the lecture series present examples of networks between the humanities and social sciences on one hand and between natural and engineering sciences on the other. According to Scherer, disciplinary boundaries cannot always be exceeded and the literary scholar can speak about technical issues with certain limitations only, “but still, he can study impacts of technology in the world to the extent covered by fictions in literature.”

Lecture dates:

Redtenbacher-Hörsaal (building 10.91, Engelbert-Arnold-Straße 4), every Wednesday, 18 to 19.30 hrs

May 6: Dr. Kurt Möser (Universität Karlsruhe, Technikmuseum Mannheim), Fantasies of the Technology War before 1914

May 13: Professor Andreas Böhn (Universität Karlsruhe, Institute for Literary Studies): Media Nostalgia as Technology Nostalgia

May 20: Professor Rainer Leng (Universität Stuttgart, Historical Institute), Magic and Machines. Aspects of Late Medieval War Books

May 27: Dr. Charlotte Kämpf (Universität Karlsruhe, Institute for Water and Water Development), Inter- and Transdisciplinary Technology Discourses in Flood Protection

June 3: Dr. Stefan Scherer (Universität Karlsruhe, Institute for Literary Studies), Cultural Journals and Their Text Species for the Popularization of Technology

June 10: Professor Armin Grunwald (Universität Karlsruhe, Institute for Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis), Technology Utopian Thinking, New Types of Present Technology Debates

June 17: Professor Burkhardt Krause / Simone Finkle (Universität Karlsruhe, Institute for Literary Studies), Automata and Their Construction in the Poetry of the High Middle Ages

June 24: Dr. Mathias Herweg / Dr. Ralf Schneider (Universität Karlsruhe, Institute for Literary Studies / Multimedia Studies Center), Encyclopedia, World Books, and World Views. Networked Knowledge from the Middle Ages to the Presence

July 8: Professor Ralph Pordzik (Universität Würzburg, Institute of New Philology / English and American Studies), Liberation of Anthropocentric Thinking: Man and the “Other Extreme” of Technology in the Anglo-American Utopian Novel

July 22: Professor Uwe Japp (Universität Karlsruhe, Institute for Literary Studies), Technology Designs in Novels of the 20th Century

The Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is the merger of the Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe, member of the Helmholtz Association, and the Universität Karlsruhe. This merger will give rise to an institution of internationally excellent research and teaching in natural and engineering sciences. In total, the KIT has 8000 employees and an annual budget of 700 million Euros. The KIT focuses on the knowledge triangle of research – teaching – innovation.

The Karlsruhe institution is a leading European energy research center and plays a visible role in nanosciences worldwide. KIT sets new standards in teaching and promotion of young scientists and attracts top scientists from all over the world. Moreover, KIT is a leading innovation partner of industry.

This press release is available on the internet under www.kit.edu.