

The European Public Sphere

International Interdisciplinary Conference for PHD-Students
Sponsored by the Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences,
Humboldt-University

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Workshop on Concepts Contribution Form

**Please fill in, rename to "name_workshop_form.doc"
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by Nov. 1, 2003**

Name, First Name: Fickers, Andreas

The conference will begin with a workshop on concepts. In groups of 5 to 6 people, we would like to discuss definitions of European Public Sphere, the underlying theoretical presuppositions and the operationalisation. As a starting-point for the discussion the participants are kindly requested to contribute a brief outline of their concepts – we suggest to do it in bullet-points and to limit yourself to one page.

Which are your underlying normative and general theoretical presuppositions?

- There is no “public sphere”, but “public spheres”
- Public spheres are mediated
- Modern public spheres are based on mass media
- Mass media public spheres are based on technology, social constructed, economically shaped and charged with symbolic values

What is your definition of European Public Sphere?

- There is no “European Public Sphere”
- There are competing national interpretations of what “Europe” might / or should be
- These competing interpretations, circulating in different media, are shaping parallel discourses
- The emerging medial “European Public Spheres” interfere in the political, economic and cultural discourse about “European identity”
- Europe as a “communication space” has no national / transnational borders

How do you operationalise the European Public Sphere?

- I’m looking at the techno-political frames of the early television development in Europe
- Different national technical standards in b/w television (which were the result of nationalistic technopolitical and industrial behaviour) have made an televised “European Public Sphere” impossible