Meandering through the community

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One of the main reasons I pursue my studies in Berlin is the geographical proximity to a vibrant scene of tech-enthusiasts, digital activists, bloggers and (if not yet included in the former) the real-life pendants of the people I follow on Twitter. However, sitting in my spacious but kind of isolated office doesn't really pay a tribute to this huge advantage, so every once in a while I start or end my days with field trips to conferences, community events or other kinds of meetups. There I have the chance to get in touch with the people, who shape the organizations I'm researching, but in a rather unscientific and relaxed setting. In the following I give some examples of events I attended, the list is not comprehensive at all but will give a first overview. There may be more posts like this in the future especially when I'm going to start my structured data collection in the field. All the events below were mainly German-speaking, however I tried to translate their respective titles into English.

Community-meetup on netpolitics

Every first Tuesday of a month, the Berlin-based NGO Digital Society ([Digitale Gesellschaft e.V.](#)) hosts an evening full of talks on the developments in digital politics, which is called "Netzpolitischer Abend". On the one hand they inform about their very own lobbying activities in Berlin and Brussels, on the other hand they invite practitioners or academics from adjacent fields. From my point of view these meetups might be the most important regular nexus for the broad field I'm interested in and I will try to attend thesem as regularly as possible. Besides: the event takes place at the futuristic hackerspace [C-base](#), which dubs itself a as a "space station underneath Berlin". Always worth a visit.

["As darkness falls" conference](#)

When I read the announcement that there will be a conference on the reconfiguration of privacy in the digital age that takes place not in a sterile conference center but in the "Volksbühne", my favourite theatre hall in Berlin, I was already convinced to go. When I saw that there will be a keynote by the adornesque Internet-intellectual Evgeny Morozov, I was heavily excited. I took part in the first day of the conference, where approximately 300-400 people gathered to listen to pannels and to participate in workshops. The interdisciplinary selection of speakers was mirrored within the audience so the #EDDCon became a place where technologists, philosophers and politicians met to listen to their peers. All in all I was quite impressed, not so much by the content, but by the atmosphere of the conference. There was a feeling around that the NSA-heat has slowly cooled down a bit and people start to think about fundamental societal implications more cold headed than in the months preceeding the gathering. Apparently I felt inspired to write an extensive blogpost on that feeling… may this one serve as a replacement.

TSB & OKF present study on open data

Quite spontaneously I went to this press conference organized by the Technology Foundation Berlin (Technologiestiftung) and the German chapter of the Open Knowledge Foundation, which took place in the brand-new Wikimedia office in Berlin. [The study](#) turned out to be quite relevant for my research and I could make some loose agreements with potential interview partners for my future field research. There was free Mate as well. So hip. Much pleasure. Wow.

Monsters of Law @ Wikimedia

Yesterday evening I made a second visit at Wikimedia's spacious new office in Berlin. The event was announced as the first of a series called "Monsters of Law" which aims at educating non-lawyers on copyright issues. Together with approx. 25 others I listened to a talk by Humboldt University's Assistant Professor Katharina de la Durantaye covering copyright issues within academic and educational work. However, I got the impression that although officially addressing a rather lay target group, the room was filled with lawyers, who felt like arguing about details in this paragraph or another. Might have been a fruitful evening for them – I had a free beer, a pretzl and left right after the discussion.