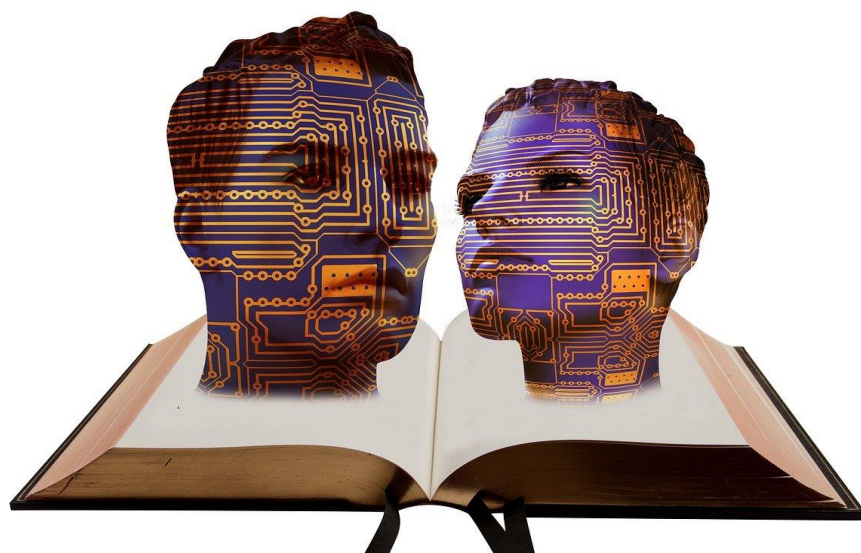# American Literature and Digital Selfhood: Algorithms, Affect, Attention

Prof. Dr. Regina Schober

Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf

Tuesday,
9 January 2024
6:15 – 7:45 pm
(CET)

Rabinstr. 8, SR 6

While algorithms have come to shape the ways of 'writing the self', for example through data tracking and recording, personalized recommendation systems, and online identity curation, traditional literary fiction has also increasingly negotiated the ways of being in and experiencing our algorithmically driven, digital environment. This talk will look at contemporary US American novels that critically inquire into modes of algorithmic self-writing, by scrutinizing the ways in which digital affect and automated scripts play into the construction of selfhood while navigating the commercial forces of the attention economy. With a particular focus on female digital experiences, this talk reframes critical perspectives on human entanglements with technology and explores the ambiguities of the digital pharmakon as posthuman spaces of failed knowledge.

Regina Schober is Professor for American Studies at Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf. Her research interests include literary negotiations of networks and algorithmic selfhood, theories of failure, and the digital pharmakon. She is author of *Spiderweb, Labyrinth, Tightrope Walk: Networks in US-American Literature and Culture* (De Gruyter, 2023) and co-editor of *Data Fiction: Naturalism, Numbers, Narrative* (Special Issue of *Studies in American Naturalism*, 2011) and of *Laboring Bodies and the Quantified Self* (Transcript, 2020).

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