## **Dave Eggers: The Circle**



- These notes are my unstructured study notes for the novel "The Circle" by Dave Eggers (Paperpack Edition, Penguin, 2014, ISBN 978-0241970379).
- The notes were created with classroom discussions in mind about the consequences and implications of increasing social-media use.

## Mini-Camera presentation (p. NN)

· discussion about the implications

# LuvLuv presentation, Mae's Information gets shown on the stage (p. 117)

- Discussion about the difference between individually posted information and aggregate information
- Research: What of that is already possible today?

### Discussions with Mercer (p. 130, p. 257 ff)

- Mercer argues that social media have changed people for worse, has turned people into teenagers
- Discussion about this position

### Serious talk about Mae's participation (p. 175 ff)

All voluntary, but at the same time socially enforced

## Delusion of control through superficial numbers (p. 191 ff)

## Congresswoman wears a camera at all times (p. 205 ff)

"to go transparent"

### Subtle feeling of pressure and coercion (p. 211 ff)

- Talking to Kalden, he disapproves of the constant camera on the congresswoman
- Mae is reluctant to leave without being seen by her supervisors
- Before she goes with Kalden she takes a few pictures and posts them to show herself being social (p. 217)

### **Energy needs of data storage (p. 220 f)**

environmental implications of widespread use of digital devices and cloud storage

## Talk with Eamon Bailey — privately and on stage (p. 276 ff)

• Slogan in three Parts (p. 303). Cf. 1984

### Mae is transparent (p. 307 ff)

- Mae talks to her viewers (p. 309) vlogging?
- Mae is not transparent she is used as a marketing device.
- Later: her parents' home is also transparent (p. 323)

### Completion (p. 311)

Ideas of completion (fulfilment?) – hopes to find in an online service what one can't find in real
life

## Keeping up appearances (p. 322)

 When you're always being watched you have to fake appearances and turn to your inside world for recreation → siehe auch 1984

## Private meetings (p. 335)

The leaders of the health companies meet in private — why?

## Student measurements (p. 342 f)

• Illusion that complete measurement of learning will improve learning or even improve personal skills of students.

• "Where was this 20 yrs ago? My kids would have gone to Yale"

### Mae goes to Francis' dorm room (p. 378)

Francis is sorry that he recorded the sex that the two of them had, "I couldn't believe that I was with you. And there was some part of me that assumed it would be the only time. I wanted to remember it" – Is recording something really the best way of remembering a special moment?
 → smart phone photos everywhere, vgl. Ein schöner Moment leuchtet das Leben hindurch

# Mae learns about some people's negative opinion and meets Annie (p. 410)

Narrative perspective: stream of consciousness?

## Mae is completely taken in by the ideology

• Even Mercer's death and Annie's breakdown don't make her question it

#lektuere #buecher #roman