

D51 Jeff / USA / History

Interaction partner(s): German students

Moment of enquiry: SS 08

Experience of difference: Boundaries and commonalities in roommate situations

Jeff is spending an exchange semester at a German university, where he is studying history. He lives in a dorm and is puzzled at how reserved his German fellow students are. He finds it especially odd that his roommates always keep the doors to their rooms closed, obviously signalling that they do not want to be disturbed. He always leaves his door open.

1. What habits determine Jeff's behaviour, and why does he interpret the German students' behaviour as shutting themselves off?
2. What does it mean to German students when they keep their doors closed?