

240209: VO Theories & Methods

Katta Spiel

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Office Hours: FR 2-4pm and upon request

Office: Porzellangasse 4 (1.06)

Time: FR 4.45-6.15 pm & 6.30-8pm (on 18.10., 15.11. and 13.12.)

no lecture on 11.10., 1.11., 8.11., 6.12., 20.12.)

Place: Lecture Hall 16, Main Building, Hochparterre, Stiege 5 HP.122

Course Description

Theories and methods build the base of all knowledge production. Fundamental epistemological implications result from the why and how of our practices. Being able to assess, locate, criticize and contextualize these brings with it the ability to position oneself independently within larger research settings. Due to the interdisciplinary approach, the field of Gender Studies draws on a number of different epistemological, theoretical and methodological approaches. This lecture addresses these basics and provides a frame in that allows to understand which approaches are suitable for which research questions and why.

As part of the course, we will touch on several theoretical concepts of knowledge production: Post/Positivism, Materialism, Critical Theory, Post/Structuralism, De/Constructivism, Situated Knowledge, Feminist Ethics, Intersectionality, Postcolonialism, Participatory Research, Design and Speculation. Each session presents paradigmatic, ontological, epistemological and methodological foundations and then translates them into methods. We will also engage in an interactive critique of recent studies and publications to exemplify different questions as well as their potentials and limits. Within the framework of each lecture, a handbook will be developed on the basis of individual positions on the topic, which can serve as an individual reference for further study (or just for the exam).

If required, the course can also be held in English.

Teaching Materials

- All materials will be made available in moodle
- Slides will be made available latest until the Wednesday at noon before the lecture and updated until the Monday after.
- Additional literature will be similarly made available.
- A collaborative pad to ask and answer questions can be found here: <https://pad.riseup.net/p/tmunivie2019-keep>. Asking and answering questions is (also) your responsibility. However, I will regularly maintain the pad.
- What else do you need?

Prerequisites

There are no specific prerequisites required to attend this lecture. However, I expect that everyone is enabled to actively contribute to the teaching and learning experiences. Additionally, participants consent to the code of conduct (below).

Learning Goals

With this lecture, you can expect to acquire the following set of knowledges and skills:

1. Referential overview of fundamental approaches to knowledge production
2. Understanding of and appreciation for different theoretical stances in Gender Studies
3. Experience with a range of methods and their implications on epistemological positioning
4. Skills in critically analysing and using these methods
5. Vocabulary for the contextualisation of your personal research practices
6. Ability to personally position yourself within a set of different theories

You are also encouraged to formulate and communicate your own learning goals for this lecture.

Structure

Every lecture starts with a brief introduction into a given topic in which I will provide a detailed structure touching on paradigm, ontology, epistemology and methodology before I present a range of different associated methods, zoning in on one that will be presented in more detail. You will then be invited to briefly experiment with the method for yourself and reflect on the approach. Afterwards, we will collaboratively critique a recent study or publication using the method. In that, you are invited to ask many questions.

You are asked to create a small booklet or zine as an individually shaped and curated overview of theories and methods. You can choose between an oral or written exam, according to your individual preference, although I restrict the opportunity for dates to within a week at the end of the semester as well as at the beginning, middle and end of the following semester. You may take the booklet/zine as an aid. Other aids will not be permitted (except to ensure accessibility). The exam is successfully passed with achieving at least 50% of possible points.

Code of Conduct

During the lecture

You may use a laptop or similar digital device for digital note taking. Though, as an interest to your learning process and success, I generally prefer handwritten notes (you may also just choose to do them in the booklet/zine). If you choose a digital device, though, I am asking you to not use it for anything else. However, you absolutely may knit, crochet, draw and anything else that supports your focus. Please silence your phones. If you have to take a phone call, you can leave the room at any point. You may eat and drink in this lecture. When you do so, though, please consider everyone else in the room and, therefore, stay away from strong smells in your food (No Leberkäse rule).

Attendance

You are expected to attend all lectures, but there is no strict rule for attendance. I assume you are able to individually assess how important attendance is for your learning. If you come late or leave earlier, please try to keep the disruption for others to a minimum.

Overall Conduct

You are as responsible as I am for a positive learning environment that allows every one to learn independently from their academic or personal background. Many social structures in our daily lives make this already more difficult for marginalised people. Assume the best. I encourage you to not just allow, but encourage and invite critique. If you don't like someone's tone, take a step back and try to ignore it. Reflect your privileges and allow space for others (including their mistakes). I am also striving towards this goal. Additional parameters will be defined in our first lecture. Otherwise, the Code of Conduct of the University of Vienna applies

Detailed Schedule

The schedule is tentative and will be continuously adapted to your interests and needs (as much as possible). The learning goals refer to core concepts you should understand each week and may also aid you in preparing for the exam.

FR 04.10.2019_16.45-18.15 Introduction

- Introduction of basic terms
- Presentation of schedule
- Discussion of expectations (yours and mine)

FR 18.10.2019_16.45-18.15 Post/positivism

- The "scientific method"
- Objectivity as ideology
- *Method*: descriptive stats 101

FR 18.10.2019_18.30-20.00 Ethics

- Normative ethics
- “Ethics of care”
- Ethical practice
- *Method*: ethical reflection

FR 25.10.2019_16.45-18.15 Critical Theory

- Difference between Critique, Critical Theory and Critical Practice
- Critique on Critical Theory
- Postcritical approaches
- *Method*: discourse analysis

FR 15.11.2019_16.45-18.15 Post/structuralism & De/constructivism

- Discourse and analysis
- Thought and speech
- *Method*: Decentering the tricycle

FR 15.11.2019_18.30-20.00 Realism/materialism

- Critical Realism
- Posthumanism and cyborgs
- *Method*: object oriented research

FR 22.11.2019_16.45-18.15 Queer(ing) Theory

- Disrup....
- Challenge
- Complaint
- *Method*: subversive approaches

FR 29.11.2019_16.45-18.15 Hegemonic and situated knowledges

- Standpoints and positionality
- Different concepts of “power”
- Privilege and marginalisation
- *Method*: positioning

FR 13.12.2019_16.45-18.15 Intersectionality and postcolonialism

- Interplay and amplification of multiple marginalisations
- Subaltern knowledge
- Attention as practice
- *Method*: interviews & thematic analysis

FR 13.12.2019_18.30-20.00 Critical Disability Studies

- Models of Disability
- Theoretical embodiment
- Pride against prejudice
- *Method*: Observation

FR 10.01.2020_16.45-18.15 Participatory research

- Situated action research
- Validation and transformation
- Research as figure
- *Method:* participatory evaluation

FR 17.01.2020_16.45-18.15 Design & Speculation

- Research and presentation beyond text and numbers
- Design as critical practice
- Reflexivity as a quality criterion
- *Method:* speculative design

FR 24.01.2020_16.45-18.15 Finale/Reflection

- According to your interests and needs

FR 31.01.2020_16.45-18.15 1. option for exam