

240209: VO Methodological Approaches

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Office Hours: FR 2-4pm and upon request

Office: Argentinierstraße 8/2nd floor (TU Wien)

Time: tbd.

Place: digital only

Course Description

Methods lie at the foundation 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 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 methods together with their epistemological and methodological foundations. 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).

Teaching Materials

- All materials will be made available in moodle.
- Slides will be made available before each lecture (English and German).
- Additional literature is available, but optional for personal study.
- What else do you need? → write me an email or hit me up on Slack

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 methodological 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 your own knowledge production

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 method, before I zone in on a specific example that will be presented in more detail. You will be invited to briefly experiment with some methods for yourself and reflect on the approach. Afterwards, we will collaboratively critique a recent study or publication using the method. In this lecture, you are invited to ask many questions.

Examination

In this lecture, you have three options for gaining your mark:

Classical Exam

You are asked to create a small booklet or zine as an individually shaped and curated overview of theories and methods in Gender Studies. 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. For the written exam, you have one week for submission during which you can take as much or as little time as you need.

Essay

You may also write an essay to a self-selected or given topic from within the lecture. The essay should be about 4-6 pages long (12 pt font, 1.5 spacing, including references), though this is more guidance than strict prerequisite. The essay topics will be announced 10 days before the examination date, which is also the submission date.

Exam-free Option

Instead of writing an essay or submitting an exam by the end of the lecture, you have the opportunity for on-going reflection with this option. For this, I would ask you to send me either a drawing or a short text (half a page) each week for each of the core topics (starting with week 2). You may choose a blogging platform for this as well (just send me the link). Note that while this might add a bit to your weekly workload, you will receive ongoing feedback and will not have to submit an additional exam/essay at the end of the semester.

Code of Conduct

During the lecture

Should we have synchronous lectures, please feel free to attend them in whatever way you please. I only ask for you not to have loud background music playing (or mute your microphone should that be unavoidable). Feel free to show your pets, we will give them adequate attention.

Attendance

You are expected to engage with the material for all lectures, but there is no strict rule for attendance (in case we have synchronous meetings). 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 02.10.2020 introducing

- Survey for digital learning
- Syllabus reading
- Terminology

FR 09.10.2020 surveying

- Survey construction
- Consistency and Validity
- Participant recruitment

FR 16.10.2020 counting

- Quantitative data
- Objectivity as ideology
- Descriptive statistical analysis

FR 23.10.2020 reading

- Literature analysis
- Feminist Content Analysis
- Close reading

FR 30.10.2020 interviewing

- Structured and unstructured interviews
- Conduct during interviews
- Transcription

FR 06.11.2020 analysing

- Coding interviews
- Categorisation and themeing
- Thematic Analysis

FR 13.11.2020 interpreting

- Dealing with quotes
- Critical interpretation
- Grounded Theory

FR 20.11.2020 positioning

- Standpoints and positionality
- Intersectional inquiries
- Reflexivity in context of privilege and marginalisation

FR 27.11.2020 mapping

- Situational maps
- Identifying human and non-human actors
- Actor-Networks

FR 04.12.2020 decolonizing

- Subaltern knowledge
- Citational justice
- Decolonizing methods

FR 11.12.2020 queering

- Subversion
- Marginalised knowledge production
- Trans Studies vs./and Queer Studies

FR 18.12.2020 crippling

- Accessibility in research
- Corporealities
- Crip Theory

FR 08.01.2021 sharing

- Situated action research
- Validation and transformation
- Participatory Evaluation

FR 15.01.2021 drawing

- Research and presentation beyond text and numbers
- Design as critical practice
- speculative design

FR 22.01.2021 loving

- Summary of lecture
- Questions on examination
- Loving epistemologies

FR 29.01.2021 Submission of exam material