

Workshop on current debates about research ethics in the social sciences

Prof. Dr. Hella von Unger (LMU München)

Organized by the DocAG “Ethics and (self-)reflexivity in qualitative research”

Friday, December 19th 2014, 11.30 - 16.00 Campus Westend, PEG 1. G 102

Program

- 11.30 - 13.30 **Guest Lecture "Current Controversies and Debates about Research Ethics in the Social Sciences" by Prof. Dr. Hella von Unger (in English)**
- Research ethics are a highly contested topic. In the US, Cannella and Lincoln (2007) criticize the way in which the ethical conduct of research is commonly treated as a “regulatory enterprise” that only creates an “illusion of ethical practice” (p. 315). Other social science scholars share this criticism and point to the shortcomings of institutionalized review procedures and their negative implications for academic freedom and especially for qualitative inquiry.
- The lecture will discuss the history and the current debate about research ethics with a specific focus on recent developments in Germany.
- 14.00 - 16.00 **Workshop on ethical dilemmas in research (in English & German)**
- Participants have the possibility to present and discuss ethical dilemmas and challenges they have encountered in the research process. (Closed Workshop*)
- 18.00 - 20.00 **Dinner (self-paid)**

*For organizational reasons, the number of participants of the workshop is limited. Prospective participants are invited to submit a brief description of their dissertation project with a focus on research ethics.

Hella von Unger is Professor for Qualitative Methods of Empirical Research at the Institute for Sociology at LMU München. Her research focus is on qualitative methods of empirical social research, and sociology of health and illness. Email: unger@lmu.de

Further Information:

<http://www.qualitative-sozialforschung.soziologie.uni-muenchen.de/personen/professorin/unger/index.html>

<http://www.qualitative-sozialforschung.soziologie.uni-muenchen.de/index.html>

Literature:

DGS (2014): Ethik-Kodex der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Soziologie (DGS) und des Berufsverbands Deutscher Soziologen (BDS). Online verfügbar unter <http://www.soziologie.de/de/die-dgs/ethik-kodex.html> (Zugriff: 8.7.2014).

von Unger, Hella (2014): Forschungsethik in der qualitativen Forschung: Grundsätze, Debatten und offene Fragen. In: von Unger, Hella / Narimani, Petra / M'Bayo, Rosaline (Hrsg.). Forschungsethik in der qualitativen Forschung: Reflexivität, Perspektiven, Positionen, Wiesbaden: Springer VS. S. 15-39.

The **DocAG „Ethics and (self-)reflexivity in qualitative research“** was constituted in October 2014. In regularly scheduled meetings we discuss literature on research ethics and ethical issues that arise from the research context of our PhD projects. One of the central features of qualitative research is the reflection on the subjectivity of the researcher, its position in the field of research and its influence on the research process. Engaging with research ethics means e.g. reflecting on issues such as:

- ≡ How can power inequalities in the research context be recognized and conceptualized in our work?
- ≡ How can we deal with research participants that belong to vulnerable groups while at the same time recognizing and encouraging their agency?
- ≡ How can we deal with personal and trust relationships that establish in the field?
- ≡ How can we manage our position as researchers and what are our role and our responsibilities towards our research participants and towards society in general?
- ≡ What should be the aim of research? Can the interest of researcher, of research itself and of participants be combined?

We want to create a space for open discussion and (self-)reflexivity on the above mentioned issues. The aim of the group is to accompany the members in a reflexive process through fieldwork and during the stage of data analysis, to discuss about issues emerging in the research but also to share, analyse and reflect together on literature that engages with ethical issues, positionality and self-reflexivity in qualitative research. The group should offer an opportunity to combine and take into account various perspectives coming from different streams of literature (e.g. feminist literature, queer and postcolonial literature).

Flaminia Bartolini, Susanne Becker, Mirjam Tutzer, Johanna Leinius & Aisha-N. Ahmad

Contact: bartolini.flaminia@gmail.com