

## Dependency, Vulnerability and Embodied Fieldwork

### Sexualized Harassment and Power Dynamics in the Field

*April 21-22, 2021; Bonn, Germany*

As researchers, we collect empirical data through interviews and participant observation during ethnographic fieldwork. We integrate into the everyday life of a group or community, whether near or at some distant location, and seek to develop close relationships with 'informants' in order to acquire relevant data on our research topic. An increasing number of disciplines has been turning to ethnographic fieldwork as a research method. However, not nearly enough institutional training and preparation is provided for ethnographers. Too little attention is paid to the significance of the researchers' and the informants' intersectional identities and the impact they have on the research process. Aspects such as the gender, age, or sexual orientation of the ethnographer are seldom sufficiently reflected on, even though these multiple identities have a decisive influence on fieldwork practice.

For example, a growing body of literature reveals that fieldwork experiences of sexualized harassment are not exceptional (Moreno 2005; Pollard 2009; Clark & Grant 2015; Johansson 2015; Kloß 2017; Hanson & Richards 2019). Researchers who have experienced sexualized harassment or assault during fieldwork often describe their feelings of being 'bad ethnographers' and believe that their methodology was flawed. This is often the case among PhD candidates, who are only starting to acquire academic status and reputation.

This workshop will focus on specific challenges of ethnography as a gendered and embodied practice. We will discuss topics such as dynamic power relations, dependency, vulnerability and the agency of gatekeepers to better prepare early-career researchers for fieldwork, and to reflect on the role of embodied research in academic knowledge production.

Up to 16 PhD candidates are invited to participate in this interdisciplinary workshop. It is going to take place at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, University of Bonn, on April 21-22, 2021 and is organized by Sinah Kloß (University of Bonn) to facilitate discussion among PhD candidates and postdocs. It is funded by the Cluster of Excellence "Beyond Slavery and Freedom".

Topics will include:

- Sexualized Harassment and Violence during Fieldwork
- Intersectional Identities and Fieldwork
- Emotions, Fieldwork and (Academic) Writing
- Dependency and Vulnerability in Fieldwork Relationships

Any PhD or advanced Master student who uses ethnographic fieldwork as a research method is invited to apply. Please send your applications by **October 15, 2020** to [s.kloss@uni-bonn.de](mailto:s.kloss@uni-bonn.de) and [researchandstudy@dependency.uni-bonn.de](mailto:researchandstudy@dependency.uni-bonn.de). Applications must include a CV and a personal statement ('letter of motivation', max. one page) in a single pdf. Successful applicants will be notified before November 15. We regret that travel costs cannot be reimbursed.