

Congress of the Swiss Sociological Association 2024
University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland, Basel (MuttENZ),
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Call for Papers

Workshop Session: Shared Vulnerability: A Key Concept for Critical Social Sciences?

Organizers:

Ira Zöller (RWTH Aachen), Katharina Hoppe (Goethe University Frankfurt)

This workshop session explores different understandings of vulnerability in sociological and feminist theory as well as their respective political implications. First, our goal is to sort out an understanding of vulnerability beyond individualism. By shedding light on the shared vulnerabilities, co-dependent and interdependent relations, we aim to disperse individualistic conceptions. Here, we want to explore the analytic capacities of accounts of vulnerability especially regarding other concepts such as precarity, dependency, and resilience. Analytically, we see the promises and strengths of a perspective that frames and acknowledges the feminist insight into the ontological situation of being vulnerable. Taking this seriously, we want to look at the implications of vulnerability in the context of feminist practice and social justice – thus, discussing the critical capacities of the concept of vulnerability. Thus, the workshop also discusses empirical analyses that put ‘vulnerability’ to practice. Particularly, we ask how a framing of groups of people as vulnerable risks paternalistic accounts, homogeneity and appropriation for policies and measures. One reason for this is that every framing of one group as something (eg. as vulnerable) excludes another group and therefor leaves them without allocated resources and measures. Vulnerability is hence a normatively open account and asks for specific analyses and theorizations that emphasize this ambivalent character.

We invite contributions that discuss these and related aspects of vulnerability from different perspectives of critical sociological research such as dis/ability Studies, Digital Data Studies, Science and Technology Studies, feminist theories, and postcolonial approaches.

Information:

- deadline for submitting abstracts: 5 January
- length of abstracts: max. 2000 characters
- language: English
- send proposals to: izoeller@soziologie.rwth-aachen.de & k.hoppe@em.uni-frankfurt.de