

Call for Participation

'Violence in the Field'

Recognizing, naming, and transforming experiences of violence in research contexts

September 26th-28th, 2024 at the Alexianer Hotel am Wasserturm

(+Preparation and Follow-up: Summer Semester 2024: online reading circle, Thursdays 11:00-12:30, April 25th, May 16th, and June 13th; Online lecture (date to be announced) with Parvis Ghassem-Fachandi + exchange on the repercussions and follow-up of the workshop)

Experiences of violence during and around fieldwork are unsettling. They are often discussed within ethnological disciplines as part of a 'practical tips for avoidance' discourse, but lately, they are also being explored more deeply in their epistemological and ontological dimensions. Alongside physical violence, power hierarchies, assaults, and discriminatory structures in the field or university context are palpable but often cannot be addressed or communicated by researchers because certain (emotional) regimes hinder the exchange about them.

We aim to create an accountability space for reflection where social anthropologists and artists of all academic hierarchical levels, with diverse backgrounds, can reflect on their experiences of violence: Where are the potentials for violence in the research process? What are personal and institutional strategies to render violent moments invisible or to bypass them? How can we responsibly deal with becoming witnesses of hurtful dynamics or being involved in them ourselves? How do I recognize institutionalized violence and typical 'perpetrator strategies'? How do we research violence and what should be considered when working in violent research contexts? What do I need to handle situations that overwhelm or unsettle me? How do I deal with injuries or the 'damage' I have suffered and caused?

In this workshop, we do not seek to eliminate violence and discrimination but primarily to make them visible, communicable, and experiential. We want to encourage taking risks, particularly urging precise observation and emotional engagement. In a further step, depending on the case and context, we will either develop solutions or transform experiences of violence and make them useful for research. We intend to work with participants' personal experiences and examples. Performative and theatrical methods and exercises facilitate the direct involvement of bodies, emotions, and embodiment in the work and discussion processes.

During the workshop, the Owdnegrin Performance Collective will present their research as a case study for the participants. Based on the intense and personal work of Jeanne Rohleder and Sonja Keßner on the topic of sexual violence against children, they will introduce their questions and methods, ethical implications, and strategies for dealing with the inherent violence of their research topic. As a team with the unique combination of a researcher affected by childhood sexual violence and one not affected, they will also provide insights into both perspectives and present the different challenges and opportunities of both positions. They address questions of possible retraumatization as well as the difficulties of conforming to the rules and schedules of conventional academic and artistic (production) processes. They discuss unexpected obstacles and report on the impossibility of feeling secure on uncertain terrain. They provide personal insights into their processes and share experiences on how to access embodied knowledge through performative practice, find strategies to

locate, translate, endure, and integrate this knowledge. Their input encourages acknowledging violence as process-immanent rather than avoiding it. In a practical exercise part, they will familiarize participants with the basic ideas and methods of artistic research. Participants will work with object improvisation, automatic writing, scenic reenactments, and poetic translations on topics brought or general questions of the workshop.

Conditions of Participation: Interested individuals can apply for participation in the preparatory reading circle (online) until April 19th. On three dates, we will engage with selected literature on the topic. We aim to create an accountability space and seek committed, prepared, and active participants.

The binding registration for the workshop is possible until July 1st. Please send applications to annika.strauss@uni-muenster.de. We appreciate a brief introduction and a short explanation of why you are interested in the reading circle and workshop.

For students of the BA programme: The preparation for (reading circle + pre-meeting), participation in, and follow-up of the workshop can be credited as (research) internship. Also, a module completion thesis can be prepared within the framework of the workshop.

Organizers

Owdnegrin Performance Collective, <http://owdnegrin.de/>: **Jeanne Rohleder** is a performance artist, art therapist, social worker, and social and cultural anthropologist. **Sonja Keßner** is a multidisciplinary artist with focuses on theater and music and also a social and cultural anthropologist.

Dr. Julia Koch Tshirangwana, Institute of Ethnology, Georg-August-University Göttingen
<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/dr.+julia+koch/512860.html>

Dr. Annika Strauss, Medical Anthropologist, with focuses on transcultural psychiatry and psychological anthropology, and theater educator, Institute of Ethnology, University of Münster