



Paul Lazarsfeld Lecture 2024

Politics of Knowing: Lived, Embodied, and Felt Expertise Within Social Movements

Michael Orsini, University of Ottawa

Di, 23.04.2024 | 18–19:30 Uhr | SR 3, Rooseveltplatz 2

Drawing on critical policy analysis, social movement studies and theories of emotion and affect, this talk examines the making and unmaking of expertise in social movements across three sites: autistic activism, contested illness mobilization, and fat activism. Hence this talk will not only address an academic audience, but also invites activists and people interested in the politics of social movements.

Orsini suggests that analyses of movements as merely uncritical receivers of expert knowledge fail to acknowledge how knowledge and expertise are lived, felt and embodied in movements, and do not operate solely as external forces outside of movements. An instrumental view of knowledge and expertise provides a limited vantage point to appreciate the co-constitutive nature of embodied knowledge, and its complex relationship with social movement contestation. Instead, he suggests that a richer view of the role of expertise and knowledge in movement struggle should highlight projects of unknowing, challenging assumptions about what constitutes legitimate knowledge and expertise. Doing so will uncover the importance of felt knowledges that are embodied in actors' own experiences, and which might resist scientific capture.

We are looking forward to a thought-provoking talk and an ensuing discussion, bringing scientific and activist thoughts on expertise, embodiment and feelings together.