

Incivility in public space and the construction of uncivil groups

Pavel Pospěch

The encounter with the stranger is a defining feature of public space. Our conduct in public space is premised on the assumption of civility, yet there are also strangers and groups who we perceive as uncivil. How are such groups produced and how does this relate to our societal ideas of incivility? The paper builds on Jeffrey Alexander's theory of the civil sphere and on research into public space and incivility policing to provide an example of such process. Taken from a larger empirical research, the example of the Roma minority in the Czech Republic is discussed. A long-term analysis of the media coverage shows the processes of othering and essentialisation through which the Roma are discursively defined as uncivil. The conflict about the Roma results into a binary opposition of "local knowledge" and "non-local elites", which provides a framing for the conflict to be articulated politically. Waves of moral panics over the "Roma problem" and the policy solutions to it are analysed as a particular form of incivility policing and regulation of public space.

Vortragender: Pavel Pospěch

Department of Sociology, Universität Wien

Di. April 17th, 2018, 12:30 – 14:00.

4th floor – Besprechungsraum, Department of Sociology, University of Vienna

(Presentation will be held in English)