Cultural sociology~~and political participation~~

The course encompasses three themes – culture, politics and collectivity ~~participation~~ – and seeks to carve out different relations between them. It gives an introduction to selected theories and empirical research areas belonging to the sociology of culture while centering on questions regarding politics and collectivity~~participation in relation to cultural life in general and youth culture in particular~~.

The course plan is divided in three clusters,~~;~~ each of which is meant to enter the matrix of culture, politics and participation from a different perspective.

1. The course investigates the very concept of culture and the different ways it has been theorized and defined. What *is* culture in the first place? Is it meaning, signs and symbols? Art or "high" culture? Forms of language and communication? Does it include the everyday? The body?

2. The course investigates ~~politics and~~ political and emancipative potential in relation to subculture, ~~in play- or leisure cultures,~~ in popular culture, in our love lives and our sexualities ~~and art, in charismatic political leadership and related to communication, symbols and signs, clothing styles and new media~~. ~~How is Facebook used politically?~~ How to understand the political in relation to youth subcultures? Has contemporary youth become depoliticized? Should a sociology of culture always be "critical" and "political" – and in which sense? ~~Does political potential hide in everyday hobbies or leisure activities?~~ Or is it only art – contrary to popular culture or "cultural industrial" forms – which carries an emancipative potential? Is the concept of taste political? How does new cultural tastes mirror (old) inequalities? Or is taste rather to be understood as a basic form of collectivity with the objects we treasure? What role does new social media play in political culture? How do they chance politics as we know it? How do they change our love life and our everyday interaction?

3. The course investigates the aspect of collectivity and participation as an important component in its own right. What does it really mean to have the feeling of participating in something? What is love? When did it come into being? How has it changed? What role does ~~the~~ collective aspect play in cultural and political phenomena? What role does the ~~How to understand~~ affective and bodily play in our collective and political life~~forms of participation~~? How to understand the relation between collectivity and politics?

The course will be taught in English.

Learning outcome

Knowledge

The student will gain

- a detailed knowledge of main theories and empirical themes belonging to the sociology of culture.
- a sociologically informed understanding of important modern cultural institutions, phenomena or themes such as media, current trends in popular culture and leisure, youth culture and art.
- theoretical and conceptual tools to understand and theorize collective and participatory aspects to cultural phenomena.
- theoretical and conceptual tools to understand and theorize political aspects to cultural phenomena.

Skills

The student will learn

- to creatively theorize and analyze cultural phenomena
- to understand and reflect on theoretical choices and their conceptual and methodological consequences at the field of the sociology of culture

General competence

The student will gain

- increased reflexivity and sensibility as to the social and sociological meaning of culture and cultural phenomena
- increased reflexivity and sensibility for political aspects to cultural phenomena.
- increased reflexivity and sensibility for collective and participatory aspects to cultural phenomena.

The course will provide the student with competences, tools and knowledge indispensable for an eventual carrier in the cultural sector, public or private, in event design, organization or management, or in youth education or youth research. In addition, the capacity to analyze and understand modern culture and current cultural tendencies may be of use in a number of other occupations.