

The Sociology of Emotions Seminar at the University of Gothenburg (Emogu), Fall 2022

For further information, contact Veronica Grönlund (veronica.gronlund@gu.se)

September 16th, 13.15–15.00

Department of Sociology and Work Science, **Zoom (note: online only!)**

Paper Presentation

Marcel Sebastian

(Technical University of Dortmund)

Title:

Emotional neutrality as a work requirement in the slaughterhouse

Abstract:

Slaughtering animals can be an emotionally overwhelming task for many people, yet slaughterhouse workers must be able to perform such work daily and display neutral emotions to the killing of animals. Not feeling negative emotions such as guilt, pity, or regret is a necessary condition for long-term work in the slaughterhouse but remains an informal norm as a work requirement within the organization of the slaughterhouse and is shared as tacit knowledge among workers. This study aimed to discover how slaughterhouse workers perform emotion work in the context of slaughtering animals. Drawing on sociological theory regarding emotion work, organizational sociology and the sociology of work, the proposed paper analyzes whether slaughterhouse workers' emotion work can be considered "deep acting" or "surface acting" and explores the emotional labor techniques used in the slaughterhouse. The empirical study, based on 13 semi-structured interviews carried out with German slaughterhouse workers from six slaughterhouses, showed that the successful use of specific emotion labor techniques leads to emotional neutrality toward the act of killing, which turns workers into "deep actors", whereas unsuccessful use of such techniques leads to negative emotions and, thus, "surface acting." The analysis shows that emotional distancing is a main emotional labor technique and is supported by reframing, which is the attribution of meaning and legitimation to slaughtering, which makes emotional distancing easier. Additionally, the proposed paper examines reasons for failed emotion work, such as the

slaughter of calves, as well as the role of socialization for the fulfilment of the emotional job requirements of slaughterhouse work. The study was able to show that an experience with slaughtering at a young age through a family background in meat production or animal husbandry can lay the emotional foundation for later work in slaughtering.

<https://gu-se.zoom.us/j/63743429985?pwd=TFR5anRNNlJYWnpFamZHVUJYRmhGdz09>

Meeting ID: 637 4342 9985

Passcode: 204414

October 14th, 13.15–15.00

Department of Sociology and Work Science, **Room G213** (hybrid)

Article Draft Presentation

Sara Uhnöo

(University of Gothenburg)

Title:

It could be my son! – Himpathy and the male fear defence in rape trials

Abstract:

Why do legal professionals tend to mention their sons in interviews about a new consent-based rape law? Inspired by the feminist concept of ‘female fear’ to understand women’s situated experiences in a patriarchal society, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the manifestation and legal implications in rape cases of a discourse of male fear of being accused of sexually assaulting a woman. In the context of a new Swedish consent-based rape law from 2018, drawing on interviews with prosecutors, defense lawyers and judges, court observations of rape trials and written rape judgements, I examine how legal actors employ empathy as a tool to understand the perspective of rape accused men and illustrate how a discourse of male fear affects how legal actors reflect upon and problematize the new law. The analysis reveals that the discourse of male fear is drawn on by legal actors, in particular defense lawyers, to 1) account for accused men’s rationality, emotions and behavior in rape cases, 2) to install doubts about the credibility of the victim story, indicating that the accused *might be* victim of

a false accusation and 3) to create an imagined “ruined” future of the accused if convicted, including his and his relative’s shame over the rapist stigma. If the male fear discourse is recognized, this result in *himpathy*, that boys and men accused of rape receive sympathy and concern over their female rape victims. This implies epistemic oppression and *hersure* in the form of silencing the female victim and her trauma. I interpret the findings as indications of subtle discrimination in legal practice still prevalent after the Swedish rape law reform and discuss if the discourse of the male fear might be even more widespread and potent in the backlash of the new rape legislation and the #MeToo-movement in Sweden.

Key words: defense strategies, rape trial, the male fear, empathy, himpathy

<https://gu-se.zoom.us/j/66096585848?pwd=RS8vMWFkbnkKQzhQcGJLVElXZTlrQT09>

Meeting ID: 660 9658 5848

Passcode: 137464

November 11th, 09.00–11.00 (note the time!)

Department of Sociology and Work Science, **Room F417** (hybrid)

Book Seminar

Jack Barbalet

(Australian Catholic University)

Title:

Nation and State in Max Weber: Politics as Sociology

Description:

This book shows how Max Weber’s perceptions of the social and political world he inhabited in Wilhelmine Germany were characterized by a nationalist commitment which colored practically every aspect of his thought, including his social scientific writings and the formulations they expound. Exploring the consequences of Weber’s ardent nationalism in a manner seldom acknowledged in recent existing scholarship, it considers the alignment of his commitment to liberalism and democracy with his devotion to the ideal of the German people

as an ethno-racial community supported by a power-state, with the purpose of realizing the national interest of future generations of Germans. Through an analysis of a range of texts, Barbalet contends that Weber's liberalism is not based on universalistic principles and that Weber considered the liberty he espoused to play an important role in securing the position of a political elite trained in parliamentary institutions, which are used to shape the citizenry in the pursuit of a patriotic commitment to an expansionist, imperial state. It will therefore appeal to scholars with interests in the history of sociology and classical social theory.

<https://gu-se.zoom.us/j/62612262875?pwd=aWZLNXpJQUxybkNyWjZJbXJyMGM2dz09>

Meeting ID: 626 1226 2875

Passcode: 212296

December 9th, 13.15–15.00

Department of Sociology and Work Science, **Room F417** (hybrid)

Article Presentation

Yvonne Wechuli

(University of Cologne)

Title:

Between crippling and reclaiming: epistemological implications of Disability Studies' feeling strategies

Abstract:

Disability Studies promote different feeling strategies by pushing for social change towards a more inclusive and less ableist society. There is a utopian touch to this: how can we change the world by feeling differently about disability? Disabled people have long discussed how to navigate the emotional toll of ableism. This article oscillates between two strategies that Disability Studies scholars and activists have advocated for: crippling – deliberately changing one's emotional reaction towards disability; and reclaiming – acknowledging hurtful emotions connected to an ableist society. Both strategies acknowledge the sociality of emotion but differ on what this sociality entails. Whereas crippling preaches the deliberate enactment of

different feelings, reclaiming promotes acknowledging authentic feelings – feelings rooted in a discriminatory society and thus social in origin. However, crippling as a political endeavour has often been criticised as an elitist issue – irrelevant to the lived reality of most disabled people. In contrast, a contemporary take on authenticity problematises its performative constitution and commodification in consumer capitalism. Considering crippling and reclaiming as complementary feeling strategies promoted in Disability Studies for social change, I argue that we should engage with the underlying epistemological questions to point out their respective implications. To this end, shared theoretical concepts and terminology on feelings, affect and emotion should be developed for a comprehensive engagement with emotionality in the field of Disability Studies.

<https://gu-se.zoom.us/j/67121483469?pwd=ZSs2WDB6VjVTRVBibkdVS3R3bUI0QT09>

Meeting ID: 671 2148 3469

Passcode: 325314