Einladung zum Gastvortrag

Das Dekanat und die AG Internationalisierung der Fakultät für Erziehungswissenschaft laden alle interessierten Studierenden und Lehrenden zu einem Gastvortrag ein:

Prof. Dr. Jens O. Zinn
T. R. Ashworth Associate Professor at the University of Melbourne, Australia
Mittwoch, 22. Januar 2020
16.00 - 18.00 Uhr (s. t.)
Gebäude X
X-E0-001

Zinn is known for his contributions to the sociology for risk and uncertainty. He studied in Saarbrücken and Bielefeld and was awarded his PhD in 2000 at the University of Bremen. He worked at the collaborative research centers Status Passages and Risks in the Life Course in Bremen (1995-1999) and Reflexive Modernisation in Munich (1999-2002) and developed his conceptual work at the Social Contexts and Responses to Risk priority network at the University of Kent, Canterbury, UK (2003-2008). Since 2009 he is Professor at the University of Melbourne, Australia. He was founding president of the risk networks of the International Sociological Association and the European Sociological Association. In 2015, he received the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation’s Friedrich Wilhelm Bessel award of the for his scholarly achievements.

Understanding Risk-Taking – Paradox and Explanations

“Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure, or nothing.” —Helen Keller¹

At a time when risk-taking is celebrated as a means to give meaning and fulfilment to one’s life there is a widespread risk-aversion indicated by a continuous stream of reporting on unreasonable exposure to risk in the news such as on women drinking and smoking during pregnancy, youth engaging in unsafe sex, parents not vaccinating their children or refugees dying when attempting to reach Europe. With sociological approaches such as Man-Made Disasters (Turner), Normal Accidents (Perrow) and the Risk Society (Beck) focusing on managing and reducing risk, there is little conceptual work to understand risk-taking in everyday life. The presentation summarises key insights from this growing research domain on risk-taking and introduces a number of concepts to systematise this body of knowledge. It focuses on the variety of forces, which shape people’s engagement with risk in everyday life. This includes the different social layers which shape people’s experiences of risk and uncertainty as well as people’s responses and attempts to lead a meaningful life. Evidence and hope, trust and intuition, emotions and cold reasoning, socio-cultural norms and individual interests combine in what has been called bricolage, risk work and assemblage. Such an approach is valuable to the degree that people expose themselves to risk or take risks purposefully rather than accidentally or involuntarily as a result of lacking knowledge.

¹ Helen Keller (1880–1968), American author, political activist and lecturer was the first deaf-blind person to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree.