

# Ungerechte Ordnungen – The Structure and Dynamics of Inequality

One of the functions of social order is to organize inequality. When inequality is perceived as unjust the question how the social order upholding it is maintained and justified, but also how it may be effectively attacked and changed, becomes particularly pertinent. Within the framework of 'threatened social order' we want to look at forms of inequality that may become a threat to a social order as people begin to desire change – but we also want to address the phenomenon that some forms of injustice seem to remain unchallenged.

The major question our framework implies is whether different forms of social inequality, such as those based on race, gender, sexual orientation, or wealth, share patterns and mechanisms that help them to persist, continue and perhaps even make a come-back. After the demise of Marxist theory, the question is also whether we possess the theoretical tools to conceptualize what different forms of inequality may have in common. The sociology of Norbert Elias and Pierre Bourdieu, with concepts such as 'symbolic violence,' 'Established and Outsiders,' or 'Habitus' may provide a starting point, and 'culture' itself may be examined with regard to its function of sustaining inequality; at the same time, the insights gained from the study of social movements and the experience of activists may tell us about the vulnerabilities of social order, too.

Possible questions include but are not limited to:

What are the particularities of race, sexuality / gender, and poverty? How do they structure society? What do they have in common?

What are typical mechanisms and dynamics of perpetuating orders of inequality?

How does (institutional / structural) inequality come to be accepted? What can bring people to resent inequality as unjust? What may (successfully) threaten a social order perceived as unjust?

What role does Bourdieu's concept of *symbolic violence* or Giddens' concept of *agency* play in maintaining order?

How do works of fiction address and represent inequality?

How has social inequality changed over time? What has remained the same? How can change and order be conceptualized?



## Contact

### Organization (CRC 923 Workshop)

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## Collaborative Research Center 923 Threatened Order: Societies under Stress

# Workshop Ungerechte Ordnungen – The Structure and Dynamics of Inequality

Tübingen, November 7 – 9, 2013

# Program

## Thursday, November 7, 2013

Neuphilologikum (Brechtbau), Room 027

18.00

**Prof. Dr. Ewald Frie &  
Prof. Dr. Astrid Franke**

Welcome

**Prof. Dr. Christa Buschendorf**

Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt  
*Sustaining Inequality through Symbolic  
Violence*

Reception

## Friday, November 8, 2013

Keplerstraße 2, Room 036

9.30 – 11.00

**Prof. Dr. Julie Ann McMullin**

University of Western Ontario  
*Understanding Social Inequality:  
The Failure of Sociology Theory*

11.00 – 11.30

Coffee break

## Friday, November 8, 2013

Keplerstraße 2, Room 036

11.30 – 13.00

**Dr. Birte Christ**

Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen  
*Reading Representations of Poverty:  
New Theorizing and Intersections with  
Concepts of Gender*

13.00 – 14.30

Lunch at "Esspunkt," Mohlstraße 26

14.30 – 16.00

**Prof. Dr. Eric Arnesen**

George Washington University  
*The Unfinished Task of Emancipation:  
African Americans and Economic Inequality  
in the Twentieth Century?*

16.00 – 16.30

Coffee break

16.30 – 18.00

**Dr. des. Nicole Hirschfelder**

Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen  
*Oppression amongst the Oppressed:  
How Inequality Pervades Social Dynamics*

19.00

Dinner at "Bellevue," Neckargasse 22

## Saturday, November 9, 2013

Keplerstraße 2, Room 036

10.00 – 11.30

**Prof. Dr. Harold D. Weaver**

Boston  
*Black Visionaries Respond to Injustice,  
Inequality, and Oppression*