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UNIVERSITÄT  
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Berner  
Humangeographisches  
Kolloquium **BHK**

**17 October 2023** | 14:15 – 15:45 | GIUB 002 | Hallerstrasse 12

**Prof. Dr. Hanna Hilbrandt** (Universität Zürich)

Disinvestment, Decay, Displacement:

Rethinking (Ir)Responsibility for Housing Property

**28 November 2023** | 14:15 – 15:45 | GIUB 002 | Hallerstrasse 12

**Prof. Dr. Gary Bosworth** (Northumbria University)

Rural Community Cohesion and the Network Society

**5 December 2023** | 14:15 – 15:45 | GIUB 002 | Hallerstrasse 12

**Prof. Dr. Maria Rodó-Zárate** (Universitat Pompeu Fabra)

Relief Maps+: New Tools for Collecting, Analysing and  
Visualizing Intersecting Inequalities From an Emotional and  
Geographic Perspective

Organized by the Research Units

Social and Cultural Geography

Economic Geography

Critical Sustainability Studies

Political Urbanism and Sustainable Spatial Development

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**Prof. Dr. Hanna Hilbrandt** (Universität Zürich)

**Disinvestment, Decay, Displacement: Rethinking (Ir)Responsibility for Housing Property**

In the course of a decade-long cycle of speculative debt, disinvestment, and building decay, in 2017 the city of Dortmund (Germany) evacuated the housing complex Hannibal II. 753 tenants lost their homes without notice and have been unable to return to date. The harms the residents experienced raise questions about responsibilities for these wrongs and stress the need for a wider discussion about relations of responsibility and irresponsibility that shape processes of housing: How is such irresponsibility legally, practically, and socially organized? Building on a recent project that discusses the nexus of housing and responsibility in the Hannibal case (Hilbrandt & Dimitrakou, 2022; Dimitrakou & Hilbrandt 2022), among others (Hilbrandt, Dimitrakou & Pattaroni, 2023), this lecture delves deeper into the legal and philosophical foundations of responsibility for housing. I posit that a critical engagement with notions of responsibility can provide a domain for theoretical critique, empirical investigation, and legal political struggle against housing injustice when the concept's foundational premises are radically revised. In particular, I aim to put property's social obligation norm into sharper focus to discuss how this conception of responsibility would have to be rethought to actually hold property owners to account.

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**Prof. Dr. Gary Bosworth** (Northumbria University, Newcastle)

**Rural Community Cohesion and the Network Society**

The significance of Castells' "Network Society" for understanding contemporary processes of rural change has been somewhat forgotten. In this presentation I will argue that the emergence of "smart rural development" (Naldi et al., 2016), a variety of rural hubs (Bosworth & Salemink, 2022) and a continuing interest in rural-urban linkages (Bosworth & Venhorst, 2018; Bürgin et al., 2022) should encourage us to revisit the Network Society. Castells described the Network Society comprising a web of "nodes" that provide access and connectivity to networks, with the assumption that sparse rural regions have fewer nodes and fewer network connections. In response to this, hubs of different forms have been proposed to co-locate a critical mass of activity to raise the visibility of rural places within networks and facilitate better connectivity beyond these rural centers. However, this can fall into the trap of defining a rural place as a single node where it is assumed that everyone within that place is part of the node. I argue that in order to understand the inclusivity of external facing networks, we must consider conflicting rural identities, "network immiscibility" and different degrees of actor embeddedness within rural nodes.

**5 December 2023** | 14:15 – 15:45 | GIUB 002 | Hallerstrasse 12

**Prof. Dr. Maria Rodó-Zárate** (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona)

**Relief Maps+: New Tools for Collecting, Analysing and Visualizing Intersecting Inequalities From an Emotional and Geographic Perspective**

Although there is wide research on the complex interaction of different social categories and inequalities, it has been pointed out that the development of research methods is needed. Here I present the new developments of the Relief Maps model as a visual method, a way of collecting, analysing and displaying data on intersecting inequalities. They make possible the visualization of complex social and subjective perceptions while relating emotions (the psychological dimension), power structures (the social dimension) and places (the geographical dimension). While the Relief Maps were initially thought for being drawn by hand by the participants of a research, the digital development of the tool through a website ([www.reliefmaps.cat](http://www.reliefmaps.cat)) uses the potential of technology for empirical research on intersectionality and combines a mainly qualitative approach with the potential of obtaining quantitative patterns. Currently, following the works of feminist geographers on critical visual methods, we have engaged with GIS with the aim of expanding its potentialities through the application of georeferentiation tools and 3D mapping in order to visualize how intersectional inequalities are lived in the places of the everydaylife. In this line, the new version has been designed to combine textual narratives, points and areas with geographic coordinates and places with unknown or vaguer locations to capture the complex qualities of place and scale in relation to the lived experience of intersectional inequalities.