

Ethnography and Law: Methods and challenges in times of crisis

Workshop programme (July 2-3, 2026)

Venue

[Warburg-Haus](#), Heilwigstr. 116, 20249 Hamburg

Wednesday, July 1

19:00 - 21:00 Informal get-together

Café Leonar, Grindelhof 59, 20146 Hamburg (self-paid)

Thursday, July 2

09:30 - 10:00 Workshop opening

10:00 - 11:30 Session 1: Legal procedure and lay persons

Chair: Eva Kocher (European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder))

Kari Anne Drangslund (University of Bergen)

Legal form, technicalities, and care: understanding judges' practices in times of legal contestation

Julia Struppe-Schanda (Sigmund Freud University Vienna)

Studying emotions in court: a feminist ethnographic approach to intimate partner violence criminal trials

Alina Zurmühlen (European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder))

Legal expertise and lay encounters at the Berlin labor court

Sophie Konrad (University of Hamburg/University of Potsdam)

The role of victims in German international criminal law

11:30 - 11:50 Coffee break

11:50 - 13:20 Session 2: Where law happens: ethnographies of normativity and meaning-making

Chair: Jonas Bens (University of Hamburg)

Thomas Scheffer (Goethe University Frankfurt/Main)

Trans-sequential analysis of legal case-work: a critical ethnomethodology

Bertram Turner (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/Saale)

Interview with a volcano: ethnographic approaches to human-MTH relations in times of anthropogenic crisis

Marco Motta (University of Lausanne)

Law through life in the cracks

Louise Victoria Johansen (University of Copenhagen)

The materiality of emotion control: presenting media-based evidence in courtrooms

13:20 - 14:50 Lunch break (90 min) (Members' meeting of the Vereinigung Recht und Gesellschaft)

14:50 - 16:20 Session 3: Ethnographing professional legal practice: methods, challenges, and insights

Chair: Mareike Schmidt (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/Saale)

Kerstin Eppert and Franca Heuer (Bielefeld University)

Knowledge in court: ethnographic analysis of terror trials and epistemic subjects in trial proceedings

Sophie Andreetta, Claire Lefort-Rieu and Emma Vescovi (University of Liège)

Following legal categories: a collective ethnography of law and administration in the Belgian asylum reception system

Mark Yin, Pratishruti Preeti Dash and Monika (University of Cambridge)

Analysing the role of 'site' in legal ethnographic methods: reflections on law, 'field' and context

16:20 - 16:40 Coffee break

16:40 - 17:10 Brief announcements

17:10 - 17:40 Walk to Hamburg Institute for Social Research (30 min)

18:00 - 20:00 Attacks on the 'rule of law'

Public Panel at [Hamburg Institute for Social Research \(HIS\)](#)

Address: Mittelweg 36, 20148 Hamburg

Chair: Francesca Barp (HIS)

Bianca Tavorari (FGV São Paulo Law School)

Deniz Yonucu (Newcastle University)

Jessica Greenberg (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)

20:00 - 21:30 Finger-food buffet

Friday, July 3

09:30 - 11:00 Session 4: Crisis, critique and unquestioned baselines in ethnographic legal research

Chair: Larissa Vettters (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/Saale)

Grigory Gorbun (American Bar Foundation)

Ethnography of moot jurisdiction

Agnieszka Doll (University of British Columbia)
Institutional ethnography of legal aid lawyering: bridging the micro and macro investigation in the ethnographic studies of law

Aino Korvensyrjä (University of Bristol)
Towards a fugitive ethnography: Duldung and black mobilities in Germany

Rachel Sieder (Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (CIESAS))
Ethnographies of law and (in)justice in Mexico

11:00 - 11:20 Coffee break

11:20 - 12:50 Session 5: Researching legal activism: engaged ethnographic approaches

Chair: Francesca Barp (HIS), Laura Affolter (University of Hamburg)

Ania Zbyszewska (Carleton University)
Ethnographies of resistance: grappling with activist depletion in the field

Sebastian Benedikt (University of Göttingen)
Legal struggle as a method? Reflections on ethnographic engagements with law in times of crisis

Matthew Canfield (Leiden University)
Participatory Legal Anthropology?

José Saldaña Cuba (McGill University)
Learning, translating, and contesting environmental law: ethnographic insights from a mining sacrifice zone in southern Peru

12:50 - 14:50 Lunch break (120 min)

14:50 - 16:20 Session 6: Collaborative challenges for institutional ethnographers

Chair: Heike Drotbohm (University of Mainz) and Olaf Zenker (University of Halle/Saale)

Anna Wyss and Kim Herrmann (University of Bern)
Studying the unspoken: an intersectional approach to analysing the effects of social categories on legal practice in the Swiss welfare regime

Leonie Thies (University of Oxford)
Learning from Dorothy E. Smith: institutional ethnography in Berlin's youth diversion offices

Insa Koch (University of St. Gallen)
Courtwatch as method and politics: challenges for legal anthropology

Janaína Gomes (University of Rio Grande do Sul)
Violation in the name of protection: ethnographic reflections on child removal, legal practice, and reproductive injustice in times of crisis

16:20 - 16:40 Coffee break

16:40 - 17:00 Final plenary discussion and closing remarks