The History and Politics of Ignorance
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Abstract
Social hierarchies between different groups influence our epistemic practices. How one is positioned in such hierarchies affects what one knows or remains ignorant about, whether one’s testimony is considered believable by others, and so on. This seminar takes an interdisciplinary approach, investigating the history of ignorance as well as its philosophical and political implications. It looks particularly at ignorance and epistemic injustice produced by hierarchies of race and gender, engaging with the work of Charles W. Mills, Patricia Hill Collins, and Miranda Fricker. The seminar’s aim is to offer insight into particular historical and contemporary examples of ignorance and take lessons from these for a philosophical and theoretical analysis, as well as applying philosophical tools of analysis to them. It extends the range of analysis by studying ignorance both as the lack of knowledge but also as a specific kind of knowledge, thereby opening up for an analysis of the power of ignorance, of being ignored or being ignorant.

Audience, admission, and requirements
The seminar is open to MA-students from the departments of Law, Philosophy, Political Science, History, Social Anthropology, Religious Studies, and Sociology. Successful participation includes a preparation paper, a presentation with discussion (à 15 min), active participation during block seminar. The number of participants is restricted.

Inclusive Classroom. One of our priorities is to create a learning environment that is welcoming to all students. If you have special circumstances that impact your life as a student (i.e. child or elder care duties, financial or other personal concerns), please inform us as early as possible so that we can work together to ensure your success in this class.

Language: The seminar will be conducted in English

Evaluation: Final grades will be based upon 1) attendance and participation (25%); 2) your presentation (25%); 3) paper (50%).

Registration: Via KSL: 476365