



Sparkling Science >

Science linking with School
School linking with Science

PROJECT OUTLOOK 19th November 2008

Practising (Un)Doing Gender as an integral principle of
education: Language – Politics – Performance

LEADING INSTITUTIONS

University of Vienna
Referat Genderforschung
Department of German Studies,
Centre for German Language Teaching
Coordinator: Dr.ⁱⁿ Marlen Bidwell-Steiner
and Dr. Stefan Kramer
Contact: marlen.bidwell-steiner@univie.ac.at
stefan.krammer@univie.ac.at

SCIENTIFIC CO-OPERATION PARTNER

New Design University, St. Pölten

SCHOOLS INVOLVED

GRG Rahlgasse 4
IBC Hetzendorf
GRG 15 auf der Schmelz 4



BM.W.F^a

www.bmwf.gv.at

Austrian Federal Ministry of
Science and Research

Practising (Un)Doing Gender as an integral principle of education: Language – Politics – Performance

In this project, high school students will work together with teachers and academics in investigating the construction and deconstruction of gender relations in everyday life at schools as well as at university. What does gender actually mean? How can gender roles be monitored, put into action, and questioned critically from an academic viewpoint as well as from a creative perspective? The project takes a particular interest in joining high school students and academic researchers in a process of enquiry into the manifold aspects of gender.

Sabine Zelger, a literature and didactics specialist in the project team praises this concept of cooperation: "Working together with students, teachers and sociologists is part of the thrill. The process of updating and questioning our knowledge on gender relations and political structures is most important."

Gender everywhere?

What does gender mean to the different groups and individuals involved? How is gender put into action, how is gender negotiated, brought up and discussed or argued? How can gender roles be noticed, critically inspected, or constantly re-arranged and re-considered from a creative angle?

Developing gender competence, applying critical reflection and acquiring a larger set of methods and approaches are the major objectives of this Sparkling Science project. Finally, the project wants to initiate strategies that can make gender fairness and gender sensitivity realizable in schools, which are important social areas.

Sociologist Paul Scheibelhofer says: "In the long run this project could make today's schools into places where bias and stereotyping will not be solidified any more but diminished." This process of change is brought about and assisted by the schedule of the project year. In several modules, academics and students will get the opportunity to learn from one another and to do research work in schools and at the University of Vienna, one of the highlights being a project week at the German Department in February. On the so-called Action-Research-Days students will be given new impulses, for example by acting and interacting in gender-scenarios using both the media and the theatre for inspiration.

Another endeavour of this project is the development of a 'gender-disc' based on the students' experiences. Students from the New Design University of St. Pölten will co-operate with the high school students and input their expertise. At the end of the project the gender-disc will be presented as a new type of teaching material.




Gender Research at school and university

The project team cooperates with three Viennese schools: GRG Rahlgasse (7th form); GRG Auf der Schmelz (6th form), and the International Business College Hetzendorf (7th form). As (Un)doing Gender is focussed on language, politics and performance, the interaction among students and their teachers is the central point. Teaching German as a first or second language integrates language and cultural approaches, which makes German classes particularly suitable for discussing gender and examining it closely. Philological and didactic approaches can be interlinked. Doris Eder (Auf der Schmelz), Claudia Kreutel (Business College) and Roman Jobstmann (Rahlgasse) appreciate the creative and scientific cooperation between university and schools. They are enthusiastic in their comments: "It's great. We can do something really exceptional with our students!" They all expect to broaden their own gender horizons. Gender expert and literature specialist Veronika Zangl is thoroughly convinced of the interdisciplinary and trans-institutional quality of the project: "This is a project, at long last, that dares to undertake all sorts of transitions: from speaking to acting; from school to university; from student to teacher – and above all these transitory phases will be under discussion at all times."

(Un)doing Gender looks into the moments of empowerment of social interaction and puts an emphasis on the various ways of transformation. The project is innovative in the action-related and user-oriented approach that it takes thus making students aware of gender roles and gender identities. Stefanie Waldek, a student at Hetzendorf Business College, is looking forward to the project: "...for I am very interested in equal rights and gender equality. I would like to see a new consciousness of gender roles and a new understanding."





Sparkling Science >
Science linking with School
School linking with Science

BM.W.F^a

www.bmwf.gv.at

Austrian Federal Ministry of
Science and Research