

## WORKSHOP

# Comparing, Categorizing, Valuating: Modes of Ordering

In our personal and professional lives, we are constantly categorizing, comparing, and valuating things, people, actions, etc., often building on categorizations, comparisons, and valuations made by others. These practices amount to a dense web of subtle, yet powerful modes of (social, cultural, and political) ordering.

Modes of ordering, categorization, comparison, and valuation have attracted considerable scholarly attention in the past couple of decades, resulting in extensive and sophisticated fields of study. However, despite overlapping conceptual frameworks and research objects, these fields tend to privilege one of the practices rather than to explore their interconnectedness and intersecting themes and questions. This workshop intends to foster dialogue between the three fields of study and to further our insights into how categorizing, comparing, and valuating relate to, build on, or are in tension with each other.

The point of departure for the workshop is that categorizing, comparing, and valuating, though analytically distinct, are deeply intertwined in practice. The awarding of the Nobel Prize, for instance, is obviously an act of valuation, but the designation of a laureate is also inherently comparative (the committee chooses from a pool of candidates) and preceded by acts of categorization (there are prize categories, for which one is more or less eligible).

### CONVENORS

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### WEB

[www.uni-bielefeld.de/sfb1288](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/sfb1288)

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#SFB1288 #Vergleichspraktiken

### LOCATION

X-Building

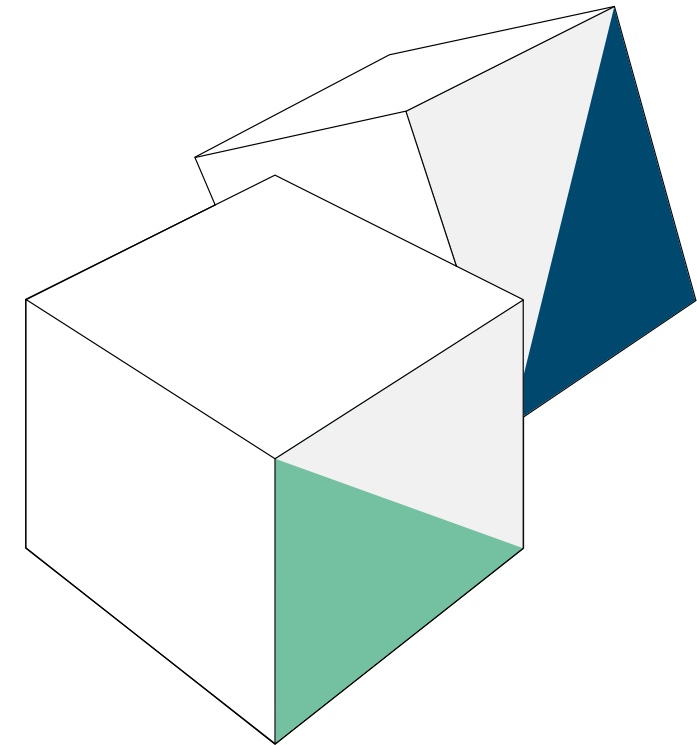
X-C3-107

Bielefeld University

Universitätsstr. 24

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**13.–14.07.2023**

**Bielefeld University,  
X-Building**

## THURSDAY, JULY 13TH

09:30 AM	Introduction
10:00 AM	<b>Studying Comparing, Categorizing, and Valuating – Contributions from the Sociology of Valuation and Evaluation</b> Anne K. Krüger, <i>Berlin</i>
10:45 AM	Coffee Break
11:15 AM	<b>Governing Oceanic Space: Struggles of Classification and Valuation in Deep Sea Mining</b> Hans Krause Hansen, <i>Copenhagen</i>
12:00 PM	<b>Testing the Boundaries of Comparability: The Case of an International Survey of how Literary Works are Appreciated across the World</b> Joakim Landahl, <i>Stockholm</i>
12:45 PM	Lunch Break
02:00 PM	<b>Sorting Texts out (or in). Revisiting Paratexts Praxeologically</b> Johannes Passmann, <i>Bochum</i>
02:45 PM	<b>Valuating Valuation? How Literary Review Blogs Are Categorized and Compared</b> Kristina Petzold, <i>Bielefeld</i>
03:30 PM	Coffee Break
04:00 PM	<b>What Kind of Book is it? The Hidden Infrastructure of Book Reviewing</b> Phillipa Chong, <i>Hamilton</i>
04:45 PM	<b>Varieties of Concrete Valuation. Amateur Literary Criticism and its Implications</b> Désirée Waibel, <i>Lucerne</i>
07:00 PM	Dinner (Il Jivino)

## FRIDAY, JULY 14TH

09:30 AM	<b>Measuring Up Graffiti. How Urban Visual Artifacts are Categorized, and Evaluated</b> Andrea Brighenti & Cecilia Brazioli, <i>Trento</i>
10:15 AM	<b>School Grades and the Quantification of Merit</b> Noelle Rohde, <i>Oxford</i>
11:00 AM	Coffee Break
11:30 AM	<b>Organized Spectacles of Valuation. Competitions and Prizes in the Field of Contemporary Literature</b> Oliver Berli, <i>Cologne</i>
12:15 PM	<b>In the Judges Seat: (Auto)Ethnographic Reflections on Judging and Prize Culture(s)</b> Stevie Marsden, <i>Edinburgh</i>
01:00 PM	Lunch Break
02:00 PM	<b>The Architecture of Status Hierarchies: Structures and Valuation</b> Michael Sauder, <i>Iowa</i>
02:45 PM	<b>One of these Things is not like the Others</b> Gabriel Abend, <i>Lucerne</i>
03:30 PM	Concluding Discussion
04:00 PM	End of the Workshop

Such practices are shaped by and, at the same time, give shape to the social, cultural, and political contexts in which they are performed. That is, categorizing, comparing, and valuating (re)produce but also challenge hierarchies, orders of worth, and the distribution of various forms of capital in social, cultural and political fields.

For analytical purposes we propose to distinguish three dimensions: (1) agents or communities that combine practices of categorizing, comparing, and valuating; (2) contextual factors that enable, shape, or constrain these practices; and (3) the effects that these practices, as modes of ordering, have on social, cultural, and political orders. What are the determinants for grouping certain entities? How are comparables selected for the sake of evaluation, by whom, and based on which categorizations? How do historical processes, legal frameworks, political imaginaries, economic considerations, cultural sensibilities, institutional settings, etc. condition practices of comparing, categorizing, and valuating? What social structures, orders of worth, or status hierarchies do these practices draw on, (re)produce, or change?