

SUMMER 2027

Course Descriptions

01	Tradwives, Bro-Culture and Co. – Anti-feminist Ideologies on Social media
02	The WASD-Wanderer – Walking & Being Present in European Videogames & Cultural Theory
03	Who reproduces the world? – Feminist Economics in Times of Crisis“

COURSE 1

Tradwives, Bro-Culture and Co. - Anti-feminist Ideologies on Social media

Mareike Fenja Bauer

Course description

ECTS OPTIONS 6 ECTS / 9 ECTS	CLASS FORMAT 4 hours per week (two times 90 minutes plus breaks)
ASSESSMENT – 6 ECTS Seminar Paper (approx. 3000 words); Group Project; Active Participation	ASSESSMENT – 9 ECTS Seminar Paper (approx. 4500 words); Group Project; Active Participation
CONTACT Mareike Fenja Bauer	E-MAIL mbauer@europa-uni.de

Course description

Anti-feminist narratives and actors have attracted a lot of attention on social media in recent years. This course looks at anti-feminism as an ideology and examines various viral anti-feminist phenomena such as the so-called “TradWives.” Participants will learn to understand anti-feminism theoretically and how it relates to other ideologies of inequality. In addition, participants will engage with the ethical challenges and considerations that arise with this research topic and with social media as a research environment.

Course syllabus

SESSION 1 Introduction to Anti-feminism	LITERATURE Must read: Mayer, Stefanie & Goetz, Judith (2023). Introduction: Global Perspectives on Anti-Feminism. In: J. Goetz & S. Mayer (Eds.), Global Perspectives on Anti-Feminism: Far-Right and Religious Attacks on Equality and Diversity (pp. 1–24). Edinburgh University Press. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/jj.7358671.4 Group A: Roth, Julia & Birgit Sauer (2022). “Worldwide Anti-Gender Mobilization: Right-wing Contestations of Women’s and Gender Rights”. In Alexandra Scheele, Julia Roth, Heidemarie Winkel (eds.) Global Contestations of Gender Rights. Bielefeld University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783839460696-006 . Group B: Graff, Agnieszka & Korolczuk, Elżbieta (2021). Mapping the anti-gender campaigns as a global movement. In: Agnieszka Graff and Elżbieta Korolczuk (eds.), Anti-Gender Politics in the Populist Moment. 1. Aufl. London: Routledge, pp. 39-66. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003133520 .
SESSION 2 Anti-feminism & Social Media	LITERATURE

	Must read: Rothermel, Ann-Kathrin (2020). Global–local dynamics in anti-feminist discourses: An analysis of Indian, Russian and US online communities. <i>International Affairs</i>, 96(5), 1367–1385. https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iaa130 Siapera, Eugenia (2019). "Online Misogyny as Witch Hunt: Primitive Accumulation in the Age of Techno-Capitalism". In <i>Gender Hate Online</i>, herausgegeben von Debbie Ging & Eugenia Siapera. Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96226-9_2.
SESSION 3 Manosphere & Co I	LITERATURE Must read: Gerrand, Vivian, Ging, Debbie, Roose, Joshua M., & Flood, Michael (2025). Mapping the Neo-Manosphere(s): New Directions for Research. <i>Men and Masculinities</i>, 28(5), 443–464. Copley, Constance, Jason Luger, Lisa Thomas, und Ozge Dilaver (2026) <i>The Political Geographies of AI and the Manosphere</i>. <i>Political Geography</i> 125 (March): 103462. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2025.103462.
SESSION 4 Manosphere & Co II	LITERATURE Must read: MacDonald, S., Wiens, B. I., Ruest, N., & Padda, K. K. (2026). "All You Have to Do is Publicly Execute a Few Women Who Have Lied": Mapping Online Misogyny and Feminist Digital Counterprotest in the Post-pandemic Landscape¹. <i>Women's Studies in Communication</i>, 49(1), 81–109. https://doi.org/10.1080/07491409.2025.2579089 Group A: Rothermel, Ann-Kathrin (2023). The role of evidence-based misogyny in antifeminist online communities of the 'manosphere'. <i>Big Data & Society</i>, 10(1). Group B: Lott, Kaarel (2026). Techno Music and Luxury Yachts: The Misogynousque Audiovisual Affective Codes of TikTok Manfluencers. <i>Social Media + Society</i>, 12(1). Group C: Scotto Di Carlo, Giuseppina. 2023. "An Analysis of Self-Other Representations in the Incelosphere: Between Online Misogyny and Self-Contempt". <i>Discourse & Society</i> 34 (1): 3–21. https://doi.org/10.1177/09579265221099380.
SESSION 5 TradWives & Co I	LITERATURE Must read: Pieters, Sanne, & Trottier, Daniel (2024). Anti-Feminism and Self-Improvement: Hegemonic Femininity in the Manosphere. <i>Social Media + Society</i>, 10(4). Scott, K., & Day, L. (2025). TikTok tradwives: femininity, reproduction, and social media. <i>Gender and Education</i>, 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2025.2546050
SESSION 6 TradWives & Co II + Group Project	LITERATURE Must read: Tebaldi Caterine (2025). Pearl Nationalism: Tradwives and the Chronotopes of Femininity. <i>Signs and Society</i>. 2025;13(4):497-518. doi:10.1017/sas.2025.10024 Patouras, Stephanie & Tanner, Claire (2024). "Oh how I love being a woman": post-feminism and contemporary femininity on TikTok. <i>Feminist Media Studies</i>, 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2024.2442997



SESSION 7
Group Project

LITERATURE

Must read: Fariás, Catalina, Elohim Monard, Fernanda Carvajal (2026). „Digital Feminism and Anti-Feminism in Interaction: Relational Dynamics and Hybridization Across Seven Spanish-Speaking Communities on Twitter“. International Journal of Communication 20 (März): 26. <https://doi.org/10.65476/p6249755>.

COURSE 2

The WASD-Wanderer – Walking & Being Present in European Videogames & Cultural Theory

Elizabeth Neumann

Course description

ECTS OPTIONS 6 ECTS / 9 ECTS	LECTURER Elizabeth Neumann, MA
OFFICE HG 09 (Chair of Popular Cultures, Große Scharrnstr. 59)	E-MAIL eneumann@europa-uni.de
OFFICE HOURS on appointment	SCHEDULE 7 bi-weekly meetings; approx. 3.5–4 hours per meeting

Course description

When was the last time you simply walked somewhere for the sake of walking and observing? Walking to take in the scenery of how your present – moment, after moment, after moment – unfolds before your eyes? Without a screen, earbuds, or even a wristwatch counting your steps?

It might have been a while.

Novelist Edmund White once wrote in his essay *The Flaneur* (2001) that his fellow US-Americans were particularly “ill-suited” to do just that: walking, idling, observing, being present. He suspects their mindset is far too focused on self-improvement, keeping busy with work, and organizing time. Whereas a flâneur/flâneuse enjoys “enormous leisure ... since a specific goal or a strict rationing of time is antithetical to the[ir] true spirit.”

But isn't that just terribly lazy? Who wants to be this unproductive?

Everyone who plays, one might argue, is just as lazy.

Play and games are inherently unproductive, according to a classic definition by Dutch cultural theorist Johan Huizinga (1938). Yet videogames also tend to involve productivity goals, a win-or-lose logic, high scores, competition, and strict time constraints – so playing can indeed become work, or work can function in a playful way; for example, in *Farming Simulations* or *Multiplayer Shooters*.

But what if the leisure of a flâneur/flâneuse and the medium of videogames meet?

Enter the so-called “Walking Simulators.” Originally a derogatory term used to express: “Nothing really happens – all you do is walk!” In this course, we aim to explore why this statement is short-sighted and whether – despite White's assumptions about US-Americans – they are capable of being flâneurs/flâneuses, if only within the virtual realm.

We will test our potential, on the one hand, by playing European examples of the Walking Simulator genre. In each session, we will play a game together. On the other hand, we will read and discuss accompanying literature on walking, observing, and being present, primarily by French and German thinkers.

No prior knowledge of any kind is required; the texts will be provided in English.

Schedule

The class consists of 7 bi-weekly meetings. All meetings will consist of a gameplay session (90 minutes) and a discussion (90 minutes) plus breaks (approx. 3,5–4 hours total per meeting).

SESSION 1 “You’re just walking, so you don’t really do anything” – or do you?	READINGS Kagen, M. “Walking Simulators, #Gamergate, and the Gender of Wandering.” 2017. [PASSAGES TBA] De Certeau, M. The Practice of Everyday Life. 1984. GAMEPLAY THE PATH (Tale of Tales/Belgium 2009) THE GRAVEYARD (Tale of Tales/Belgium 2008)
SESSION 2 The Existential Significance of Walking	READINGS [PASSAGES TBA] Baudelaire, C. The Painter of Modern Life. 1970. [PASSAGES TBA] Benjamin, W. The Arcades Project. 1999. GAMEPLAY DEAR ESTHER (The Chinese Room/United Kingdom 2012)
SESSION 3 Walking Down Memory Lane – Transgressing Realities	READINGS [PASSAGES TBA] Bakhtin, M.M. The Dialogic Imagination. 1991. [PASSAGES TBA] Westphal, B. Geocriticism. 2011. GAMEPLAY THE VANISHING OF ETHAN CARTER (The Astronauts/Poland 2014)
SESSION 4 Challenging the Senses: Being Present through Walking	READINGS [PASSAGES TBA] De Certeau, M. The Practice of Everyday Life. 1984. Böhme, G. “Atmosphere as the Fundamental Concept of a New Aesthetics.” 1993. GAMEPLAY SCANNER SOMBRE (Introversion Software/United Kingdom 2017) PROTEUS (Ed Key & David Kanaga/United Kingdom 2013)
SESSION 5 The Homely as Hiking Ground	READINGS [PASSAGES TBA] Adorno, T.W. Kierkegaard. Constructions of the Aesthetic. 1989. GAMEPLAY THE BERLIN APARTMENT (Blue Backpack/Germany 2025)
SESSION 6 Beyond The First Person Perspective: Flowing through Space(s)	READINGS Foucault, M. “Of Other Spaces.” 1984. GAMEPLAY

GRIS (Nomada Studio/Spain 2018)

SESSION 7

The Walking Sim to Backrooms Pipeline: The Liminal Line

READINGS

[SELECTED PASSAGES TBA] Augé, M. Non-Places. 1980.

GAMEPLAY

POOLS (Tensori/Finland 2024)

SCP-087 (Haversine/Russia 2012)

DATE TBA (during Summer Break)

You hand in your Home Essay via e-mail, should you need 9 ECTS.

Grading

The grade is based on three things: your in-class engagement, a Play Journal, and a "Textpertise".

ACTIVE IN-CLASS ENGAGEMENT	PLAY JOURNAL
30 %	30 %
6 ECTS – TEXTPERTISE	9 ECTS – TEXTPERTISE
40 %	20 %
9 ECTS – HOME ESSAY	
20 %	

6 ECTS: "TEXTPERTISE" | 40 % | You will briefly introduce the class to one of the required readings (approx. 10 minutes) and will act as a "Textpert" for this source throughout the meeting.

9 ECTS: "TEXTPERTISE" | 20 % | You will briefly introduce the class to one of the required readings (approx. 10 minutes) and will act as a "Textpert" for this source throughout the meeting.

HOME ESSAY | 20 % | You elaborate on your "Textpertise" reading with regards to one of the games played in class, or vice versa, respectively (10 pages).

Terms

PRESENCE IS COMPULSORY. More than one absence will automatically lower your final grade after your point total is calculated, unless you can document that the absences are related to an illness and/or official University event. For each additional absence your final grade will be lowered by 1/3 (a B becomes a B-, etc.). Late arrival and early departure will not be tolerated.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IS ESSENTIAL. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

PLAGIARISM IS INTOLERABLE. Your writing must be your own work. If you plagiarize egregiously on an assignment, you will fail the course. When in doubt, follow this rule: "If I use words or ideas that are not my own, I must cite the sources. Otherwise, I will be guilty of plagiarism."

Course bibliography

This list contains sources we will read and further sources you can read to dive deeper into the topic.

Adorno, T. W. Kierkegaard. Constructions of the Aesthetic. University of Minnesota Press. Minneapolis/London 1989.

Augé, M. Non-Places. Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity. Verso. London/New York 1980.

Bakhtin, M. M. The Dialogic Imagination. University of Texas Press. Austin 1991.

Baudelaire, C. The Painter of Modern Life and other Essays. Phaidon. London/New York 1970.

Benjamin, W. The Arcades Project. The Belknap Press of Harvard UP. Cambridge/London 1999.

Böhme, G. "Atmosphere as the Fundamental Concept of a New Aesthetics." Thesis Eleven 36 (1993), pp. 113–26.

De Certeau, M. The Practice of Everyday Life. University of California Press. Berkeley 1984.

Foucault, M. "Of Other Spaces (1967), Heterotopias." ["Des Espaces Autres". Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité 5 (1984), pp. 46–9]. Via foucault.info.

Kagen, M. "Walking Simulators, #Gamergate, and the Gender of Wandering." In The Year's Work in Nerds, Wonks, and Neocons. Indiana University Press. Bloomington 2017, pp. 275–300.

Schniz, F. "The Flaneur in a Masticator: Virtual Walking and the Philosophical Experience in Amnesia: A Machine for Pigs." In Mixed Reality and Games. transcript. Bielefeld 2020, pp. 89–100.

Westphal, B. Geocriticism. Real and Fictional Spaces. Palgrave Macmillan. New York 2011.

Course ludography

This list contains games we will play and further games you can play to dive deeper into the topic.

AMNESIA: A MACHINE FOR PIGS. The Chinese Room/Frictional Games. United Kingdom/Sweden 2013.

BIENTÔT L'ÉTÉ. Tale of Tales/Tale of Tales. Belgium 2013.

DEAR ESTHER: LANDMARK EDITION. The Chinese Room/Secret Mode. United Kingdom 2017 [2012].

EVERYBODY'S GONE TO THE RAPTURE. The Chinese Room/PlayStation Publishing. United Kingdom 2016.

GRIS. Nomada Studio/Devolver Digital. Spain 2018.

LOST EMBER. Mooney Studios/Mooney Studios. Germany 2019.

MUNDAUN. Hidden Fields/Annapurna Interactive. Switzerland 2021.

NEVA. Nomada Studio/Devolver Digital. Spain 2024.

POOLS. Tensori/Tensori & UNIKAT Label. Finland 2024.

SCP-087. Haversine/Haversine. Russia 2012.

SOMA. Frictional Games/Frictional Games. Sweden 2015.

THE GRAVEYARD. Tale of Tales/Tale of Tales. Belgium 2008.

THE PATH. Tale of Tales/Tale of Tales. Belgium 2009.

THE SUICIDE OF RACHEL FOSTER. One-o-One Games/Daedalic Entertainment. Italy 2020.

THE VANISHING OF ETHAN CARTER. The Astronauts/The Astronauts. Poland 2014.

COURSE 3

Who reproduces the world? – Feminist Economics in Times of Crisis“

Instructor: t.b.c.

Course description

ECTS OPTIONS 3 ECTS / 6 ECTS / 9 ECTS	CLASS FORMAT 4 hours per week (two times 90 minutes plus breaks)
3 ECTS Active participation; reading responses for three sessions	6 ECTS Active participation; reading responses for three sessions; essay of 5–7 pages
9 ECTS Active participation; reading responses for three sessions; term paper of 10–15 pages	ATTENDANCE Presence is compulsory; only one session without an excuse

Course description

When we talk about "the economy," we almost always look at the production side: How much profit was made? How fast is GDP growing? Are we heading into an inflation crisis, and what will tariffs do to trade? While these are the questions that dominate economics classrooms this seminar starts at the base and asks: Who reproduces the producer?

On whose shoulders — mostly unpaid — does the economy actually rest? Who sustains the social relationships that make collective life possible at all? And why is this work so often invisible, unremunerated, or underpaid and why is it disproportionately performed by women, migrant workers, and people of color?

These are the central questions of this seminar. Students will be introduced to feminist economic thought and connects its foundational debates — the domestic labor controversy, the intersectional critique — to contemporary crises: welfare state retrenchment under neoliberalism, global care chains, and demographic change.

Feminist economics is not an "add-on" to mainstream economics. It asks what counts as economically relevant, whose labor gets counted, and how markets, families, and the state are mutually constituted. It insists that what we call "the economy" needs to be questioned at its very foundations — and that is precisely where this seminar begins.

Assessment

Further information regarding the course requirements will be discussed during the first seminar session.

Course syllabus & readings

Introduction What is feminist economics?	READINGS
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	Cantillon S, Mackett O, Stevano S. A global perspective on feminist political economy. In: Feminist Political Economy: A Global Perspective. Agenda Publishing; 2023:1-18. Barker, Drucilla (2005): Beyond Women and Economics: Rereading „Women's work“, in: Signs Vol.30 (4), 2189-2209.
The role of the reproductive work Domestic-labour debate	READINGS Dalla Costa, Mariarosa; James, Selma (1971): Women and the Subversion of the Community. Petroleuse Press. Mies, M., Bennholdt-Thomsen, V. and von Werlhof, C. (1988): Women, the Last Colony, London: Zed Books.
The role of the reproductive work Critique on the domestic-labour debate – an intersectional approach	READINGS Angela Davis (1981): Women, Race & Class. Vintage eBooks/ New York. Boatcă, Manuela (2015): Global Inequalities Beyond Occidentalism. Burlington: Ashgate.
A feminist analysis of Neoliberalism The effects of neoliberalism on gender inequality	READINGS Benería, L. (2014). Neoliberalism and the Global Economic Crisis: a View from Feminist Economics. In: Verschuur, C., Guérin, I., Guétat-Bernard, H. (eds) Under Development: Gender. Gender, Development and Social Change. Palgrave Macmillan, London. Fraser, Nancy (2009): Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History, in: New Left Review 56, 97-117.
A feminist analysis of Neoliberalism Feminist reading of debt	READINGS Cavallero, Luci/Gago, Verónica (2021): A feminist reading of debt, London: Pluto Press, S.1-19. Chakravartty, Paula/ Ferreira da Silva, Denise (2012): „Accumulation, Dispossession, and Debt: The Racial Logic of Global Capitalism – An Introduction“. In: American Quarterly 64, H.3., p.361-371.
Who reproduces the world? Global care chain	READINGS Hochschild, Ariel Russel (2010): The Back Stage of a Global Free Market: Nannies and Surrogates, in: Appitzsch, Ursula/Schmitbauer, Marianne (eds.) Care and Migration, Opladen, 23-41. Safuta, A., Noack, K., Gottschall, K., Rothgang, H. (2022). Migrants to the Rescue? Care Workforce Migrantisation on the Example of Elder Care in Germany. In: Kuhlmann, J., Nullmeier, F. (eds) Causal Mechanisms in the Global Development of Social Policies. Global Dynamics of Social Policy. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
Who reproduces the world? The Fall of the Birth Rate: A Feminist Economic Account	READINGS Melinda Cooper (2020): Neoliberalism's Family Values: Welfare, Human Capital, and Kinship, in: Plehwe, Dieter (Ed.); Slobodian, Quinn (Ed.); Mirowski, Philip (Ed.) Nine Lives of Neoliberalism, ISBN 978-1-78873-255-0, Verso, London, New York, NY,

	https://www.versobooks.com/books/3075-nine-lives-of-neoliberalism, P. 95-119. H. Schubert, T. Spoorenberg, C. Dudel, & V.F. Skirbekk (2026): Masculinization of populations reverses sex differences in fertility, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A. 123 (17) e2533317123, https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2533317123. Geiger, Susi. „Tech Oligarchs' Obsession with Pronatalism and Fertility Markets“. Science as Culture, 10. März 2026, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1080/09505431.2026.2639478.
Who reproduces the world? The case of China	READINGS t.b.a.

Attendance

PRESENCE IS COMPULSORY. You may be absent from only one session without an excuse. If you are absent more than that, you must provide an official medical certificate. If you are absent more than once without an excuse, you will not be able to receive credit.