Conceptualizing and practicing spatial theory

A discussion about the relationship between theories and methods in qualitative spatial research

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Juliane and Séverine: Martina, the *spatial turn* has prompted (renewed) interest in space. Research is focusing more and more on the effects of spatial relationships on social processes. In the wake of this growing focus, a wide range of different theories about space have been proposed. You have largely defined the discourse in the German-speaking world by describing and advancing various concepts of space and contrasting them with one another. In a nutshell, we have seen a shift in our understanding of space from the territory as the dominating spatial organizational logic in the modern age and the associated idea of space as a container to a network of different concepts of space, characterized in particular by the spread of a relational understanding of space. Now we are motivated by the question of whether we can understand these different concepts of space, which are in a constant state of flux themselves, using conventional research methods or whether modified and/or new methods are required in spatial research. To phrase this as a provocative question: Might the set of methods from the traditional spatial disciplines (including geography, urban planning, architecture) promote the concept of a container space, for example, with classic maps? And might interviews and other standard methods from the social sciences favor a certain spatial obliviousness? In short: What challenges are researchers facing given the different theoretical under-standings of space (absolute, relative, relational, etc.)? With this in mind, what should we take into account when designing projects in qualitative spatial research?

Martina: The methods established in urban planning, geography, and architecture offer a major advantage in that they actually seek to understand spatial arrangements, unlike sociological methods. However, many of these methods were developed as the territory or container still dominated the spatial leitmotif. This is easy to illustrate on a map. Maps are an expression and means of territorialization, colonialism, and homogenization of space by way of surveying. Historian Ulrike Jureit illustrates this using the example of

colonialism.[1] Explorers, surveyors, and adventurers followed clearly indicated routes on foot or by horse through the colonies with the goal of "discovering" and mapping land. The information gathered in this manner was shaped into a single map, with the spaces beyond the route remaining white and being perceived as "empty space." The map transformed the experienced space into a flat, confined layout.

Ulrike Jureit shows how revolutionary and narrow this achievement was in a wider historical context: "The fundamental shift in political perceptions of space during the early modern period can be expressed as follows: *from the place to the territory*. If you read travel notes from the 16th and 17th century, they bear witness to the fact that although space was no longer fixed along select points, as was the case during the Middle Ages, travelers conceived the space they traversed as a succession of places and not as a spatial surface."[2] Nevertheless, the place was supplanted as the dominant spatial figure guiding spatial perception or political action. The territory took its place as a container space until it became just one possible construct in a varied spatial structure starting in the 1970s. Now we have to ask ourselves how we can adapt maps and visualizations. Dynamic mappings and hybrid mappings are the answer. Developing these mappings further is currently a major challenge.

Sociology has relied on texts as the most important source of interpretative data for some time. The problem with texts, and also with interviews, is that people are often unable to describe spaces and to verbalize spatial arrangements. This can be traced back to the legacy of container space. Whoever lives "in space" as they would in a container has little concern for spatial issues. As a matter of course, time became the problem of the modern age: social development, progress, life course, and biography were the big topics of the 20th century. In contrast, spaces were homogenized and standardized. They were zoned (e.g., playgrounds) and territorialized (e.g., nation-states). Society was less interested in quality, whereas distribution and storage were more of a priority. Today, under the auspices of networking and virtualization, the distinctive place is regaining its significance. However, this place is rarely the only place. In particular, the growing relevance of networking spaces makes it possible for places to base their meaning on their position in the network as well. The quality of the uniqueness of the place and the quality of the spatial relationships move to the fore. Interviewees are becoming increasingly better at talking about spaces because spaces are becoming a problem for them. Researchers are also learning that all interviews contain important information about spatial constructs in everyday life, even if spaces are not mentioned explicitly. Indeed, it is not possible to talk about most everyday experiences without referring to spaces. We can make use of this narrative to understand the communicative construction of spaces in everyday life. The interview situation itself is also a spatial situation that is subject to interpretation.

But of course communicative action is more than just verbal communication. It also includes body language and arrangements of objects. Because spaces in communicative action are created based on how subjects relate to one another and how they relate to objectivations, spaces are also made meaningful by the fact that they become part of the

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1   See Jureit 2012.

2   See Jureit 2012: 36.

communication through subjective, physical experiences. This can be understood best by means of observations, ethnography, or video analysis.

Juliane, you work at the interface between planning and sociology. And Séverine, you work at the interface between architecture and sociology. Do you see similarities between the methods, problems, theories, and practices of the disciplines, or do you see instead different approaches to space?

Séverine: At the moment, you can observe a (renewed) convergence of architecture and sociology, which has resulted from the pressure to think of the social and the spatial as one. Even though this means materiality is increasingly important for sociologists and users are becoming a higher priority for architects and planners, the heritage of the respective knowledge and research cultures is still an influential factor and characterizes their strategies when it comes to such spatial-social research endeavors: From a spatio-sociological standpoint, the "observed" users of spaces are also regarded as producers of those spaces. This is widespread primarily among researchers in planning and architecture, who focus on participation, collaboration, and incrementality; nevertheless, it is not uncommon in architecture and planning to understand spatial production predominantly as the construction of materialities. Integrating the different perspectives so as to take into account users and materialities can enrich efforts to cooperate. I would like to illustrate these fundamentally different approaches using an anecdote: As part of an interdisciplinary research project at Technische Universität Berlin, I collaborated with a colleague from the field of architecture to address the question of accessibility at a cultural institution in Berlin.[3] When drafting the research design, we discussed what type of data should be collected. In the process, the different approaches became clear: While I as a sociologist considered how to collect socio-demographic data using questionnaires and interviews in order to determine potential social exclusion mechanisms by analyzing the composition of the audience, the architect proposed reproducing the sidewalks, streets, and other paths leading to the cultural institution and photographing the entrances, for example. This demonstrates not only how the objects of observation can vary (in this case schematically with people, social classes, doors, bus stops, etc.), but also how different tools (textual or visual) might be selected to evaluate the space empirically. However, I see great potential in combining these complementary approaches since a physical-material factor and an entry point can both be socially exclusive with the proper connotation.

Juliane: From my experience in interdisciplinary research projects with sociologists and educationalists, I can confirm that we "approach space" differently, although the differences are not always as obvious as in Séverine's example. In their research, planners rely on the repertoire of methods from other disciplines, especially those from sociology.[4] For example, a module on methods of empirical social research, which is generally taught by sociologists, is established in planning degrees.[5] Beyond this general orientation on cer-

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3   See Marguin et al. in this handbook.

4   Also see Sturm 2000.

5   Also see Baur/Blasius 2014.

tain methods, several individual methodological guidelines—such as interviewing and observational techniques—originated primarily from sociology handbooks (in part from political science as well). But if we take a closer look, we can see that neither planners nor architects simply adopt the methods without further ado: rather, they appropriate them and develop them further by incorporating their craft and their individual practices.[6]

Furthermore, I have observed in interdisciplinary cooperation that we go into the field with a different focus. To put it in concrete terms, admittedly exaggerated and simplified: When I go into the field with my sociologist colleague and make observations, he focuses explicitly on people and their behavior. He writes down his thoughts in field notes. When planners observe, the physical-material setting takes center stage. In preparation for the observations, drawing materials are arranged for the documentation; for example, hand sketches or photos are copied as a basis for drawings. Of course in this day and age, I can also take a picture with my tablet and then sketch my observations directly on it. As a rule, an in-depth urban design analysis would probably precede this. This means the observed behavior is considered within the context of the materiality of the location, and then it is documented visually. As a result, the focus of what is observed and the type of documentation vary between disciplines.

I can draw the same conclusion from my observations as Séverine: These different approaches to space are precisely what make interdisciplinary cooperation so exciting and enriching. I see great potential here, not only with regard to our research findings, but also for the purpose of fostering methodological development. The field of visual spatial research is a great example of this. In planning degree programs, a rich selection of visual research methods are taught and then applied to both planning sciences and practice. However, the knowledge of these methods remains within the discipline as it is passed on in university courses, as part of research projects, or between colleagues. Publications on this subject are limited. Without a doubt, this is problematic since reflections on and improvements to the methods are not particularly systematic. The intersubjective verifiability of research also poses a challenge, especially in an interdisciplinary context. The situation is different in sociology. Although the tradition of visual research is less pronounced, the increased interest in this subject is illustrated by the growing scientific discourse on methodology and methods of visual research. However, the practical application and discourses of the two disciplines have seldom been brought together so far[7]—although the mutual use of both seems obvious.

Juliane and Séverine: After our initial question about the relationship between methods and spatial theory, we would like to ask you about the relationship between methods and social theory. In this handbook, various epistemic positions are represented: communicative constructivism, practice theory, actor-network theory, etc. Do you think that we need different methods depending on the theoretical framework?

Martina: Depending on the theoretical approach, there are methods that are obvious and methods that are more surprising. I will illustrate this using a classic comparison. At the

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6   See, for example, Bentlin/Klepp and Marguin et al. in this handbook.

7   Also see Pauwels 2011.

beginning of the last century, Max Weber defined sociology as "a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order to arrive at the causal explanation of its course and effects."[8] Weber thus combines the tradition of interpreting cultural achievements in the social sciences with the tradition of finding universal laws in the natural sciences. It starts from the subjective meaning people intentionally ascribe to their actions. Sociology is now challenged to reconstruct meaningful action situations in a comprehensible manner and to seek regularities and legitimacy.

Émile Durkheim pursues a different conception of sociology. In his opinion, investigating subjective meaning is not enough. Social order, which sociology endeavors to study, cannot be explained by individual actions alone. Rather, it exists independently of these actions to some extent and predetermines them.[9] Therefore, he believes the subject of sociology has less to do with individual action, since this is fleeting, and more to do with collective consciousness, which applies equally to all groups in a society and connects one generation to the next. For him, sociology is the "science of institutions, including their formation and function."[10] Sociology is tasked with analyzing the "social truths" that give rise to individual actions.

Now, searching for meaning in interviews or in pieces of text is an obvious choice for Weber's line of thought. In his essay *Zur Sache* (English: *On Point*), Ulrich Oevermann presented a full analysis of society based on the interpretation of the words "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen," as they are spoken every day on the evening news.[11] According to Durkheim, it would seem logical to collect quantitative data. A historical analysis would hardly be surprising either. But of course it is more complicated than that: It is also possible to survey the social order of a society based on small gestures such as greetings or to reconstruct the collective consciousness by interpreting images (for instance, if it is a particularly important image like Brandt's genuflection in Warsaw). Or you can investigate social meaning compared to economic statistics. The method you choose depends on your question and not on the given theory. Nevertheless, how the question is formulated cannot be separated from the theoretical approach.

Séverine and Juliane: We would like to interject here: *Firstly* we talked about the relationship between methods and spatial theory and *secondly* about the relationship between methods and social theory. *Thirdly*, to complete the triangle, we would like to ask about the relationship between social theory and spatial theory. We are interested in your perspective on whether there are certain social theories that help answer specific socio-spatial questions or that facilitate particularly profitable thought? And if so, what are they? Moreover, what might we have to accept in return?

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8   Weber 1980 [orig. 1921]: 1 (own translation)
9   See Durkheim 1999: 128; see also Durkheim 1961 [orig. 1895].
10   Durkheim 1961 [orig. 1895]: 100 (own translation)
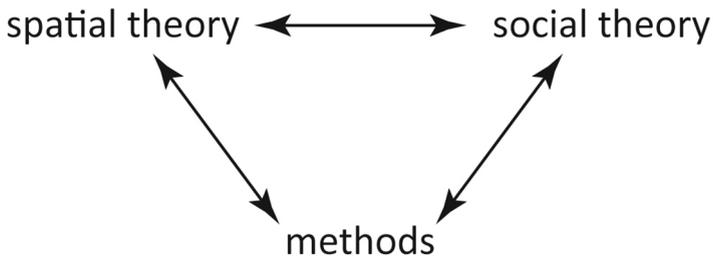11   See Oevermann 1983.

Fig. 1: Links between spatial theory, social theory, and methods. | © Author's own diagram

This question is especially polemic within the context of interdisciplinary cooperation between sociologists and designers: Currently, there is a strong tendency among designers toward *more-than-human* or *post-human* approaches with the justification that these social theory approaches "really" take the materiality of the space seriously and thus understand it better. The work by anthropologist Tim Ingold, for example, is quintessential.[12] However, these approaches, which reinforce the concept of flat ontology, conflict with social theories that still aim to understand society and in doing so focus on the dialectics between individual actions and social structures.

Martina: In order to answer this question, I first have to discuss the term social theory. In the Anglo-American context, by which I primarily mean the US, *social theory* is a field that emphasizes the relevance of theoretical principles (in contrast to the demand to always base theory on empirical statements).[13] As such, *social theory* is primarily positioned opposite or alongside (mostly) quantitative research. By contrast, the German-speaking world differentiates between social and societal theory. Both are theoretical concepts in the social sciences, but each has a different focus. While social theory inquires into the conditions of potential social phenomena, societal theory emphasizes the specific characteristics of society.

Social theory strives to determine the basic concepts underlying the social sciences and humanities. From a sociological standpoint, the main question is how to define and measure social phenomena across societies and eras. It is dedicated to the scientific approach within a social context. Societal theory is based on the conceptual foundation established by social theories and endeavors to describe the systems and substance of specific societies (as a rule, contemporary modern society) or to explain their basic principles.[14] Social theory is then challenged by the findings of societal theory and is forced to change. The social theory terms are defined in such a way that they can be used to analyze different societies at different periods of time. Even if the definitions often fail to meet this objective in individual cases and have a historical bias, the purpose of social theory is

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12   See Ingold 2012.

13   For the difference between social and sociological theory, see Lindemann 2014; Reckwitz 2016: 8 et seqq.; Knoblauch 2017: 11 et seqq.

14   See Joas/Knöbl 2004.

to capture the concept of action, communication, or space so as to understand socialist and capitalist societies, as well as societies from early modern and modern times. Georg Simmel, for example, sets out to define space from the perspective of social theory (over long sections of his text *The Sociology of Space*[15]), whereas he works from a societal theory angle in his essay *The Metropolis and Mental Life*.[16]

Space and time are fundamental structures of every society and thus of the social in general. As such, spatial theory is a necessary explanatory connection, both for understanding modern societies and for further developing the tools used to analyze social phenomena. However, sociology has long since neglected space and materiality—sociologists, like most modern people, believe in the division of labor and assume that space and materiality belong to other disciplines. For all intents and purposes, the material and the relational arrangement of material objects to spaces have played a role in many theories—for example, those of Émile Durkheim and Maurice Halbwachs, Erving Goffman and Alfred Schütz—but they attempted to understand the social using terms such as action, interaction, or communication. Space and materiality played a less important role than time or meaning. This is changing now. For example, Hubert Knoblauch wrote that we are "naturally returning [...] to a basic social theory dimension of communicative action with space."[17]

Therefore, my first answer to your question would be: Social theory needs spatial theory to understand how social phenomena are constituted in terms of space. How does space structure human action, and is it always independent of the social system? Or to put it another way: Which spatial concept can help us compare societies with very different characteristics (for example, translating Western preconceptions to Eastern societies unchecked)? Which understanding of space helps us comprehend the actions of people in periods when there were communities but no societies yet?

These questions are at a different epistemic level than questions in societal theory, inquiring into which spatial forms modern society produces and how space is used to structure action in this society. Therefore, my second answer to your question is that societal theory needs spatial theory to analyze specific spatial forms and spatial logics, along with their accompanying power structures in—in the case of Europe—late modern societies.

In my opinion, however, it is not enough for spatial theory to be just a means to an end, to reflect capitalism, late modernism, etc. Sometimes one gets this impression from theorists such as Henri Lefebvre or David Harvey. It is good when spatial theory helps to understand a specific society, especially if that society is built on exploitation and colonialism. But, and this brings us to ANT and *post-human* approaches, there are more and more proponents of expanding the use of spatial analyses beyond conflicting interests and who are curious about spaces, cities, and architecture as a materialized form of cohabitation. Ignacio Farías, for example, rightly asks in my opinion: "The central question we need to pose is whether we study cities as an instance of something else, of capitalism in this case, or we engage in an inquiry into the city and urbanization as a positive,

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15   Simmel 1995 [orig. 1903] (own translation)

16   Simmel 1957 [orig. 1903] (own translation)

17   Knoblauch 2017: 294 (own translation)

actual and selfentitled process."[18] Similarly, Helmuth Berking and I presented the conceptual idea of the "intrinsic logic of cities" in 2008: "To no longer research exclusively in cities, but to study cities themselves, to make 'this' city in contrast to 'that' city the object of analysis."[19] The objective is to no longer reduce cities and spaces to a laboratory for the big sociological questions. Therefore, my third answer to your question is: Although neither social nor societal theory can exist without spatial theory, spatial theory does not merely serve as an aid for the larger theories, rather it acts as an independent correlation of well-founded statements. Spatial theory is a perspective of order used to connect the social to the material. Doreen Massey emphasized time and again that a spatial-theoretical perspective makes it possible to take into account both the contemporaneous plurality (for space to unfold, at least two elements must be positioned) and the interrelation of the elements that have been positioned simultaneously (namely the spatial dependence that is experienced socially).[20] Spatial theory is not bound to a single discipline. Spatial theory can be based on philosophy, anthropology, sociology, architecture, planning sciences, etc. Spatial theory—or to be precise, the analysis of spatial phenomena—is therefore particularly suited for interdisciplinary collaboration.

Juliane and Séverine: For the readers of this handbook, it would undoubtedly be helpful to have some indications of how to select their own spatial and social theory approach and what the advantages and disadvantages of that approach might be. After all, the field is quite broad and difficult to capture as it includes communicative constructivism, practice theory, the ANT approach, and Bourdieu's field theory—just to name a few.

Martina: When deciding on the approach, it is important to clarify what you are interested in finding. Am I interested in enduring spatial structures or terminological work (social theory), in analyzing the modern, capitalist society (societal theory), or in spatial orders without knowing (initially) whether they are characterized by capitalist, neoliberal, or late modern politics (spatial theory)? Once I have decided this, I ask which system of statements is either more convincing for me in general or appears more compelling for the problem at hand. For example, if I am interested in social reproduction, I can quickly apply Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical construct,[21] whereas I would be more likely to use Judith Butler's theoretical architecture to understand the influence of language on action, especially if I am also interested in gender roles.[22]

Almost all new social science theories strive to think consistently in relational terms. I use the terms theoretical constructs or architectures because theories are systems of statements based on coherent inferences that have been recognized as plausible (from a critical perspective). Tim Ingold, for example, makes many references to anthropological debates to form his theories.[23] He also has philosophical inclinations. He endeavors

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18   Farías 2011: 368.
19   Berking/Löw 2008: 7 (own translation)
20   See Massey 2005.
21   See Bourdieu 1987.
22   See Butler 1991.
23   See Ingold 2012.

to make general statements about the nature of relationships, at the same time contemplating the role of knowledge. In contrast, Hubert Knoblauch draws on interaction and communication.[24] He is interested in how manners of existing in the world are reflected in a simple gesture, such as pointing with the finger. Both theorists take materiality seriously, but in different ways. Now how do I decide between Ingold and Knoblauch (two relatively recent theories that were formulated in relational terms and with materiality in mind, in addition to having an affinity for space)?

In my opinion, the answer consists of two equivalent influences (unless we need to change our views completely due to revolutions, disasters, etc.): the biographical/professional upbringing and the demands of the object. The first requires us to develop a system of thought that helps to understand the world based on studies and within an academic career. Which theoretical approaches you decide to use later on in your work depends greatly on which explanations can be plausibly integrated into your own (verified, successfully tested) system of thought. After all, we do not want to redescribe the world from scratch with every paper or every essay. As scholars, we strive to identify correlations between phenomena, and that is a lifelong undertaking. Therefore, it is all the more important for students to try out and apply different types of theories, to know the lines of thought in their own field, and at the same time to expand their thinking continuously through interdisciplinary working groups so that they can develop plausible theoretical perspectives.

This is where the second influence comes into play. If we are not dogmatic, then we can also be steered into new realms of theory by the objects we are investigating. When I was working on prostitution, I started to take the structuring of actions through emotions more seriously. This idea would (probably) never have crossed my mind had I continued working with electromobility. So how can you choose your own theoretical approach? Read a lot and select the most plausible arguments!

Let us return to the qualitative methods once more. If we assume that space is dynamic, that it can be understood relationally and always has material and symbolic aspects: Which qualitative methods do you consider particularly suitable and for what reasons?

Juliane and Séverine: The fact that you mention methods—plural—already suggests that your question about particularly suitable methods for spatial research can be answered only with an openness for a diverse range of methods, which is characteristic of qualitative research. Of course there is not just one method that can be used to comprehend the many different facets and characteristics of relational and dynamic space.

Like you, we endorse theoretical preference; the selection of the methods should depend, first and foremost, on the research question or the demands of the object, but also on the biographical/professional upbringing—for example, the educational background of the researchers and the skills they possess (such as drawing, coding, writing, etc.).[25] Selecting a method is anything but trivial since each method is associated with

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24   See Knoblauch 2017.

25   At the same time, one's personal methodological expertise should not be an impediment to acquiring new methods. After all, the purpose of this anthology is ultimately for readers to discover

a certain conception of science, serving as a guarantee: "Books on research methods expressly prescribe how something should be done. As mentioned, their normativity lies in this scientific methodology as well. [...] It is what makes it possible to understand, justify, and even criticize the veracity of the statements."[26] Lastly, there are already privileged "relationships" between methods and social theory, such as ANT and ethnography; communicative constructivism and videography or focused ethnography; Foucault and discourse analysis; Bourdieu and correspondence analysis, etc.[27] But beware: This by no means implies that we should or must always follow the established pairings. Methods are constantly being refined, and their limits should always be considered, contested, and transcended. We also see opportunities to break new ground in qualitative research with methods—and with epistemological caution—and to call into question and perpetuate recent discoveries about spaces (and society).

In qualitative spatial research, we can grasp specific aspects especially well with each method presented in this publication. For example, by using methods to collect and analyze verbal or text-based data, we can reconstruct individual and collective points of view, opinions, meanings, experiences, motivations, reasons for a course of action, and discourses. Furthermore, ethnographic research allows us to examine observed behavior and representations, among other things. Thus, this range of methods offers us approaches to analyzing perceptions of space and spatial imaginations. By contrast, working with methods to collect and analyze visual data can allow researchers to investigate visual documentations of social action, to examine objects as symbols of social meaning, or to reconstruct the unintentional and unnoticed consequences of human action and inaction. Hence, appropriate methods enable us to comprehend the materiality of space, spatial arrangements, and spatial practices.

This can be summed up as follows for this handbook: Photo-interviewing, mental maps and narrative maps, and biographical interviews make it possible to capture spatial knowledge effectively, among other things.[28] Ethnography and go-along interviews are especially suited for researching spatial practices.[29] Focused ethnography or videography can be used to investigate communicative situations in spatial terms,[30] while visual and cartographic methods such as site visits, layer analyses, or maps focus on the

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new methods, to expand their methodological horizons, and to dare to break new methodological ground!

26   Marguin/Knoblauch 2021: 452 (own translation)

27   This handbook contains chapters on several of these different methods (and their privileged "relationships" with social theories): see Farías/Paulos for actor-network-based methods of spatial research, Genz/Yildirim Tschoepe for ethnography as a methodology, Knoblauch/Tuma for videography and space, Wetzels for (spatially) focused ethnography, and Sommer/Bembnista for multimodal discourse analysis.

28   Refer to the following sections in this handbook: Dobrusskin et al. for image-based interviewing, Million for mental maps and narrative maps, Weidenhaus/Norkus for biographical-narrative interviews, and Bentlin/Klepp for visual-biographical interviews.

29   Refer to the following section in this handbook: Genz/Yildirim Tschoepe for ethnography as a methodology.

30   Refer to the following sections in this handbook: Wetzels for (spatially) focused ethnography and and Knoblauch/Tuma for videography and space.

materiality of spaces.[31] But as we said, such correspondences should be treated with caution. Based on our own research practice, we would always advocate combining methods: *First*, this could be the combination of complementary methods (as is typical in the sociology of space at least), such as ethnography (for observing spatial practices) together with interview formats (for exploring subjective spatial knowledge or interpreting spatial practices). Or *second*, it would be conceivable to combine different media (e.g., visual and verbal data),[32] which might involve using visual data (such as photographs, aerial images, plans) to capture the materiality of spaces and combining them with verbal data (such as newspaper articles, interview protocols, comments on social networks) to ascribe them meaning accordingly (this could entail photo-interviewing, multimodal discourse analysis, cartography and photo-documentation, or go-along interviews). *Third*, mapping can be used as a synthesizing tool, which is currently receiving considerable attention in the spatial sciences—as illustrated by many of the chapters in this handbook—because it represents an attempt to grasp the procedural, socio-material dimension of spatial constitution.[33] And *fourth*, mixed-method combinations can be employed in an effort to integrate qualitative and quantitative data, as is the case in joint spatial displays,[34] for example.

Martina, we would like to give you the final word and ask you about a dream project. Imagine you have *carte blanche* to pursue whatever you would like: Without having to submit a proposal for third-party funding in advance, you have the liberty to carry out a research project or experiment of your choosing. What would you like to do? And why?

Martina: I like how you differentiate between spatial knowledge, spatial practices, spatially structured communicative situations, and the materiality of spaces. This helps a great deal in determining which method addresses which aspects of spatial constitution. Dream project: Sex, gender, and space. We know so little about how sexuality is experienced today (including for specific genders). We also know nothing about which spaces are relevant in this regard and how. For example, what role does personal space or unfamiliar space play in the development of a young girl's sexuality? How does space structure intimate communication? Such a project is quite challenging from a methodological perspective. I would combine interviews with dynamic maps.

Séverine and Juliane: The project sounds exciting, but it would indeed require a certain degree of sensitivity. Perhaps the readers of this handbook will offer you suggestions on how to develop your idea further. Dear Martina, thank you for sharing with us your insights into the triad of spatial theory, social theory, and methods.

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31   Refer to the following sections in this handbook: Tabačková for site visits, Bentlin for urban layer analysis, and Fülling et al. for mapping and photo-documentation.

32   Refer to Heinrich in this handbook.

33   Refer to the chapter on drawing and visualizing in this handbook.

34   See Marguin et al. in this handbook.

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