

Abstracts

Marlen Schulz and Michael Ruddat

Incompatible interests? A discussion concerning the integration of qualitative and quantitative results

The advantages of combining qualitative and quantitative research methods was already advocated by Max Weber. In spite of his early start on this subject, German sociologists following in Weber's footsteps have been reluctant in exploiting the potential of combining qualitative and quantitative methods. Such a combination promises two major advantages: mutual validation of research results and expanded realms of interpretation due to the integration of explorative and confirmative purposes. In this paper the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative methods are being reviewed and the mutual benefits of combining the two approaches explained. Based on empirical studies in which such an integration was pursued the potential gain in explanatory power will be documented and possible conditions determined under which these gains can be expected. At the end the potential for meta-analysis in sociology will be addressed.

Boris Holzer

The Suffering of Others: Episodic Solidarity in World Society

In order to account for the specific characteristics of world society this paper is predicated upon the view that the idea of „social integration“ should be conceived of in less demanding terms. It suggests the communicative integration achieved by the focused attention of the mass media as an alternative to normative integration. Analysing the tsunami-catastrophy in 2004, I show how such a world event was able to precipitate an „episodic“ form of transnational solidarity. This kind of solidarity is based upon the universalistic programs of international humanitarian organizations that are triggered off by specific events combined with spontaneous and particularistic efforts of relief that take existing social ties as their point of departure.

Ursula Dallinger

Rational Cooperation or Cultural Norms? The Welfare State in the Light of Economic Institutionalism

The contribution criticizes those concepts in Political Sociology, which assume, that formal welfare state arrangements have to be embedded in societal values. It does not put into question the importance of (welfare) values, which order social relations and structure cooperation. But this contribution proposes a different theoretical approach and refers to theories of rational cooperation and economic institutionalism in order to explain the social fundaments of the welfare state. It analyses how economic social theory explains institutional constraints on the background of social dilemmas and the limits of rational action when co-operation is to be achieved. Approaches offering solutions to second-order contribution problems to institutions are introduced more closely and related to cooperation in the welfare state (f.e. 'co-

Soziale Welt 59 (2008), S. 199 – 200

operative institutions' and 're-individualization'). Economic approaches to cooperation and institutions are limited in scope; they explain the social insurance dimension of the welfare state, but the redistributive dimension hardly becomes plausible. Here is the place of social values about equality or justice. But even after giving values a certain role, the problem to reconcile multiple and conflicting social policy values has to be solved. The solutions of an economic contractarianism (Buchanan) are presented and their potential to explain consent discussed. The role of insecurity about the future social position that generates generalized interests is an important topic when asking for the preconditions for cooperation in a welfare state.

Kuei-Tien Chou

Glocalized Dioxin – Regulatory Science and Public Trust in a Double Risk Society

This article analyses risk events in Taiwan between 2004-2005 that were produced by dioxin contamination in baby formula, duck and duck eggs. It critically discusses the special risk governance structure, public risk perception and trust in newly industrializing countries. In particular, through discourse analysis, the author points out that historically, technocrats have shown authoritative attitudes when regulating different risk events. The author also analyzes how the delayed and hidden risk governance structure alters public perception and systematically destroys public trust in regulators' risk governance.