



Universität  
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## **Public Talk + Apéro**

# Bridging the Divide: Reimagining Researchers and Research Practices through Feminist Ethics of Care and Institutional Responsibility

**Prof. Dr. Luisa T. Schneider (VU Amsterdam)**



Date: Thursday, April 24; Time: 6:15 p.m.

Location: Markthalle Basel, Salon (Steinentorberg 20, 4051 Basel)

Cooperatively hosted by the Institute of Social Anthropology, the Center for Africa Studies, and the Center for Gender Studies, all from the University of Basel.

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## REGISTRATION

No registration is required for the public talk. **For the Apéro demi riche, please register by April 10 by e-mail to [ggsb-genderstudies@unibas.ch](mailto:ggsb-genderstudies@unibas.ch) (subject: Apéro, Markthalle Salon).** For further information, you may also contact Anna K. Kraft via e-mail: [annakerstin.kraft@unibas.ch](mailto:annakerstin.kraft@unibas.ch).

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## ABSTRACT

The creation of the "researcher persona" in academia often occurs through the creation of an artificial split between personal identity and professional role, fostering a framework where positionality, personality, and lived experiences are systematically excluded from scholarly practice. This division, rooted in neoliberal academic structures and perpetuated by the myth of the "in-control academic", undermines the potential for grounded and transformative engagement in research. It disregards the emotional labor and vulnerabilities inherent in qualitative research. The reality of conducting research often includes the potential for researchers to witness or experience violence, as well as the emotional and ethical complexities that follow. These experiences are too often erased or muted in academic discourse, as their acknowledgment may be perceived as a threat to institutional competitiveness. This erasure not only fails to support researchers in processing trauma but also devalues the insights and ethical imperatives that such experiences can bring to knowledge production. This presentation argues that risks and vulnerabilities must be responsibly acknowledged and integrated into research processes, ensuring that researchers are supported rather than left to navigate these challenges in isolation. Drawing on feminist ethics of care and failure, this presentation proposes an alternative approach that centers relationality, vulnerability, and the acknowledgment of researchers' positionalities as integral to scholarly rigor. By challenging the competitive and market-driven logic that views unpredictability and emotional engagement as liabilities, it advocates for a holistic reimagining of research as an ethically entwined and reflexive practice. The discussion further addresses institutional responsibilities in mitigating the risks researchers face, recognizing that the absence of robust support systems often exacerbates the emotional toll and ethical challenges of this work. Strategies for fostering a culture of care and shared responsibility will be outlined, emphasizing the need for institutions to create environments that prioritize researcher well-being, offer trauma-informed resources, and engage with the ethical dimensions of research vulnerability. Ultimately, this talk calls for dismantling the dichotomy of person and researcher, advocating for an academic paradigm that embraces the complexity of human experience, responsibly addresses the realities of violence and trauma, and values care as a cornerstone of research practice. By weaving these considerations into institutional structures, we can foster a research culture that is both ethically grounded and genuinely humane.

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## ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Luisa T. Schneider is an Assistant Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Vrije University Amsterdam. She completed her doctorate in anthropology at the University of Oxford in 2019. She specializes in the anthropology of intimacy, violence and law and has conducted ethnographic research in Sierra Leone since 2011 and in Germany since 2018. Through combining empirical research with conceptual synthesis, Luisa Schneider studies how people negotiate the space to live their most intimate needs on various levels of social and legal organisation. A particular interest lies in the friction between care and control, between rights, protections, and their practical realisation that arise from the divide between private and public spheres, both through the politico-legal separation between home/house and street, and through conflicting discourses regarding which areas of life states may regulate and in what way. Through her interest in inventive contractualism and creative syncretism, she examines what laws 'do' and how they interact with how people govern their lives in diverse contexts.