The Dresden University of Technology is an all-around university – yet, the majority of the almost 31,000 students is studying technical subjects. Since the reunification, the university has gone through profound changes, most of all the establishment of the humanities. Moreover, the university is situated in an extraordinary location – that is to say, it is located close to the Czech and Polish borders. Traditionally, there has been cooperation with Eastern universities, for example with the universities of Poznan (Poland) and St. Petersburg (Russia). Also, gender studies have already been active at the Dresden University before 1989. Consequently, today's gender studies program can be seen in a longer tradition of gender studies in Dresden, although this tradition is a rather complicated and interrupted one.

In this paper, we would like to present a project called "Cross-Disciplinary Focus Gender Studies" which is going to run at Dresden University for 3 years, till December 2003. This teaching and research project is located at the department of Language, Literature and Culture and it is a cooperation of the disciplines New German Literature, Italian Studies and American Studies. Since 2001 it offers lectures and seminars in gender studies given by staff members of these three disciplines. The project's courses are open for students of these three disciplines and credits taken in one of the project's courses are acknowledged in all three disciplines. Moreover, the lectures and seminars are also offered to students of the university's studium generale, which means the courses are open for basically all other students including students of civil engineering disciplines. Our cross-disciplinary study focus is inspired by the broad spectrum of disciplines at Dresden University, which ranges from medicine via bio- and civil engineering disciplines to the humanities and social sciences disciplines. So we are able to offer students of other disciplines new perspectives in cultural studies.

Thus, in the courses we pay tribute to the technological character of our university in a twofold perspective. On one hand we use the category gender to focus on technology. On the other hand our program is open for all other students. What we aim at is the linkage of disciplines which formally look to be rather faraway from each other. As a first step, subject borders shall be crossed within faculty limits, but in the long run, the aim is to cross faculty borders and to link the most different disciplines.

Thus, our focus gender studies is outlined as a cross-disciplinary, curricular innovative, department-open teaching and research project. It concentrates institutional and intellectual energies and contributes to the emergence of innovative questions and research methods. Since researchers have started to extend the analytical category gender over the borders of cultural and social sciences and also integrated technical and natural sciences, it recently has become possible to cast a polyperspective look at aspects of the cultural memory, at the historical images of gender as well as at the current conditions of linguistic, discursive, medial and social features of gender differences. Also recently, special attention is paid to the cultural
and social functions of gender differences, so that assertions concerning the substance of "femininity" and "masculinity" are called into question and appear under the specific condition of the cultural context, respectively.

With regard to the teaching conditions at Dresden University, we have structured the field of gender studies crossdisciplinarily in the following five central dimensions: bodies, machines, media, space, and time. With this we do not strive for completeness but for liability. In the following, these parameters shall shortly be explained. Yet, we have to state that there is a certain stress on bodies, machines and media – basically due to institutional reasons.

I Bodies. The access on the human body as a central parameter of cultural and social structuring is principally done genderspecifically. Reproduction as a basic category of anthropomorphical endurance in time, as nucleus of the human community shapes the mechanisms to control female capability of childbearing since earliest times. The diverse phases of normative hegemony over the female body are institutionalized from the female childbearing vessel of antique and early modern discurses to the separation of sexuality and reproduction in the 20. cent. Since greek antiquity / the date of origin of the bible, this development has been accompanied with the symbolic order of the sexes. Within this order, female body images have been acknowledged as a central function for the constitution of community, rules and knowledge. Inversely, until quite recently, the destruction of human bodies - bound by criminal or international law – has been a male 'privilege'. Motherly or military body images and their counterparts, respectively, form the extremes of "internal" forms of cultural perception, whereas the perception of the "external" other functionalizes present patterns of a further, additional level. Disguise, transformation, and ambiguity of bodies live of these extremes, but at the same time they try to dissolve them or to incorporate them into a continuum of changing gender roles. Concepts of identity and subjectivity are immediately tied back to body concepts and their subvertives. They also pass through corresponding changes, as well as strategies of marginalization and punishment, the dealing with violence and death, poverty and hygiene, sexuality and pornography etc. Entering the a scenario of cyberspace, the body finally looses its former central role, it is degraded to body-machine-interface, to a functional anthropomorphical "hardware" supporting the communication of mind/imagination and virtual reality.

II. Machines. To extend the human body into tools and machines, to equate bodies and machines in the Cartesian era, and finally to dissolve and replace the body by machines has– until now- been an area of almost exclusively male roles – always competing with the female capability of childbearing. Significantly female machine staff is imagined in the first robot-simulation in literary history – the automaton episode in the Ilias. Successfully controlling the execution of his plans and being responsible for technical invention, the engineer has been one of the prototypes of the modern concepts of masculinity – at the latest since the topos of progress has been inaugurated in early modern times. In these concepts venturesomeness and circumspection, expertness, authority and energy are united. On the other hand, women were seen as having inferior minds, so they were only of interest as operators of machines: her body and psyche appear (out of labour-market-strategies) mainly as objects of ergonomical studies about body-machine-units. Corresponding to the genderspecifically coded sedimentation of technology-complexes, technical disciplines are resistant to female penetration into the male machine-domain until today, even if - in the course of the medial revolution - the exclusive male staff has recently been softened and the machine-topos has become more androgynous. Finally, technical "achievements" modify and subvert genderspecifically structured social customs. Since the introduction of the mechanical clock in the 13. cent., technical innovations repeatedly revolutionized social, political and cultural constitutions and thereby genderspecific role-models, i.e. letterpress printing, steam engine,
railroad, photography and film, telegraphy and telephon, car and aircraft, radio and television, missiles, computer, www and virtual reality.

III. Media. The access to and the handling of old as new media is genderspecifically coded. In the print media, authorship and reception are connected to concepts of masculinity and femininity. For example, male authors and female readers were central to the development of the literary market in the 18. century. After a brief intermezzo in the 16. cent., female authorship becomes important not before the 19. century, and yet the danger of marginalization remains because of its attribution to triviality. Nevertheless, the wife and mother is responsible to the child's acquisition of language. The (passive) sweetheart, and later the muse, play a central role in the concept of the male author and genius. At least the recipient's role changes with the technical innovations of photography and film, the female recipient simulates the male author's-look. The production of gender roles, and their parody or overcoming, is inflating since the establishment of television. Following the transportation-revolution and the class-crossing democratization of access to it, mobility becomes also more available to women. Moreover, telegraph and telephone support contacts outside the familial home. In the 20. century, education becomes more accessible to women including the paid labor market (except the leading positions) and with the establishment of the World Wide Web and its flow of communication, gender categories seem to become obsolete. All these aspects – of course – are closely connected to the category of space.

IV. Space. Cultural space is usually coded genderspecifically (as well as race- and class-specifically) and access to it is often limited to one gender. This is true for both 'naturally' and socially structured space. Genderspecific access is regularized by connotations of symbolic and political space, function and structure of spaces mark them as isotopic, heterotopic and utopic. Public space is usually male usurped, the private space is up to a certain amount attributed a 'female sphere', at least in the urban context. On the level of symbolic order, the concept of the 'virgin' space limits the role of the discoverer and pioneer to men and at the same time attributes ruler qualities to them. Thus, female explorers oppose gender characteristica. On the other hand, the social separation of male paid labor and familial work of reproduction-and recreation as well as charity work leads to a privileged access of women to private spaces and the limitation of female mobility to the private home (and similarly functionalized spaces). Besides this, there are (problematic) 'spaces of mediation' as for example the aristocratic court in early modernity, in which the presence of ladies functioned as necessary stimulation of ritual male conversation. Also, in the salons of the 19. century, charismatic women inconspicuously organize social life in which the exchange of certain social groups is central. Besides the church (and the localities of prostitutes) as traditional crossing points of the sexes, theater and museums, public parks and transportation, ball rooms and cinemas, and finally educational institutions fulfill similar functions. Also here, the opening of virtual space, its architectures and structures offer new challenges.

IV. Time. Just like mobility also time has long remained a male prerogative. Time and its early modern dimensioning of history as linar is male coded. Away from the cyclical-female concepts of agrarian-dominated dependence of the times of day and the seasons, permanently repeating itself, the chronology of time allows the event to enter into the now secular-temporal perception. Retrospectively, time becomes a lineal succession of (male) wars and deeds. The phases of life of an individual as well as the conceptual and practical handling of personal and general cultural history are genderspecifically formed in different ways – in the case of the female sex almost exclusively determined by the function of reproduction. This
does not only influence actual lifetime but also in different semantics and images of young and old age.
Thus, the discrepancy of personal lifetime and 'worldtime' (Blumenberg) is probably experienced differently. In literary genres as for example autobiography, male and female authors show genderspecific different strategies. Eventually, the permanent global omnipresence of news-tv and the transchronical permanence of the internet open up considerable modifications of temporally consolidated modi of perception, whose dynamics start dodging genderspecifications. Moreover, medical progresses lengthen lifetime significantly.

Project members and teaching courses

Around the cultural-scientific analytical category gender, there has been gathered a whole collection of teaching courses - from introductory courses to graduate courses and lectures. With regard to the project's central dimensions » bodies, machines, media, space, and time«, thematic complexes are examined such as i.e. gender-specific forms of perception, identity assignments, patterns of discourse and knowledge as well as the cultural formation of systems.

The project members are:

New German Literature: Prof. Dr. Walter Schmitz
                        PD Dr. Kerstin Stüssel

Italian Cultural Studies: Prof. Dr. Barbara Marx
                          Dr. Elisabeth Tiller

American Studies: Prof. Dr. Brigitte Georgi-Findlay
                   Dr. Liane Löwe

The teaching units are mainly given by the non-professional staff members in temporary positions. So far the following courses have been offered:*  

summer semester 2001:
Undergraduate course: "Introduction to Gender Studies" (Georgi-Findlay, Stüssel, Tiller)

winter semester 2001/02:
Lecture: "Introduction to Gender Studies" (Stüssel)
Undergraduate course: "Text, Gender, Policy: Italian female novelists after 1945" (Tiller)
Graduate course: "Community, Race, and Gender on the 19th Century American Frontier" (Georgi-Findlay)

summer semester 2002:
Undergraduate course: "Technology, Gender and Culture" (Löwe/Stüssel)
Undergraduate course: "Fantasies of Technology in Modernity" (Marx)
Undergraduate course: "Utopias and Gender: Aspects of gender attribution" (Tiller)
Graduate course: "Technology, Industrialization and Gender in the Media" (Stüssel)

winter semester 2002/03:
Lecture: "Introduction to Gender Studies" (Stüssel)
Undergraduate course: "Aspects of Gender and Technology in American Social History" (Löwe)
Undergraduate course: "Masculinities of Culture" (Stüssel)
Undergraduate course: "Christine de Pizan" (Tiller)
Graduate course: "Nation and Gender" (Stüssel)

Summer semester 2003:
Lecture: "Introduction to Gender Studies" (Stüssel)
Undergraduate / graduate course: "Gender, Automobiles and the American City" (Löwe)
Undergraduate course: "Classical Period and Gender" (Stüssel)
Undergraduate course: "Concepts of Femininity and Masculinity in Early Twentieth-Century Italian Literature" (Tiller)
Graduate course: "Authorship and Gender" (Stüssel)

(* with the exclusion of the American Studies seminars, all courses are given in German – consequently the course titles named above have been translated)

Every semester there is given an introductory lecture and/or an introductory undergraduate seminar. These "Introductions to Gender Studies" are based on a reader, which has been compiled by the project members and which includes these essential theoretical texts:


The introductory course / lecture clarifies how - under the term gender studies - research concerning the structure and history of gender relations and their cultural effects are combined. By the analysis of several historical key texts, students are familiarized with the cultural and social history of Western gender debates. Afterwards, the field of gender studies is science-historically and –systematically made accessible on the basis of themes like bodies, media, machines / technology. Subjects of analysis are i.e. body-concepts and their consequences for the anthropomorphous world-structure, gender constructions created in and by the media, genderspecific mechanisms in old and new media authorities, and finally also gender-patterns and roles within technical - mechanical constellations. Moreover, another subject of debate is the closeness and distance of gender studies to the women's movement and to women's studies.

The development of course materials has been systematically continued. Besides the reader "Introduction to Gender Studies", right now there is a material collection created containing key text of the Western gender debate. It is our permanent effort to optimize the courses with regard to their actuality and didactic structure. Also, we take advantage of an interactive tool which we have established on the internet, and which can be used by staff as well as students for internal .

By the cross-disciplinary study focus, the students are given the opportunity to get access to an innovative field of research in cultural studies. To explore this research field, they are personally supported and intensively advised. Because of the comparatively high number of students who have already taken part in one of the focus' study units, there is already a high discursive level to be notice – especially in the advanced courses.

Workshops, conferences and cooperation

An important part of the project is the attendance and organization of workshops and conferences by which recent research discussions reveal the current state of research, also and especially, for students. According to this concern, we have been organizing an international conference titled "Gender/Technology: Narrations/Images" for February 2004.

Besides the completion, enhancement and modularization of the teaching program, cooperation between regional and overregional projects of women- and gender studies is a special concern to the project's co-workers. Our study focus closely cooperates with several projects.

Firstly, there is the Project GiFA ("Geschlechterverhältnisse in Forschung und Ausbildung" (translation, approx.: "genderrelations in research and education") which is connected with the department of sociology at the Dresden University of Technology. For example, when the GiFA-project organized a workshop called "Gender and the Academic Disciplines", our study focus actively contributed to it. In winter-semester 2002/03 we continued this cooperation by co-organizing a lecture series called "Technology, Labor and Gender".

Secondly, we closely cooperate with the "Koordinierungsstelle Gender Studies" KoGenS which coordinates gender studies within the German state of Saxony. KoGenS is organizing among others a summer-university which is going to take place at the end of September 2003.
in Dresden. Our study focus has actively contributed to the preparation of the summer-
university and will also do so in its execution. Also taken into account the participation in the 5th Feminist Conference, we are planning to make our study focus an important contributor to European Gender Studies activities.

**Conclusion**

Eventually, it might be useful to incorporate the work of our focus into the context of German gender studies which quite often are an arrangement of abstraction (term: gender), theorizing and grants to women. Also, we heavily experience differences and even clashes between gender theory and practical gender politics in the classroom - and the more so, since gender studies in Germany are not a grassroots movement, but they are introduced 'from above'. This 'top-bottom-approach' is just contrary to developments in other countries, as for example in the US'.

Another problem is the project's reliance on the work of the assistants. These scholars work only in temporary positions and have to qualify for a further academic career in their specific discipline with their work in the project. Also, despite intense efforts, the courses of studies are bound to the basic disciplines (German literature, American and Italian studies), so that subject needs have to be fulfilled.

Now, that the Cross-Disciplinary Study Focus Gender Studies has been working very successfully for more than 2 1/2 years, it is essential to secure its further existence. The project's members have developed a modular teaching program which might be integrated into the university's new structure of B.A. study courses which is just about to be finished off. Already now, gender studies could be embodied as a separate module into the study courses of New German Literature, Italian and American Studies. The dean of our faculty and the university's prorector have promised to support these plans. In the long run it might be to taken into conseration, whether the establishment of gender studies within the B.A. study courses could be integrated into a M.A. study course. Consequently, a consecutive M.A. study course 'Gender Studies' could be outlined, which in the beginning could be realized in cooperation with the philosophical department. Later on, it also should be open to technical disciplines. Yet, it is indispensable, to secure the project's further existence by establishing permanent positions. Especially for this, we do need international support.