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# S p o n d e o – Lost Oaths in Academia

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## Abstract

Spondeo is a short film (5 minutes), which thrives into the abyss of unspoken social conventions at Austrian universities, visually addressing topics like homelessness, intimacy, sexual assault, drug abuse and suicide. It grew out of a one-year student project carried out at the University of Innsbruck (Austria) and involved the ideas of 25 students working together with two researchers in cultural sociology and media studies, an Italian artist and a Bavarian filmmaker.

As an interdisciplinary team, they tried to tell a story about unspoken social conventions at Austrian universities, which have often remained hidden from social discourse. Following the concept of photovoice, the project team gave students a ‘filmvoice’, visualizing what they felt about being a student in Austria and having to cope with a series of grievances. The film offers hidden clues, which reveal that the protagonist is homeless, being confronted with the abyss of academic life – peeping through windows and slightly left open doors, underlying that what she comes to see is socially intolerable. Historical recordings pop up like flashlights, provoking the confluence of the present and past history.

Overall, the film portrays a fragmented and fast-moving academic world, which only touches a variety of issues so that the viewers are forced to use their imagination to think the storyline to an end. Spondeo does not answer any questions, rather coming up with a punch of question marks which should initiate a discussion in words afterwards.

**Keywords:** unspoken hidden social conventions, taboos in academia, interdisciplinary film project

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