



“Intersectionality: Theories, Policies, Practices”

February 14-17, 2019, Grainau, Germany

40th Annual Conference of the Association for Canadian Studies
in German-Speaking Countries (GKS)

The Association for Canadian Studies in German-Speaking Countries is a multidisciplinary academic association which aims to increase and disseminate a scholarly understanding of Canada. For our 2019 annual conference, we invite papers from any discipline that speak to the conference theme of “Intersectionality: Theories, Policies, Practices” with a Canadian or comparative focus. (Papers can be presented in English, French or German.) We are particularly – but not exclusively – interested in the following four main aspects:

- 1) Beyond Race, Class, and Gender: Historical, Sociological, Geographical, and Political Dimensions of Intersectionality**
- 2) Space and the Politics of Place: Location, Environment, Cross-Border Dynamics**
- 3) Intersectionality and Education**
- 4) Intersectional Approaches: Discourses, Representations, Texts.**

Intersectionality, “both an analytical framework and a complex of social practices” (Hancock 2016: 7), has its roots in U.S. Black feminism, where, since the late 1980s, it has been used to address issues of inequality such as disparate access to social resources. While applicable to both individuals and groups, intersectionality focuses on interlocking categories of difference and their impact on a plethora of decision-making processes. Apart from race, gender, and class, the following mutually constitutive categories have been proposed: ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, bodily ability, religion, education, culture, nationality/citizenship status, language use as well as geographical and environmental location. Next to the relationship between categories, internal differences within categories have been considered, with scholars trying to assess power relations, for instance in terms of voice and agency, and thus identifying advantaged and disadvantaged social positions. Over the years, intersectionality has not only developed into a key concept of women’s and gender studies, but left its mark in many other disciplines, among them history, political science, geography, sociology, psychology, philosophy, cultural studies, and postcolonial studies.

In Canada, the experience of discrimination shaped by multiple identities has been recorded in volumes such as Maria Campbell’s *Halfbreed* (1973), Makeda Silvera’s *Silenced* (1983), Monique Proulx’s *Le sexe des étoiles* (1987), Dionne Brand’s *No Burden to Carry* (1990), or Orville Lloyd Douglas’s *Under My Skin* (2014). During the time span covered by these publications, Canada witnessed an increasing institutionalization of intersectionality. Scholarly analyses of Canadian society through an intersectional lens no doubt contributed to this development. Thus Olena Hankivsky and Renée Cormier pointed to health inequities which, for instance, deny Aboriginal women in nonurban environments vital health care services (2009: 16) and Rita Dhamoon underlined the importance of intersectionality for Canadian solidarity politics (2009).



Recent trends in intersectionality research include, first, a more balanced view on processes of marginalization and privileging, acknowledging that a particular group or person might be disadvantaged in one social context but advantaged in another, and, second, a more nuanced perspective on visibility, which is no longer seen as an asset in its own right. Depending on the circumstances, invisibility might lead to beneficial societal positions and might thus be an individual's or group's choice. The creative use of multiply-encoded identities at a particular time in a specific social location calls for a more dynamic concept of intersectionality, one that allows including transnational experiences.

Contact and abstract submission:

Paper proposals/**abstracts of max. 500 words** should outline:

- methodology and theoretical approaches chosen
- content/body of research
- which of the four main aspects outlined above the paper speaks to (if any).

In addition, some short biographical information (max. 250 words) should be provided, specifying current institutional affiliation and position as well as research background with regard to the conference topic and/or four main aspects.

Abstracts by established scholars should be submitted no later than **May 31, 2018** to the GKS administration: gks@kanada-studien.de.

Abstracts by emerging scholars should be submitted no later than **May 31, 2018** directly to the Emerging Scholars Forum: nachwuchsforum@gmail.com.