

Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management
Special Issue on Identity Intersectionality – Changing the Conversation

Special Issue Guest Editors and Contact Information:

Stefanie Ruel, Athabasca University (primary contact)

Email: stefanie.ruel@videotron.ca

Liela Jamjoom, Saint Mary's University

Email: Liela.Jamjoom@smu.ca

Mariana Ines Paludi, Saint-Mary's University

Email: mpaludi@gmail.com

Isabella Krysa, Farleigh Dickinson University, Vancouver Campus, Canada

Email: i.krysa@fdu.edu

Marta Calás,

Isenberg School of Management, University of Massachusetts – Amherst, United States

Thematic Focus of Special Issue:

This SI focuses on exploring the need to use identity categories in the study of social inequalities within named and unnamed-intersectionality scholarship. Lutz (2002) defined fourteen identity categories: race or skin color, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class, culture, religion, age, able-bodiedness, migration or sedentariness, national belonging, geographical location, property ownership, and status in terms of tradition and development. These identity categories function as an important assumption within intersectionality scholarship so much so that, in the past decade, identity categories often monopolize the intersectionality agenda (McCall, 2005). The unfortunate outcome is that the researcher may have to reify identities to bring discrimination cases to light. In line with Calás et al.'s (2013) questioning of the viability of identity categories, this special issue invites authors into a conversation centered on the need for such categorizations. Our goal is to provide new insights into the study of difference and inequality via methodologies that embrace a post-positivist tradition.

Recent Debates Surrounding Intersectionality and What Led to this Call for Papers:

When intersectionality was first coined by Crenshaw (1989, 1991), she argued that individuals were subject to multiple marginalizations which could not be accounted for in a rational, additive fashion. Specifically, Crenshaw's research suggested that marginalizations must be understood as greater than the sum of its mutually exclusive parts (Choo & Ferree, 2010; Crenshaw, 1989; Hancock, 2007). Numerous convergent and divergent paths led to interesting interdisciplinary intersectional studies in areas beyond Crenshaw's legislative contexts. These include nursing (Van Herk, Smith, & Andrew, 2011), education (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Naples, 2009), LGBT (Bowleg, 2008; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 2015), feminism (Acker, 1990; Davis, 2008), and postcolonial studies (Calás et al., 2013). As a result of the ever expanding application of intersectionality, this scholarship is now defined as encompassing various complex and shifting interactions of identity formations where multiple identities can co-exist thus revealing social order concerns (Davis, 2008; Zack, 2005).

The emancipatory potential of intersectionality lies, as others have argued (e.g. Carrim & Nkomo, 2016; Ruel, Mills, & Thomas, 2018), in the realization of the continuous process of *forming* that creates and recreates identities and not in the identity categories themselves. Recent debates focused on the problematization of identity categories emanate from Lykke's (2014) passionate disidentification efforts, with Bhabha's (1994, 2000) notion of hybridity, and with Anzaldúa's (2007) notion of new *mestiza* (hybrid between indigenous and Spanish). We took up these debates among ourselves, the special editors of this SI, agreeing that a study of and reification of identity categories simplifies the complexity of an individual and of their respective experience of marginalization. We also noted that we would like to hear from others on this issue of problematization of these prescribed categories in a variety of contexts. While some intersectional scholars wish for "a robust concept of intersectionality" (Rodriguez, Holvino, Fletcher, & Nkomo, 2016, p. 202), this SI seeks submissions that add to the conversation and debates surrounding identity categories and their use thus moving us away from 'robustness' to 'richness' of *forming*.

Invitation to Authors to Join the Conversation:

In this SI, we are looking for a range of papers that address and problematize the presentation and use of identity categories within named and unnamed-intersectionality scholarship. These submissions should embrace a broadly critical stance, and can discuss either subjective and/or context-specific areas. We are looking specifically for empirical papers that explore non-traditional methodological ways of conducting intersectionality-based research, while meeting our goal of problematizing the use of identity categories.

We invite papers that explore, but are not limited to, the following questions:

- How can we eliminate narrative boundaries imposed via identity categories? What narrative vehicles are available to us, as empirical researchers?
- How can cultural identities be brought to the forefront without perpetuating division?
- Does this identity categorization practice allow protagonists an avenue to reveal their own cultural characterizations and their own acts of becoming?
- What other constructions/processes/methodological approaches allow intersectionality to move beyond boundary conditions of identity categories?
- Can we escape the discursiveness of the categorization of identities and the accompanying socio-political and economic marginalization(s)? If so, through what processes?
- Stories of doubt and regret when attempting to apply intersectionality scholarship within an empirical study, and being restricted by discourses of categorization.
- Stories of research success that moved beyond the boundary condition of identity categories.
- How can we rewrite historical identity categorizations?
- What does *mestizaje*, hybridity, and ambiguity look like within intersectional research?
- And what of 'immigrant' or 'expat' identity categories? Can they be recast into a new narrative?

The submission should be no more than 10,000 words. This word limit includes tables and figures, and excludes the title page and references. All submissions should conform to the submission guidelines for Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management:

http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/products/journals/author_guidelines.htm?id=qrom

Anticipated Schedule:

The deadline for submission is **March 30, 2018**. Papers invited to be revised and resubmitted will require that authors work within a tight timeframe for revisions. For further information, please contact the primary guest editor of this SI, Stefanie Ruel at: Stefanie.ruel@videotron.ca

References

- Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender and Society*, 4(2), 139–158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124390004002002>
- Anzaldúa, G. (2007). *Borderlands/La Frontera: The new mestiza* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Bhabha, H. K. (2000). How newness enters the world: Postmodern space, postcolonial times and the trials of cultural translation. In J. Procter (Ed.), *Writing Black Britain 1948-1998: An Interdisciplinary Anthology* (pp. 300–307). Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Bowleg, L. (2008). When Black + Lesbian + Woman [not equal to] Black Lesbian Woman: The methodological challenges of qualitative and quantitative intersectionality research. *Sex Roles*, 59(5–6), 312–325.
- Calás, M., Ou, H., & Smircich, L. (2013). “Woman” on the move: Mobile subjectivities after intersectionality. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 32(8), 708–731.
- Carrim, N. M. H., & Nkomo, S. M. (2016). Wedding intersectionality theory and identity work in organizations: South African Indian Women negotiating managerial identity. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 23(3), 261–277. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12121>
- Choo, H. Y., & Ferree, M. M. (2010). Practicing intersectionality in sociological research: A critical analysis of inclusions, interactions and institutions in the study of inequalities. *Sociological Theory*, 28(2), 129–149.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989, 139–167.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43, 1241–1299.
- Davis, K. (2008). Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful. *Feminist Theory*, 9(1), 67–85.
- Hancock, A.-M. (2007). When multiplication doesn’t equal quick addition: Examining intersectionality as a research paradigm. *Perspectives on Politics*, null(01), 63–79. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592707070065>
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is critical race theory and what’s it doing in a nice field like education? *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11(1), 7–24.
- Lutz, H. (2002). Zonder blikken of blozen: Het standpunt van de (nieuw-) realisten. *Tijdschrift Voor Genderstudies*, 5(3), 7–17.
- Lykke, N. (2014). Chapter Two: Passionate disidentifications as an intersectional writing strategy. In N. Lykke (Ed.), *Writing Academic Texts Differently: Intersectional Feminist Methodologies and the Playful Art of Writing* (pp. 30–46). New York, NY: Routledge.
- McCall, L. (2005). The complexity of intersectionality. *Signs*, 30(3), 1771–1800.

- Moraga, C., & Anzaldúa, G. (2015). *This bridge called my back: Writings by radical women of color* (4th ed.). SUNY Press.
- Naples, N. A. (2009). Teaching intersectionality intersectionally. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 11(4), 566–577.
- Rodriguez, J. K., Holvino, E., Fletcher, J. K., & Nkomo, S. M. (2016). The theory and praxis of intersectionality in work and organisations: Where do we go from here? *Gender, Work & Organization*, 23(3), 201–222. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12131>
- Ruel, S., Mills, A. J., & Thomas, J. L. (2018). Intersectionality at work: The case of Ruth Bates Harris and NASA. *Ephemera*.
- Van Herk, K. A., Smith, D., & Andrew, C. (2011). Examining our privileges and oppressions: Incorporating an intersectionality paradigm into nursing. *Nursing Inquiry*, 18(1), 29–39.
- Zack, N. (2005). *Inclusive feminism: A third wave theory of women's commonality*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.