

GSAH | Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies
in collaboration with the Graduate School Gender Studies, Bern

Intersectionality – Reading Group

Moderated by Olivia Biber & Sabine von Rütte (UniBe)

19 & 26 April 2023, 2.15pm–6.00pm



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Date/time

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Room

Mittelstrasse 43, room 216

Language

English, participation for German-speakers is possible although participants should note that the reading is also in English

2 ECTS

Pflicht- oder Wahlpflichtbereich ICS / Wahlpflichtbereich GS, SLS, SINTA

Registration:

via KSL und E-Mail to mike.toggweiler@unibe.ch

When Black feminist legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw first coined the term intersectionality in 1989, she offered a framework for exploring the dynamics of oppression of marginalized communities and people that had a lasting impact way beyond the field of legal studies. With the *Denkfigur* of the traffic intersection, Crenshaw provided an apt metaphor to make visible the ways systems of inequality based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, class and other forms of discrimination result in unique, dynamic, mutually reinforcing layers of discrimination for individuals. Some thirty years later, intersectionality has become an oft-used buzzword, and an intersectional lens has arguably become indispensable for the work of the critical researcher. But what does intersectionality mean and how has the concept evolved over time? How can we actually put an intersectional approach into practice in our own research? These and more questions will be the subject of our reading group on ‘intersectionality’. The aim of this two-day course is to read and discuss key texts on the notion of intersectionality, to explore the concept in practice, and to reflect on the usefulness and applicability of the concept for our own dissertation projects.

Moderators:

Olivia Biber is a PhD candidate and assistant at the Department of English at the University of Bern. In her PhD project, she investigates gender as an economic construct in Victorian novels, paying particular attention to how novelists of the period problematize seemingly neat distinctions between the domestic, the economic, and the material. Her research interests include Victorian literature and culture, gender studies, economic humanities and queer studies.

Sabine von Rütte is a PhD candidate and assistant at the English Department at the University of Bern where she works on a dissertation about contemporary maternal life writing. Her research interests include maternal narratives, life writing, feminist literary theory, gender studies, African American literature, and cultural studies.

Program:

Day 1: Introduction and discussion of key texts

Text:

Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *The University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989. 139-167.

Other texts tba

Day 2: Discussion and reflection on intersectionality in practice and in our own research

Texts:

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*. Spiegel & Grau, 2015.

Soriano, Jen. "Multiplicity from the Margins: The Expansive Truth of Intersectional Form." *Assay: A Journal of Nonfiction Studies*, 5.1, Fall 2018.

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