

Call for Papers: Special Issue on Positionality and Minority Literatures

Contributions are sought for a special issue of *AmLit* titled “Potentials of Positionality and/or Ethics of Exclusion?: Critical Reading Approaches to Minority Literatures from the Americas”.

Since the Civil Rights movements in the U.S. on behalf of BIPOC, women, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and people with disabilities, research in literatures by members of these minorities is thriving. On the one hand, researchers from within marginalized communities within academia but also allies have contributed unique insights by reflecting their both scholarly and personal positionalities. For example, Hartmut Lutz, Florentine Strzelczyk, and Renae Watchman (Navajo) begin their volume *Indianthusiasm: Indigenous Responses* (2020) “[b]y locating ourselves within kinship, our family relationships, our backgrounds [...]” in order to “[...] reveal our intent as researchers, our relationship to the project, and our responsibility as researchers who seek to work with Indigenous researchers” (7; comment added). Without such self-reflexivity, researchers from outside the communities of the authors they study face ethical challenges regarding the theories they apply. In addition, the outcomes of research may not reflect the intentions of the researchers due to limited approaches, as Eve Tuck (Unangax) and K. Wayne Yang state that “[...] the academy as an apparatus of settler colonial knowledge already domesticates, denies, and dominates other forms of knowledge” (235). The latter issue should especially concern literary scholars from Europe who belong to the mainstream of their societies but whose work participates in global discourses on inequalities resulting from Eurocentric colonialism. Yet, writing about their institutional contexts in Canada, Watchman, Carrie Smith, and Markus Stock advocate that, for example, “[...] Indigenous and German Studies can be bridged (and relations built) by reflecting critically on their mutual influences and definitions of each other” (318). Building such connections could appeal to scholars worldwide whose engagement with minority cultures invites comparisons to their own contexts while being grounded in identity politics. For example, as a Pakistani-American, Asad Haider writes about how the autobiography of the founder of the Black Panther Party, Huey P. Newton “[...] set for me a model of the life of the mind that was far more convincing than the bohemian hedonism of Henry Miller or the self-serving social climbing expected of members of a ‘model minority’” (“Introduction”). With an interest in such transcultural approaches, this journal issue aims to center concepts of universality and particularity insofar as they are reflected by minority

literatures and as they can inform critical readings. This special issue follows a broad definition of “literature” to include figurative narratives with aesthetics referencing their genres and modes of production. The focus aims to supplement decolonial concerns by allowing contributors to trace overlaps between contexts.

Possible submissions may include (but are not limited to):

- Essays on minority literatures between scholarship and activism
- Essays reflecting on fictionality as performances to address (non-) minority readers
- Essays discussing non-fictional texts that foster personal identification with minority issues
- Essays juxtaposing graphic elements in literary texts with extra-textual stereotypes of minorities
- Book reviews of literary studies approaches in terms of their attention (or lack thereof) to minority positionalities

Please send your proposals for contributions to positionalityspecialissue@gmail.com by March 30th, 2023. Proposals must include contact information, an abstract of 250-300 words, a bio note of 200 words, and 5-7 keywords. Notifications of acceptance or rejection will be sent out by the end of April 2023. If accepted, please submit your original contribution of 5000-10000 words, including notes and bibliography by September 30th, 2023. With regard to formatting and MLA citation style, please consult the following links: <https://amlit.eu/index.php/amlit/about/submissions> and https://amlit.eu/public/journals/1/_A_Instructions_for_Contributors_Update_June_2022.pdf.

Contact e-mail: positionalityspecialissue@gmail.com

Works Cited

- Haider, Asad. *Mistaken Identity: Race and Class in the Age of Trump*. London/Brooklyn: Verso, 2018. (E-Book)
- Lutz, Hartmut/Florentine Strzelczyk/Renae Watchman. "Introduction." *Indianthusiasm: Indigenous Responses*. Eds. Hartmut Lutz/Florentine Strzelczyk/Renae Watchman. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2020. 3-32.
- Tuck, Eve/K. Wayne Yang. "R-Words: Refusing Research." *Humanizing Research: Decolonizing Qualitative Inquiry with Youth and Communities*. Eds. Django Paris/Maisha T. Winn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014. 223-247.
- Watchman, Renae/Carrie Smith/Markus Stock. "Building Transdisciplinary Relationships: Indigenous and German Studies." *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies* 55.4 (2019): 309-327.