

CfP Workshop and Book Publication Project

## **Narrating, Representing, Reflecting 'Disability': 21<sup>st</sup> Century 'American' Perspectives**

Organizers Wilfried Raussert and Sarah-Lena Essifi

Center for InterAmerican Studies & Faculty for Linguistics and Literary Studies / Bielefeld University,  
June 30-July 1, 2023

This workshop intends to shed new light on the cultural significance of disability. Fostering a dialog between American Studies, InterAmerican Studies, American Medical Humanities, and Critical Disability Studies, the project conceptualizes disability and (mental) illnesses as a cultural narrative enabling a deeper social critique. By looking at contemporary cultural productions primarily from the USA, Canada, and the Caribbean analyzed as contact zones, the proposed projects' objective is to explore the deep structures underlying the literary and cultural discourses on disability including parameters such as illnesses, racism, and sexism among others. Disability is thus read as a shifting phenomenon rooted in the cultures and histories of the Americas. Within their power hierarchies and interdependencies, the project seeks to answer questions like the following: How do literary texts and other cultural productions from the Americas in the 21<sup>st</sup> century conceptualize, construct and represent disability as a cultural narrative? How do these lived experiences imagine and render coloniality and neocolonial tendencies as symptoms of disability, illness, discrimination and exclusion? How do literary texts, life writing, and other narratives function as disability narratives on a discursive and aesthetic level in the cultural contact zone(s)? How do disability narratives shape the social discourses of change and resistance?

We welcome proposals from emerging and established academics, creative writers, graduate students, independent scholars and artists, and activists who address the connection of disability, cultural and literary narratives, and the social in the Americas. Please submit proposal of 250-300 words and a short bio latest by **December 15, 2022** to [alexandra.kenter@uni-bielefeld.de](mailto:alexandra.kenter@uni-bielefeld.de). Participants will be notified of our decision by January 31, 2023.

Our workshop will take place **June 30-July 1, 2023** at CIAS/Bielefeld University. Participants will be expected to submit a complete first draft of their articles by June 1 which will be distributed prior to our meeting to all participants. The workshop will include 10-minute presentations and intense 30-minute discussions of each paper. We expect participants to submit their presentations as revised articles for the book project latest by **September 15, 2023**.

For further inquiries, please contact the organizers Wilfried Raussert ([wilfried.raussert@uni-bielefeld.de](mailto:wilfried.raussert@uni-bielefeld.de)) and Sarah-Lena Essifi ([sarah-lena.essifi@uni-bielefeld.de](mailto:sarah-lena.essifi@uni-bielefeld.de)).