Call for papers for an *ephemera* special issue on:

Intersectionality research in organization studies: Possibilities and limitations

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The concept of intersectionality has for a number of years been applied to address the complexity and interconnectedness of identities and divisions within and between groups in contemporary society (Anthias, 1998; Crenshaw, 1991; Davis, 2008). Studies based on intersectionality theory explore the impact of social divisions, identifications and power relations on the structure of peoples' lives, particularly those considered to be marginalized (Yuval-Davis, 2006). In a nutshell, intersectionality draws attention to how the social positioning of individuals is a result of multiple overlapping processes and flows of power.

Intersectional approaches assume that an analysis of social groups based on attending to one category at a time, for example gender or race, is insufficient for developing a nuanced understanding of the mundane experience of disempowerment, marginalization and stereotyping. Importantly, individuals do not experience belonging to multiple categories of identity in a cumulative manner that can be explained away by simply listing the effects produced by each of the categories. Rather, the lived experience of multiple intersecting identification processes is seen as qualitatively different and therefore demands to be understood in its specificity (Hancock, 2007; McCall, 2005; Simien, 2007; Stewart and McDermott 2004; West and Fenstermaker, 1995). Also, the theorization of intersections of multiple inequalities is a central issue with wider applications for understanding cosmopolitanism, hybridity, multiculturalism, globalization (Yuval-Davis, 2011; Walby et al., 2012) and, in our case, organizations.

Scholarship on intersectionality is an important development for organizational gender studies (Harding, Ford and Fotaki, 2013). Over the past years, intersectionality-based approaches have become increasingly popular among organization studies researchers – to the point where intersectionality is considered to be a burgeoning 'research paradigm' (Hancock, 2007; Winker and Degele, 2011). For some, intersectionality promises to yield new insights into organizational inequalities and power relations, both theoretical and empirical (Acker, 2006, 2012; Benschop and Doorewaard, 2012; Boogaard and Roggeband, 2010; Holvino, 2010; Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012; Zanoni et al., 2010). Organizational scholars have explored how broad identity formations around, for example, gender, race, nation, class, sexuality and age, become co-articulated. This coincides with people 'crafting selves' amid the resources and demands of particular work settings (e.g. Adib and Guerrier, 2003; Ashcraft and Flores, 2003; Kondo, 1990). In this way, the concept of intersectionality refers to the ways in which a person's process of workplace identification can link to, overlap with and operate through the other possible identifications available in a given context.

A particularly attractive aspect of analyses informed by intersectionality is that in addition to offering a way of critiquing the mechanisms and effects of power, they provide a lens for conceiving the possibilities of transformation (Dhamoon, 2011), and for exploring how individuals do context-bound identity work beyond assumed systemic inequalities (Kelan, 2014).

Moreover, intersectionality fits well with current conceptions of identities as diverse, multiple and processual within organization studies (Alvesson et al., 2008; Thomas and Davis, 2005). Intersectionality, then, can usefully be framed as representing three loosely defined sets of engagements: applications of an intersectional framework; debates about the scope and content of intersectionality as a theoretical and methodological paradigm; and political interventions employing an intersectional lens (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall, 2013). Against this background, this Special Issue of *ephemera* intends to provide a forum for discussing the theoretical, empirical and political 'openings' enabled by intersectionality. Thus, the Special Issue invites contributions to intersectionality in organization studies, with a particular emphasis on:

·**Translation to organization studies and theorization**. Originally, the concept of intersectionality was introduced in a very specific context: to contest the assumed 'colour-blindness, neutrality and objectivity' of the criminal justice system in the US (Nash, 2008: 1; also Crenshaw, 1989). What are the implications of these very specific origins for 'importing' the concept of intersectionality into studies of organizations? How can intersectionality be theorized beyond its focus on oppressed or dominated social groups? How to think about intersectionality when power and domination intersect or when intersectionalities evolve through time?

·**Methodology.** There is no unified approach to studying intersectionality empirically. If, as organizational scholars, we decide to embrace intersectionality-based approaches, how should we go about it? Which methodologies are particularly suited to the exploration of intersectionality? Which methodologies are most popular at present and are these approaches appropriate? Are findings comparable?

·**Consequences and implications.** What ethical and political questions emerge in the context of conducting intersectionality research in organizations? Initially, the idea behind intersectionality was to provide oppressed and marginalised groups with an emancipatory voice (Crenshaw, 1989). As organizational scholars, are we contributing to the emancipation of disadvantaged groups by adopting an intersectionality perspective? Is there a danger that minority groups will become even more disadvantaged, or perhaps intimidated, by the potentially totalising, disempowering discourse of intersectionality? How is, or how can intersectionality be integrated in 'mainstream' diversity management policies in organizations?

Deadline for submissions: September 30, 2015

All contributions should be submitted to Sara Louise Muhr (slm.ioa@cbs.dk) and/or Martyna Śliwa (masliwa@essex.ac.uk). Please note that three categories of contributions are invited for the special issue: articles, notes, and reviews. Information about these different types of contributions can be found at: www.ephemeraweb.org/journal/call.htm. Contributions will undergo a double blind review process. All submissions should follow *ephemera*'s submissions guidelines, available at: www.ephemeraweb.org/journal/submit.htm.

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