



CfP: Call for blog posts

## **Pandemic // Corona and intersectional inequality in society and academia**

Based on our appeal [„Die Notwendigkeit einer feministischen Analyse der Corona-Krise. Ausgangspunkte für eine demokratische, solidarische und intersektionale Gesellschaftsvision“](#) the [Politics and Gender Section](#) of the German Association of Political Sciences (DVPW) is launching a theme week on the corona crisis from **the 5th to the 9th October 2020** in the blog [interdisziplinäre geschlechterforschung](#).

The corona crisis and the ensuing economic crisis have exacerbated existing social inequalities: These disparities encompass undignified working conditions in which (undocumented) migrants work, the feminisation of poverty, low-wage sectors (especially in the caring professions), the co-existing separated worlds of poor and rich neighbourhoods in metropolitan cities as well as systemic racism. These and other phenomena have already shaped social “normalcy” prior to the pandemic. Their causes can be found in multiple reinforcing relations of power and domination at different levels. As a result, the months-long lockdown that brought social life to a standstill does not affect everyone equally.

Thus far, in tackling the crisis, the strategies of governments and civil society actors have revealed gendered social and economic inequalities through a burning lens along their intersectional entanglements, i.e. intermingled in different dimensions of gender, ethnicity/migration, class and sexuality. These entanglements (re)produce and enhance different forms of vulnerability, dependence and disparity.

In contrast, the dominant masculine and white perspectives continue to take the upper hand in interpreting and managing the crisis therefore systematically neglecting the intersectional dimensions of inequalities mentioned above. Against the backdrop of such an unprecedented crisis, we see the necessity to obtain a plurality of scientific analyses and reflections including the rich empirical knowledge of social movements and civil society’s commitments, whose purposes are to explore (innovative) democratic and solidarity-based ways while tackling the crisis, and to restore social coherence. We ask: To what extent and how have the voices of women and other disadvantaged groups been systematically ignored and suppressed in the process of knowledge production? What could innovative science offer to promote gender equality in society, among other things? In politics, media and science, the plurality of expert opinions that contribute to (re)inventing a democratic and solidary society beyond the corona pandemic must be heard. With these goals in mind, the Politics and Gender Section of the German Political Science Association (DVPW) invites contributions to the blog [interdisziplinäre geschlechterforschung](#).

Reflections and analyses concerning the following themes are welcome.

### **1. The Gendered Face of the Corona Crisis**

Women are particularly affected by the corona pandemic and the ensuing political measures. This is discussed (among other things) with the concept of re-traditionalisation of heteronormative gender relations. As a result, successes in gender equity policy, that have been achieved at local, national as



well as global levels, witness serious setbacks and the emergence of new inequalities. Possible aspects of this topic include the examination of the feminisation and migrantisation of system-relevant, underpaid, precarious forms of wage labour (e.g. caring professions, cashiers, cleaning professions) and the continuing gender pay gap for jobs of equal value. Furthermore, the continuing unequal distribution of unpaid care work, the increase in domestic and sexualised violence, the worldwide restrictions of sexual and reproductive rights (e.g. medical (maternity) care, safe abortion, self-determination concerning reproduction issues) as well as the inadequate medical care and food insecurity especially in countries of the Global South, can be reflected in a gender-critical and intersectional way.

## **2. The Gendered Face of the Crisis Diagnoses**

Comprehensive discussions of the gendered and intersectionally intertwined consequences of the pandemic hardly exist. The dominant perspectives in the media as well as in the advisory bodies of the federal and local governments fall short of considering marginalised voices in terms of gender, sexual, ethnic and age categories. For instance, the publication activity of women scientists has significantly declined since the beginning of the pandemic, which points to an unequal burden of employment and care work at home and the precarious professional situation of many women scientists. Furthermore, the crisis is exacerbating global inequalities in science and restricting research opportunities. Through the assertion of a universal expertise and epistemic authority, hegemonic world views and forms of knowledge inscribe themselves in the management of the crisis in an exceptional situation for society as a whole. Contributions to this topic can refer to the following questions: Who publishes for what purpose? And what level of quality do these publications perform? Who has a say in the media on which topics and questions? These questions also include the consequences of the domination of the male, white expertocracy/technocracy and the influence of this privileged position upon the results and proposals for overcoming the corona crisis. This dominance could be contrasted with portraits of female experts and leadership during the corona crisis as well.

## **3. Critical Agenda of Social Sciences**

Following the virologists, social scientists are also increasingly taking the floor. In doing so, they refer to topics that were already systematically investigated long before the corona pandemic. They can be found in black, feminist, queer, postcolonial/de-colonialising debates, and disability studies (e.g. body, vulnerabilities, everyday life, care, solidarity, legal and moral normalcies of a society). Intersectionally contextualized feminist practices and knowledge production offer innovative answers for a democratic, fair and transparent crisis management. However, the social sciences' turn to address genuinely feminist issues in the context of the corona crisis continues to pay insufficient attention to these approaches, thereby helping to perpetuate their marginalization. This leads not least to narrowed analyses as well as the resulting recommendations. If contemporary diagnoses in social sciences are to provide convincing proposals that can pave democratic ways to get out of the crisis, it is essential to systematically take gender-sensitive intersectional knowledge into account. Possible aspects of contributions relating to the marginalization of gender studies and critical feminist social sciences might address the following questions: Is there a shift in research funding towards medical and pharmaceutical corona research? Is the corona crisis strengthening the structures of right-wing



extremists? To what extent has the prevailing agenda of social sciences influenced the spread of the anti-feminist discourse?

#### 4. Critical Drafts for Feminist Futures

For critical feminists, a sustainable solution to the current crisis cannot dwell on a return to 'normalcy' as quickly as possible, which has been characterized by intersectional inequalities, discrimination, violence and a destructive approach to bodies, vulnerabilities and ecology. In the midst of such a crisis, visions for a democratic society characterised by solidarity, in which efforts are made to abolish unequal gender relations and other forms of social inequality, are more necessary than ever. This turns out to be urgent and compellingly important, particularly against the background of strengthening authoritarian and right-wing forces, disseminators of conspiracy myths, as well as social insecurity as a result of ongoing digitalization. Reflections on the systematic consideration of intertwined inequalities and, in general, feminist and other socially critical perspectives are suitable as a starting point for providing impulses to address the crisis. How, for example, can the adoption of interdisciplinary approaches to scientific diagnoses be made fruitful, especially in the areas of water, nutrition, climate and land(-robbery), but also in economic development?

Contributions to the debate are welcome **up to a maximum of 9,000 characters** that problematise corona-induced inequalities and their causes, critically examine the above-mentioned (and other) aspects, draw attention to and/or review marginalized positions, raise new (science) policy questions or position themselves in ongoing discussions. Please note the style manual of the blog interdisciplinary gender studies and send your contribution in a Word file to **redaktion@gender-blog.de** by **6 September 2020**. Accepted contributions will be published on the blog *interdisziplinäre geschlechterforschung* as part of a Corona theme week. If you have any questions regarding the content, please contact Dr. Dorothee Beck ([info@dorothee-beck.de](mailto:info@dorothee-beck.de)) and Dr. Miao-ling Hasenkamp ([lin@ihrr.net](mailto:lin@ihrr.net)).