



NACHWUCHSFORUM

der Gesellschaft für Kanada-Studien e.V.

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Call for Papers

**16th Annual Conference of the Emerging Scholars' Forum of the
Association for Canadian Studies in German-speaking Countries:**

INTERSECTIONS OF GENDER AND MYTH IN CANADIAN CULTURE AND MEDIA

University of Kassel | 27 – 29 June 2019

“Because it’s 2015.” Since at least Justin Trudeau’s swearing-in as Prime Minister, when his succinct explanation of his new gender balanced cabinet drew international attention, gender sensitivity has intensified, and gender equality is increasingly foregrounded in Canadian culture and media. Laws protecting the LGBTQ+ community from discrimination have been issued, a third gender option has been introduced, and since 2018, even the national anthem aims at gender-neutrally inspiring patriotism in all Canadians. Today, Canada is perceived as a forerunner in raising societal awareness of gender issues – a vanguard position that brings about both support and criticism. While Canada’s gender parity laws are adopted by other countries, Trudeau’s 2018 suggestion to speak of “peoplekind” rather than “mankind” to be more inclusive has caused approval as much as bemusement. These gender debates are mirrored in Canadian media and art. Many current television shows and series refer to LGBTQ+ issues or reflect on the implication of gender norms in power structures. More and more women writers establish themselves on the Canadian and international book markets and give rise to the “gender novel” as recent reviews claim.

As the reception of Canadian culture and media as avant-gardist concerning gender sensitivity and representation builds up, and as visibility of the LGBTQ+ community increases, it is time to analyse this contemporary development and its historical, political and sociological roots. Some of these roots go as far back as to the Canadian First Nations and are embedded in myth. Comprising sacred lore, foundational narratives, and fairy tales, myths express fundamental principles and perpetuate the norms and values of a society. They thus function as guidelines for peoples’ lives and influence cultural understanding till today.

The 16th annual conference of the Emerging Scholars’ Forum wants to pursue the proposition of gender and myth being intricately connected within Canadian culture and media and to examine those intersections of gender and myth in closer detail and from multiple angles. Encompassing such diverse disciplines as history, political science, sociology, literary and new media studies, mythological studies and Indigenous histories, this conference aims to encourage academic discourse on gender, myth, and their interdependencies, ranging from the realm of the contemporary

entertainment industry to the historical field of fairy tale studies, and touching upon the specifications of the Canadian nation.

The following questions could serve as starting points for a constructive discussion: How can gender and myth be understood within various contexts of Canadian studies and how are they portrayed in factual as well as fictional texts? How are gender and myth intertwined: can gender be regarded as myth in a so-called post-feminist era and can myth be seen as gendered in Canadian cultural features and medial representations? What are the specifics of those intersections of gender and myth in Canadian culture and what distinguishes the Canadian perspective from other approaches to gender-myth intersections?

The conference will take place from 27 to 29 June 2019 at the University of Kassel. It is intended as an open forum for emerging scholars in the interdisciplinary field of Canadian studies to present their ongoing research and exchange ideas with colleagues and fellow Canada-enthusiasts. We therefore invite advanced B.A. and M.A. students, doctoral students, and post-docs of all research fields connected to Canadian studies to submit papers in English or French that are related to a wide spectrum of categories such as:

- cultural studies
- feminist and gender studies
- mythological and fairy tale studies
- meanings of gender and myth in various Canadian contexts
- Canada's historical, political, and sociological takes on gender and myth
- Canada's present discourses, norms, and practices concerning gender and myth
- gender equality and equity
- queer activism and LGBTQ+ communities
- intersectionality
- interrelations between gender and myth: myths of gender and gendered myths
- representations of gender and myth in Canadian media and art: advertisement, literature, painting, movies, television and others
- comparisons of Canadian representations of gender and myth with other countries' representations
- mainstream vs. counter-narratives
- factuality vs. fictionality
- other critical topics of your research field which you believe have been neglected

Please send a 500-word abstract outlining the direction and objective of your paper and a 200-word biographical note to nachwuchsforum@gmail.com by 4 November 2018. We are looking forward to your contributions and are excited to welcome you in Kassel in 2019!