

T13P01 / Intersectionality and Public Policies: Potentials and Pitfalls

Topic : T13 / Gender, Diversity and Public Policy

Chair : Marieme N'Diaye (CNRS/ISP Cachan)

Second Chair : Mireille Paquet (Concordia University)

Third Chair : Nora Nagels (Université du Québec à Montréal)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

In dialogue with intersectional approaches in academic and policy circles, this panel explores the role of public policies in the productions, reproduction or, conversely, the subversion of power relations. The constitutive interactions between gender and other social relations have been studied through several approaches. In the late 1970s, French materialist feminists have proposed an analysis of the relationship between gender and class, designed as coextensive and consubstantial (Kergoat 1978). In dialogue with others, Crenshaw (1989) has developed the concept of intersectionality to account for the interaction of "race" and gender in the generation of the multiple discriminations faced by black women in the US courts. Whether they use or criticize the concept of intersectionality, past and current analyses of these questions have expanded research agendas beyond the "gender / race / class" triptych to integrate other social relations such as age, religion or even ethnicity in the study of inequality and politics (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). This panel maintains an open posture toward these debates and considers intersectionality in a multidimensional and dynamic perspective that "intersects facts and representations" and "considers the emancipatory potential of the interleaving power relations, rather than considering them systematically as domination levers" (Navarre, 2015, our translation).

There are reasons to believe that intersectionality provides a fecund lens for the studies of state actions. Indeed, public policies often have a universalizing character, making them blind to some social relations of domination. The identification and labelling of target populations such as "users", "patients" or "migrants" is a classical example of the erasure of diversity central to policies. Whatever the sector and even if they are aimed at fighting inequalities (Jacquot, Mazur, 2014), policies have differentiated impacts and outcomes according to the targeted group but these are not necessarily taken into account, beyond gender and disability. In this case, the promise of intersectional approaches is to demonstrate the role of these policies in defining and reifying power relations. At the same time, central to this standpoint is the complex rendering of individual and collective agency. Indeed, a crucial assumption of these approaches is at all actors can act strategically within power relations, since they experience simultaneously intersecting axes of privilege and domination. From that standpoint, intersectional approaches can help analysts to break away from overly structuralist and top-down research, by renewing their consideration of the groups interacting with policies. At the same time, critics of these approaches and observers of their implementation in policy design and evaluation warn that intersectionality has the potential to dilute hard-won rights in favour of a multiplication and an individualization of the areas of difference to be considered in public policies. Are these fears empirically verified and are we witnessing such problems in all policy sectors?

The objective of this panel is to generate a dialogue on public policies and power relations, from multiple policy sectors and perspectives. We ask two central questions : 1) what empirical and theoretical innovations can emerge from the study of public policies through intersectional approaches? 2) what are the theoretical, political and social pitfalls associated with the mobilization of this perspective for policy studies?

CALL FOR PAPERS

In dialogue with intersectional approaches in academic and policy circles, this panel explores the role of public policies in the production, reproduction or, conversely, the subversion of power relations. This panel maintains an open posture toward these debates and considers intersectionality in a multidimensional and dynamic perspective that "intersects facts and representations" and "considers the emancipatory potential of the interleaving power relations, rather than considering them systematically as domination levers" (Navarre, 2015, our translation). The objective of this panel is to generate a dialogue on public policies and power relations, from multiple policy sectors and perspectives. There are reasons to believe that intersectionality provides a fecund lens for the studies of state actions. Indeed, public policies often have a universalizing

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In this case, the promise of intersectional approaches is to demonstrate the role of these policies in defining and reifying power relations. At the same time, central to this standpoint is the complex rendering of individual and collective agency. Indeed, these approaches recognize that all actors can act strategically within power relations, since they experience simultaneously intersecting axes of privilege and domination. At the same time, critics of these approaches and observers of their implementation in policy design and evaluation warn that intersectionality has the potential to dilute hard-won rights in favour of a multiplication and an individualization of the areas of difference to be considered in public policies. In light of this, we ask two central questions: 1) what empirical and theoretical innovations can emerge from the study of public policies through intersectional approaches? 2) what are the theoretical, political and social pitfalls associated with the mobilization of this perspective for policy studies? We welcome empirical and theoretical contributions that aim to provide answers to these questions.

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Session 1

Friday, June 30th 08:15 to 10:15 (Block B 4 - 2)

Discussants

Marieme N'Diaye (CNRS/ISP Cachan)

Is intersectionality a false problem in public policy analysis?

Alexandre Jaunait (University of Poitiers & ISP-CNRS (Nanterre))

Transgender rights in India and the US – a comparative critical analysis through the lens of intersectionality

Chitranshu Mathur (Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad)

Mainstreaming Equity via Intersectionality Analysis of Migration Policies: Potentials and Pitfalls

Hankivsky Olena (Simon Fraser University)

Gemma Hunting (Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy, Simon Fraser University)

The intersection of gender and class in the framing of Australian childcare policy problems and their solutions

Kay Cook (RMIT University)

Michelle Brady (University of Queensland)

The possibilities of intersectionality: public policies on ex-combatants' reintegration in Colombia

Priscyll Anctil Avoine (Université du Québec à Montréal)