



## **Conference Programme & CFP**

### **Prejudice and discrimination in childhood – Children’s agency within intersectional power relations**

**University of Applied Sciences Magdeburg-Stendal, 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

Following the conditions of modern Western childhoods, young children are situated primarily in families and in institutions of childcare. Prejudice and discrimination are aspects of those intersectional power relations that structure their institutional environment in democratic-capitalistic societies. The conference focuses on the question how children up to the age of about six years act and assume the ability to act within power relations regarding class, ethnicity, religion, gender, and age.

The conference aims at an intensive exchange between a limited number of active contributors from the fields of childhood studies, critical psychologies and educational studies. In each panel two to three thematically related contributions (20 minutes each) will be followed by 30 to 40 minutes of discussions.

Five consecutive key topics, to be mutually completed by all participants, are planned:

#### **1) ‘Agency’ and ‘action potency’: Approaches to the analysis of children’s action within intersectional power relations by Sociology of Childhood and Critical Psychology**

From their beginnings, Childhood Studies have programmatically looked into the relation of the structure of childhood and children’s actions within this structure. Whereas the theoretical and empirical understanding of childhood is well advanced, the focus on children’s action has remained rather vague. Recently, interest in the elaboration of the concept of *agency* has grown and existing concepts by other approaches – such as *action potency* in Critical Psychology – could be utilized.

For this topic, **contributions** are welcome which elaborate either from a Childhood Studies perspective on the concept of *agency* or from a Critical Psychology perspective on the concept of ability to act in regard to children’s actions in intersectional power relations.

## **2) Sociology of childhood vs. developmental psychology? Being and becoming within intersectional power relations**

One section of Sociology of Childhood is based on a fundamental critique of developmental thinking; another, which is followed here, includes *critical* Developmental Psychologies in Childhood Studies. Following the latter perspective, it is firstly to be fathomed which terms Sociology of Childhood can utilize to examine children as beings as well as becomings without reproducing the generational order. From the perspective of Developmental Psychology it is to be discussed which terms can be utilized to comprehend development in a way that does not normalise children or render them passive, but understands them as active participants of society.

For this topic, **contributions** are welcome which, from a Sociology of Childhood perspective, examine the relation of children's being and becoming with regard to intersectional power relations and elaborate on the development of cognitions, emotions and actions within these power relations as an aspect of children's ability to act in historically determined social circumstances.

## **3) Methodology and methods**

The controversies surrounding epistemic and methodological foundations of the social sciences seems to be put to rest and the debate about 'qualitative' vs. 'quantitative' methods seems to be resigned in favour of a pragmatic combination of both sets of methods. Nevertheless, the institutional dominance of quantitative-statistical methodology remains largely untouched, although 'qualitative' and subject-scientific methods appear (more) appropriate with regard to the essential dimensions of the subject matter *agency/action potence*. Following from this, questions that are answered differently in qualitative and subject-scientific approaches are to be discussed, such as: How does the relation of conceptual knowledge and openness play out in the research process? To what extent do the reconstruction of meaning and of premise-reason-relations differ? To what extent and how can action research be actualised in researching children's ability to act within intersectional power relations?

For this topic, **contributions** are welcome which discuss methodologies, methods and techniques of the understanding tradition (qualitative, subject-scientific, action research) in their significance for researching children's ability to act within intersectional power relations. In doing so, the relation of conceptual knowledge and empirical data, the relation of the reconstruction of meaning and premise-reason-relations and the possibilities of actualising action research should be particularly focused on.

## **4) + 5) Power, prejudice and discrimination in early childhood**

Depending on their affiliations and positions, power relations bear different meanings for children and implicate diverse possibilities for and restrictions of action; they put some children in a subordinate and others in a superior position, they grant or deny potential for action and development. Given this, how do children act, think and feel, and for what reasons? Do they (not) reproduce or internalize prejudice, because (or although) they are 'prevalent'? Do they act in solidarity or at least in renitent ways? Which developmental sequences can be identified in acting, thinking and feeling to this effect?

For this topic, **contributions** are welcome which describe forms of children's *agency* or ability to act and reconstruct their meaning for children in different positions or analyse them as premise-reason-relations. Furthermore, contributions addressing developmental sequences of *agency* or *action potency* in different positions are welcome.

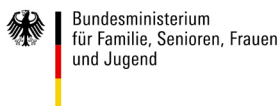
Conference languages are English and German. The conference will be held in Stendal in Saxony-Anhalt, Germany.

The deadline for abstracts of up to 500 words is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. Enquiries can be directed to Ms Romy Schulze.

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The conference is organised by the two institutes of the University of Applied Sciences Magdeburg-Stendal, KinderStärken e.V. and Competence Centre for Early Education, in the context of the action research project “KiWin – With children into the world of diversity. Promoting inclusion, preventing exclusion”. The project is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth through the federal programme “Live Democracy!” as well as by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Integration of Saxony-Anhalt.

Gefördert vom



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