

SOCARE JUNIOR CONFERENCE

WHOSE VOICE?

Power, Knowledge and
Positionality in Caribbean Studies

OCTOBER 20-22, 2022
ONLINE EVENT

CONVENERS:

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CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Whose knowledge is recognized, and what voices are heard within Caribbean studies? This conference focuses on how knowledge is produced, shared, and received, and on what changes are needed to ensure that power is shared, while epistemic differences are included and valued. The aim is to discuss research projects dealing with the Caribbean or its diaspora from a reflexive perspective. The call for critical knowledge production is on the rise once again in various research areas, including: naming policies, literary representation, climate change, and forced migration. Although the “decolonial option” was promoted as early as in the 1990s in the Americas and the Caribbean, in order to liberate knowledge from the colonial matrix of power, it has only found its way into hegemony-oriented scholarship during the last decade. However, it has been observed that researchers and academic institutions enmeshed in coloniality tend to use the label “decolonial” more as a metaphor, while they continue to recognize only certain knowledges and methodologies.

We welcome contributions, related to participants’ research projects, that address questions of power, knowledge, and positionality: Who holds power in Caribbean research? What knowledge is recognized by whom, and how? How do Caribbean studies scholars position themselves? The discussion will reflect critically on significant power inequalities in practice and academia. It will also explore potential forms of decolonial methodologies and consider how more diverse voices and pluralistic approaches can gain more visibility and be valued more.

By inviting participants working on a wide range of research topics, we hope the conference will reveal the challenges that exist and explore how they can be addressed and overcome.

The key questions are as follows: Whose perspectives and interests inform one’s own research topic? How are the voices of the researched individuals excluded or included in political debates and research agendas? If there are inequalities, how are they maintained and how may they be overcome? In what way do decolonization debates intersect with knowledge production and knowledge transfer in the field of research? How do social relations play a role in relation to the research topic? Which social actors delegitimize or erase certain voices?

What challenges do researchers working in the Caribbean or among its diaspora face in making their voices heard? Which channels (e.g., conferences, activism, or publications) do they use and why? How are nonimperial concepts and terminology adopted? How does language affect the production and sharing of knowledge? In what way does the use of English and other colonial languages affect which ideas and perspectives prevail? What role do and should Indigenous languages and sources play in the exchange of knowledge and perspectives?

This junior conference is explicitly addressed to doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers of linguistics and literature, history and the social sciences, arts and cultural studies, and those working beyond or between these fields of knowledge. The broader aim is to facilitate a small, discussion-focused, and collegial conference that explores how power, knowledge, and positionality are negotiated in Caribbean studies research through researchers’ specific projects. On all conference days, there will be keynotes or round table discussions that provide insights into current debates in individual disciplines and topics. After the conference, a publication is planned, open to all interested participants.

If you wish to attend, please submit your proposal by JUNE 15, 2022 to juniorresearch@caribbeanresearch.net. You must include a brief academic biography (max. 100 words) and a full page abstract with reflections on the research project that you would like to present at the conference. Our CFP has been published in English, Spanish, German, and French, but we also welcome submissions in other languages. Regardless of the language of your submission, please send us three to five keywords in English to facilitate program planning. Notification of acceptance will be sent out by the end of June 2022. Follow us on [#WhoseVoice2022](https://twitter.com/WhoseVoice2022)

