

CALL FOR PAPERS  
**Transnational Knowledge**

Deadline for submission of abstracts

**March 1, 2017**

Guest editors Anne Duscha, Kathrin Klein-Zimmer, Matthias Klemm, and Anna Spiegel invite interested authors to submit proposal abstracts for original contributions on the focus topic **“Transnational Knowledge”** of the journal “Transnational Social Review – A Social Work Journal” (TSR) to be published in spring 2018.

**Research Interest**

In transnational arenas of cooperation, the existence of universally true knowledge is systematically contested by a variety of particularistic practices of action and knowing and their claims to be equally legitimate. Internationally mobile managers, human rights activists, development workers, social workers etc. and their respective counterparts working together in cross-border cooperation are therefore faced with the task of finding common languages of understanding, mutually acceptable definitions of situations and frames of action in order to successfully achieve their tasks. Transnational knowledge can be seen as an emerging new mixture of global ideas and regional expertise forged together in the process of negotiation in transnational arenas of cooperation.

A growing body of research on travelling ideas (Czarniawska-Joerges & Sevón 2005), travelling models (Behrends, Park, & Rottenburg 2014) and the negotiation of global concepts in local contexts (Merry 2009, Lachenmann, & Dannecker 2008) has shown that knowledge undergoes various changes when adapted in different regional and institutional settings. Claims to universality have been seriously challenged and so-called global cultural models traced back to Western elements, for example in science, ecology, business and education (see Krücken & Drori 2009). However, while this research emphasizes the diversity and uniqueness of local adaptations of global ideas, in effect it ignores the processes by which transnational knowledge is produced, as well as the structures and sources of approval of such “global” stocks of knowledge. The question remains unanswered of how the processes leading to the approval of transnational knowledge should be conceptualized, identified and assessed with regard to their transcending the local level.

Theory and research on these topics is especially relevant and important in social work, transnational organizations and global movements. In the field of global development,

consultants have been described as “knowledge brokers” and mediators engaged in the translation of travelling concepts. In the field of multinational corporations (MNCs), expatriate managers have been described as “boundary spanners”. Activists in social movements and social work professionals vernacularize, localize and appropriate global concepts such as human or women’s rights. Specifically in the field of social work, research has started to reveal the historical transnational background of global knowledge stocks (for social work see Köngeter & Chambon 2012). Yet, we still know too little about the ways in which professional knowledge is transnationalized, about the epistemic cultures which enable claims to truth to be translated in these arenas and about the actors who generalize their newly found solutions to create a transnationally accepted stock of knowledge.

## Focus

To gain a deeper understanding of the development of transnational knowledge—especially, but not exclusively with respect to social work—it is necessary to ask how transnational knowledge is produced, negotiated and approved in transnational arenas which are at the same time shaped by power and interests. We invite both empirical and theoretical papers which focus on three analytical fields of enquiry:

- First, social *arenas* of transnational encounters: social movements, transnational organizations, international politics, development cooperation, social work or scientific work
- Second, the biographical and professional resources and experience of *actors* who are engaged in the transnational exchange of ideas, concepts or policies
- Third, *frameworks* and systems of professional expertise, epistemic cultures and knowledge emerging from transnational interaction and their claims to truth.

Researchers could discuss one or more of the following questions:

- What translation practices generate transnational knowledge in the different professional and organizational fields?
- How do the inbuilt power relations in the respective professional fields (Global North/Global South, experts/laypeople, professionals/clients) influence the practices and outcomes of knowledge creation?
- What practices and discourses create and contest legitimacy and authority of knowledge in the different fields?
- How is the international dimension of acceptance integrated into reasoning (e.g. scientific research, the claim of human rights) and how is the transnational claim used in proposing new causes of action—e.g. pressing changes with regard to human rights, altering pedagogical practices due to “universal” claims of rationality?
- How are forms of transnationally approved knowledge whose truth claim rests precisely on processes of inter- or transnational bargaining (e.g. new modes of social work) disseminated?

Finally: What theoretical concepts can be used to describe transnationally approved knowledge *in the making*? Possible “candidates” could be “negotiation,” “conflict” and “translation.” How do we have to take the role of power, inequality and subjectivity into consideration when reasoning about transnational knowledge?

### **Submission Requirements and Time-Frame**

Each proposal abstract should contain no more than 500 words and should address the following: background of the proposed article; content outline; and main discussion points.

Deadline for submission of the abstracts: **March 1, 2017**. For those proposals that are accepted, articles may be up to 7,000 words in length, they should include an abstract of up to 150 words, and up to six keywords, suitable for indexing and online search purposes. The authors are responsible for submitting proof-read and formatted articles. For the manuscript preparation please use the style sheet and the formatting guideline, which are available here:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/action/authorSubmission?journalCode=rtsr20&page=instructions#.U6glxIRhCCg>

The deadline for submission of full articles is **June 15, 2017**. The time-frame of the issue is as follows:

March 1, 2017	Submission of proposal abstracts
June 15, 2017	Submission of full articles
July – September 2017	Peer review
October – November 2017	Revision of articles, if necessary
November 15, 2017	Final submission of publishable articles
March 2018	Publication

### **Contact**

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For more information on the journal TSR, please visit the homepage:

[www.tandfonline.com/loi/rtsr20](http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rtsr20)

## References

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