

## **Building Transdisciplinary Relationships: Indigenous & German Studies** Special issue of *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies*

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This special issue poses a seemingly simple question: Is there transdisciplinary ground between Indigenous Studies and German Studies? By this we do not mean the often-explored question of the fetishization of Indigenous people in German-language thought, literature, film, and hobby culture—from medieval and early modern exoticist discourses through nineteenth-century fascinations (pre- and post-*Winnetou*) to currently ongoing Indianthusiasm (Lutz 1999) appropriations. While there cannot be any doubt that further analysis must continue to uncover such racist and colonialist violence and erasure, this special issue of *Seminar* invites contributions that address which role German Studies—its research, teaching, and institutions—can play in the overdue rethinking of the academy beyond its colonial, exclusionary, and racist legacies. The hope of shifting relations from violence and violation to co-existence and dialogue seems frail at best, given the deeply-rooted, systemic racism and injustices that Indigenous people face in and outside of the academy. But conversations around restoring relations must happen, and they must reach into all disciplines. This special issue aims at taking up this conversation for German Studies both from an institutional and disciplinary perspective. What are the concrete contributions German Studies is able and willing to make in order to fundamentally address systemic barriers to Indigenous scholars and scholarship, legacies of colonization in discourse and language, and racist ideologies embedded in academic culture, with a view toward transformative change? How might the transdisciplinary linkages between German and Indigenous Studies create fruitful interchange that advocates for social justice actions while serving as one site of knowledge exchange? What does reconciliation mean from the disciplinary point of view of German Studies or from a German-language context and how might learning from this context provide new insights? How might the current discussions about decolonizing German Studies in feminist and queer contexts, such as those in Afrogerman or Black German Studies and Queer of Colour activism, impact or be impacted by thinking through the decolonizing and indigenizing of campuses transnationally? What aspects of Indigenous pedagogies or knowledge building practices should make up the German Studies classroom? How can German Studies scholars lead the way to restoring relations with Indigenous peoples, in terms of critically addressing the epistemicide and erasure that Indianthusiasm promotes? Guided by such documents as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s “Calls to Action,” can German Studies support systemic change and decolonization of universities without further harming or damaging relations between Indigenous and settler cultures? In sum, what is the role that German Studies can play in and for the many regions of the world that are grappling with colonialist and racist legacies and continuities?

This special issue will contain scholarly articles 6,000–8,000 words in length as well as a forum section with shorter thought interventions or research creations. For either section, we invite proposals from knowledge holders, scholars, community leaders, artists, and activists from Indigenous Studies and German Studies.

Please send proposals of 250–300 words and a short bio by 31 May 2018 to [seminar.journal@cautg.org](mailto:seminar.journal@cautg.org).