Dear Intersections Workshop Invited Speakers,

We have now completed the review and confirmation process for NWAV44 abstracts and would like to enlist your help for the next step – developing diverse, thought-provoking sessions to follow your plenary presentation.

Attached you will find a list of accepted abstracts whose authors have indicated interest in participating in the session related to your topic (and their abstracts).

We ask that you look over the abstracts and rank them according to your interest in having them in your session. Some have been accepted as papers, some as posters. We will be able to schedule 3-4 talks in a session directly following your plenary talk and will make every effort to accommodate your preferences. There is no limit to the number of posters, to appear in the Friday evening poster session, that can be tagged as relevant to your topic. (Talks not selected for your session will be presented elsewhere in the conference.)

Some authors have indicated interest in more than one session. If more than one of you rank these talks highly, we will determine how best to distribute them.

Please indicate your ranking in the attached spreadsheet and return it to nwav44@chass.utoronto.ca by Tuesday, August 4, if at all possible. Use “1” to indicate your top-ranked abstract, and subsequent numbers as far as you are interested.

Other information and requests, for a little further down the road:

* We request that you prepare a draft/outline version of your plenary talk to send to William Labov by mid-September so that he can prepare for his role as Discussant of the Intersections Workshop on the last day of NWAV44. We hope you will all participate in this Discussion as well.
* If you are willing, we would be very happy to have you chair the session related to your talk and participate in the Q&A in that session (in particular).
* With your permission, your plenary talk will be simulcast to Youtube where additional viewers can engage via chat messages. Online and post-event participants can broadcast the session, for example, to a classroom. Paul DeDecker, Memorial University Newfoundland, has volunteered to oversee the broadcast component of the workshop.
* The editor of the *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* has expressed interest in producing a special issue comprising a selection of peer-reviewed papers coming from this Workshop.
* Finally, here is the [lightly edited] relevant extract from the NSF grant which funds your participation:

“To help put the “new” back in “New ways of analyzing variation,” we aim to strike the spark that will consolidate new directions by creating an interactive and bridging Workshop alongside the usual conference template — Variation at the Crossroads: Advancing Theory and Integrating Methods. This workshop will run as “Intersections Special Sessions” throughout the conference, with each session specifically designed to cultivate cross-pollination of different fields of research in linguistic variation. Each session will headline a world-class researcher who is conducting cutting-edge research at the intersection of their discipline with variation. The invited speakers will present their research and engage in discussion with presenters on related topics, to be selected from submitted abstracts. Collectively, these presentations will both deepen and broaden the questions that will occupy Variationist Sociolinguists in the next decade and set the agenda for future research.

Four of the speakers have been chosen from a select group of researchers who are high-profile participants and innovators in their own subdisciplines. Their work breaks new ground by integrating variation into domains of inquiry where variation has not traditionally been considered. Their panels will target the following intersections with Variationist Sociolinguistics: i) formal linguistics, ii) historical linguistics, iii) language acquisition and iv) corpus linguistics. In their talks, each researcher will address the relevance of his/her research program to Variationist Sociolinguistics. They will be asked to comment on other papers in the session. Papers focusing on these themes of intersection will be specifically encouraged in the call for papers. The Intersections sessions will offer the opportunity for the presentation of opposing views and a formal occasion for debate, which will set the scene for ongoing discussion in the more informal parts of the conference, and beyond. The fifth invited speaker is a *NWAV* regular who exemplifies the interdisciplinary approach we wish to promote. She will illustrate how her more than 20 years of work on smaller, less well-described languages, mainly creoles of the SW Pacific and the Caribbean, has combined two major interests: the extent to which sociolinguistically constrained variation speaks to and can inform our understanding of linguistic structure, and the extent to which sociolinguistically constrained variation is used as a symbolic resource in the construction of social, especially gendered, identities.”

We are especially looking forward to this exciting part of the conference. Please let us know if you have questions or suggestions.

Best,

Naomi, on behalf of the NWAV44 Committee