

Call for Papers: 11th Annual Students and Graduate Conference

The focus of this conference will be on U.S.- American traditions and concepts of family and kinship. Representations, reflections and contestations of families and kinship run through all aspects of American life and are most prominently noticeable in politics, law-making, art, and the media. Discourses about family and kinship can be used to communicate and negotiate constellations of power; they can serve to investigate spaces, differences, struggles, alliances, strategic endeavors and innovative conceptualizations of family at various intersections.

Over the centuries, cultural conventions and ideas about the traditional family and family values have gradually shifted, and this shift consequently has affected the manifold narratives about family and kinship. However, since "family" is an overriding discourse in social, cultural and political studies, it seems to resist analysis. The importance given to the metonymic quality of family discourses with regard to wider entities (society at large, political and economic systems) suggests that "family" serves as a repository not only for reactionary positions, but also for the validity of concrete experience as opposed to abstract discourse.

This year's students & graduate conference seeks to explore forms of narratives in U.S.-American culture that convey accounts of family and kinship constructions. We invite contributors to explore how narratives of family and kinship affirm, repro-

duce, resist, challenge or subvert normative ideas of family life.

What are the various social, legal and cultural prerequisites and ramifications of kinship and family membership? How do family and nation relate on a metaphorical level? How do states regulate sexuality and reproduction through dominant discourses of family and kinship? How relevant are religious concepts and traditions in this discussion?

Possible paper subjects may include, but are not limited to:

- the institution of marriage: politics of privilege and exclusion
- patchwork and rainbow families
- race, nation, and migration
- polygamy and polyamory
- family and class
- friendship networks and families of choice
- family as a constituent of the American Dream
- dating
- queering families and kinship
- genealogies and heritage

Please submit your abstracts for a 20-minute presentation till **August 31, 2012**.

A current list of topics already covered, the preliminary program as well as further information can be found on the conference web site:

<https://www.angl.hu-berlin.de/confslcs/studgradconf2012>

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