

Playing House – Shifting Paradigms of Family and Kinship

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, reproduce, 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?

The Annual Students & Graduate Conferences Series

The conference series sets out to support and foster the students’ interest in academic exchange and discussions. It provides students of all levels (undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate) with a space for the discussion of academic topics in the absence of the usual hierarchy often found in university seminars.

More information about this and previous conferences can be found here:

<http://www2.hu-berlin.de/amerika/asc/index.html>

We thank our sponsors and supporters

American Studies Program, HU Berlin
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Organizers

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Information

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Contact

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All panels will take place in room 3119
Unter den Linden 6

All times s.t.

For possible changes to the program, please consult the web site of the conference at http://www.angl.hu-berlin.de/confslecs/stud_conf/studgradconf2012

Institut für Anglistik und
Amerikanistik
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

11th Annual Students and
Graduate Conference

***Playing House – Shifting
Paradigms of Family and
Kinship***

November 15 – 17, 2012

Unter den Linden 6, 10099 Berlin,
Room 3119

HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN



Thursday, 15 November 2012

until 15:00 **Arrival; Registration**
15:00 **Welcome!**

**15:30-17:00 PANEL 1: Playing House –
Normative Family Models**

Julia Hillenbrand, Gutenberg Universität Mainz

Motherhood and Self-Realization: Changing Feminist
Evaluations from the First to the Third Wave

Newton Freire Murce Filho, UFG Brazil

Changing Families in Highly Recommended Children's
Picture Books: A Comparative Study

Ulrike Schneeberg, HU Berlin

The Monster under the Bed: The Normative Function of a
Frightening Picture Book Motif

Moderation: Amina Grunewald, HU Berlin

17:00 – 17:30 Coffee break

**17:30-19:00 PANEL 2: Queer House –
Alternative Family Models**

Florian Zappe, FU Berlin

"Who gives a shit how your mother died or if you have a
real father." – The Radical Subversion of Oedipal Famili-
alism in the Novels of Kathy Acker

Viola Amato, HU Berlin

"Is Growing up in Silence Better Than Growing up Differ-
ent?" or: How to Raise Your Intersex Child

Alicia VandeVusse, University of Chicago, USA

Consuming Sperm: Trajectories of Alternative Insemina-
tion in the United States

Moderation: Katja Linke, HU Berlin

20:00 **Conference Dinner** (Restaurant Via Nova)

Friday, 16 November 2011

**10:00-11:30 PANEL 3: Black Families and
(Post-)Racial Fantasies**

Andre Dechert, WWU Münster

Breaking Free from Stereotypes. "The Cosby Show" and
the African-American Community

Dr. des. Barbara Antoniazzi, FU Berlin

(Im)perfect Fathers and Postracial Fantasies:
Representing the Black Family in the Age of

Neoliberalism

Lauren Fannin, Georgia State University, USA

Beyond Ann Romney: Understanding the Experiences of
African American Stay at Home Moms

Moderation: Viola Amato, HU Berlin

11:30 – 12:00 Coffee break

**12:00-13:30 PANEL 4: Making New Homes –
Family and Diaspora**

Henning Marquardt, Leibniz Universität Hannover

Defining Religious Ideologies: Family Representations in
Claude McKay's "Banana Bottom"

Nicole Poppenhagen, Gutenberg Universität Mainz

"You lie with stories": Mother-Daughter Conflicts and
Transnational Storytelling in Chinese American Literature

Edward Barry, HU Berlin

Western Reverberations in the Asian Diaspora: How to
Create the Most Notorious Family in the Western World

Moderation: Karolina Golimowska, HU Berlin

13:30 – 15:00 Lunch Break (Mensa, HU Berlin)

**15:00-17:00 Panel 5: Empty House –
Absent Parents, Missing Links**

Silvia Chirila, HU Berlin

Kinship and Community in Toni Morrison's Novel "Home"

Sandra Heil, HU Berlin

What If Your Mother Never Meant To? –

The Absent Mother in the Novels by Louise Erdrich

Candela Delgado Martin, University of Seville, Spain

Unconventional Motherhood: Silent Female Bonding in
Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping*

Moderation: Eva Brunner, HU Berlin

17:00 – 17:30 Coffee break

**17:30-19:00 Panel 6: Let's Play Together –
Family as Community**

Sonja Schillings, FU Berlin

Families of the Secret: Child Abuse and Utopias of
Alternative Rule in Hardboiled Fiction

Nina Schnieder, Universität Potsdam

"We're Bringing the Band Back Together": Alternative
Family Concepts in Robert Schwendtke's Hollywood

Action Film "RED" (2010)

Rebecca Schäfer, Gutenberg Universität Mainz

Monstrous *Mutterkult*? Lady Gaga, the Family Discourse,
and Alternative Modes of Kinship

Moderation: Ulrike Schneeberg, HU Berlin

20:00 **Dinner/Get Together** (Café/Bar "Aufsturz")

Saturday, 17 November 2011

**10:00-11:30 Panel 7: Broken Homes –
Collapsing Family Ideals**

Stefan Hippler, Universität Würzburg

"Intricate Waves of Love and Hatred": Representations,
Models, and Functions of 'Family' in Michael Cunning-
ham's *Flesh and Blood* (1995)

Benjamin Betka, Goethe Universität Frankfurt a.M.

Housing Halloween – 60 Years of Cinematic Family
Horror between Commodified Rites of Passage and Real
Tissue Terror

Charles Leichtfuss, Philipps Universität Marburg

"Facing Up to Their Responsibilities": Representations of
Working Class Parenthood in the Lyrics of Bruce Spring-
steen

Moderation: Isabel Scholz, HU Berlin

11:30 – 12:00 Coffee break

**12:00-13:30 Panel 8: Dream House –
Disrupting Suburbia**

Agnieszka Styła, University of Gdańsk, Poland

Prodigal Children or Prodigal Parents? – Family Grudges
in the selected novels of Jonathan Franzen, Marilynne
Robinson, and Anne Tyler

Talel Ben Jemia, FU Berlin

Gilmore Girls and Millennial Family Values on Network
Television

Pablo Gómez Muñoz, University of Zaragoza, Spain

"We Can't Go On Pretending that This Is the Life We
Wanted:" Revisiting 1950s American Suburbia through
Contemporary Film

Moderation: David Rose, HU Berlin

13:30 - 14:00 Conclusion and Goodbye!