

20th- and 21st-Century Narratives of Masculinity: Commonalities and Differences in European Constructions of Masculinity

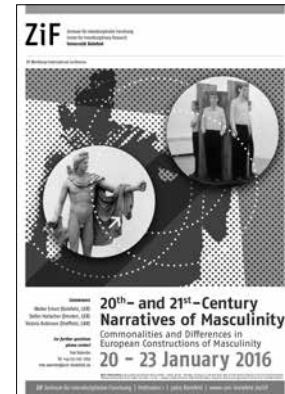
Convenors: Stefan Horlacher (Dresden, GER), Walter Erhart (Bielefeld, GER), Victoria Robinson (Sheffield, GBR) | 20 – 23 January 2016

The field of masculinity studies is diversifying. Masculinities are increasingly understood as plural and are analysed in relation to other theories and politics. With the emergence of new concepts of masculinities come new methods of analysis and investigation, such as the use of narrative to construct understandings of masculinities. This interdisciplinary shift towards narrative structures and 'storytelling' as a basis for masculinity research was a key focus of the conference. Convened by Stefan Horlacher, Walter Erhart and Victoria Robinson, this event sought to synthesise various contemporary international and interdisciplinary perspectives and theories on narratives of masculinity.

The four keynote speakers commenced the discussion. Stefan Horlacher outlined comparative masculinities and the importance of the arts and humanities. Jeff Hearn articulated the contributions of the transnational to masculinity studies whilst Todd Reeser discussed affect theory and masculinities. Victoria Robinson spoke about the embodiment of men's narratives through empirical research, and Walter Erhart talked about 'Comparing Narratives of Masculinity: *True Grit*'; a presentation in which he utilised the Academy Award winning film *True Grit* as a catalyst for an analysis of the shifting notions of masculinity.

After the keynote speeches, other contributions were presented around a clearly structured range of themes. These included, among others, 'Discourses of Fatherhood and Caring', 'Territorialities: Comparing Masculinities in Europe', 'Psychoanalysis and Medicine' and 'Media-Analysis: Literature, Videogames and Film'. Michael Meuser presented a paper on 'Involved Fatherhood: Discourses, Practices and Institutions', proposing that despite the growing discourse surrounding involved fatherhood, there is still a gap between this discourse and fathers' typical engagement in family work. Mechthild Bereswill talked about 'The Construction of Disadvantaged Boys and Caring Men', Ilka Quindeau discussed concepts for understanding masculinity that have recently emerged from the perspective of inter-subjective, relational psychoanalysis, and Martin Dinges analyzed the position of men within discourses of health. While Ofer Nordheimer Nur took the conference to the margins of Europe and right into the 'lifeworld' with his discussion of post-heroic masculinity in Israel, a significant number of papers had a strong focus on literature such as José Armengol's (University of Castilla-La Mancha) presentation on 'Iberian Masculinities from the Margins', Alexander Wöll's talk on 'The Construction of "Postcolonial" Emancipating Narrative Masculinities in Ukrainian Literature', Gregor Schuhen's paper on 'The Sons of Lazarillo: Constructions of Masculinity in 20th Century Picaresque Narratives', and Ralf Schneider's analysis of 'Narratives and Discourse of British Masculinities in Late 20th Century Prose Fiction'; a paper in which he mapped out the ways in which British masculinities are frequently portrayed within this genre, highlighting the positioning of men against both female protagonists, as well as other men within the narratives.

While Toni Tholen analyzed the narration of the concept of care—or *Sorge* within German cultural history, and the way that the relationship between masculinity and care is conceptualised in different disciplines, including literature, literary criticism and philosophy, the presentations by Elahe Haschemi Yekani, Jennifer Kapczynski and Wieland Schwanebeck took film and cinematic contexts into account, leading over to Jan Kucharzewski's paper on 'Playing Men: Constructions of Hypermasculinity in European Video Games', which provided an in depth analysis of the



José Maria Armengol Carrera (Ciudad Real, ESP)
 Ruth Beresford (Sheffield, GBR)
 Mechthild Bereswill (Kassel, GER)
 Vira Buschanska (Bochum, GER)
 Svanje Cordua (Münster, GER)
 Martin Dinges (Stuttgart, GER)
 Dan Fletcher (Sheffield, GBR)
 Ellie Gaddes (Sheffield, GBR)
 Sebastian Grieser (Bielefeld, GER)
 Ruth Haake (Berlin, GER)
 Marcus Hartner (Bielefeld, GER)
 Elahe Haschemi Yekani (Flensburg, GER)
 Jeff Hearn (Helsinki, FIN)
 Franziska Hesse (Bochum, GER)
 Jennifer Kapczynski (St. Louis, USA)
 Tomke König (Bielefeld, GER)
 Jan D. Kucharzewski (Hamburg, GER)
 Miriam Kurz (Berlin, GER)
 Julia Mayer (München, GER)
 Michael Meuser (Dortmund, GER)
 Ursula Müller (Bielefeld, GER)
 Katherine Nichols (Sheffield, GBR)
 Ofer Nordheimer Nur (Tel Aviv, ISR)
 Kathrin Peltz (Landshut, GER)
 Katharina Pietsch (Bielefeld, GER)
 Ilka Quindeau (Frankfurt am Main, GER)
 Todd W. Reeser (Pittsburgh, USA)
 Alexandra Scheele (Bielefeld, GER)
 Alexia Schemien (Essen, GER)
 Silvana Schmidt (Marienheide, GER)
 Ralf Schneider (Bielefeld, GER)
 Gregor Schuhen (Siegen, GER)
 Wieland Schwanebeck (Dresden, GER)
 Liudmyla Teslenko (Bielefeld, GER)
 Toni Tholen (Hildesheim, GER)
 Othmar Walchofer (München, GER)
 Anne-Dorothee Warmuth (Paderborn, GER)
 Klaus Wieland (Straßburg, FRA)
 Heidemarie Winkel (Bielefeld, GER)
 Alexander Wöll (Frankfurt (Oder), GER)
 Francesca Zaccone (Rom, ITA)

depiction and construction of masculinity in European video games, contrasting this to the American and Japanese contexts.

It is safe to say that the conference provided a setting which enabled discussions on the work needing to be done in order to make the interdisciplinary connections between disciplines stronger. The contributions as well as the ensuing discussions—which took up a large part of the conference—did not only analyze the representations and constructions of European masculinities over more than a century but also presented new developments and theories relating to a) the narrative construction of male gender identity/masculinity; b) the link between narrative, affect and embodiment; c) the theoretical framework and analytical tools of comparison; and d) methodological differences and innovations in exploring men, masculinities and narratives across different disciplines and contexts.

Kitty Nichols, Elena Gaddes, Dawn Fletcher, Ruth Beresford, Stefan Horlacher



Narrative Konzepte von Männlichkeit im 20. und 21. Jahrhundert:

Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede in europäischen Konstruktionen von Männlichkeit

Die interdisziplinäre Tagung 20th and 21st Century Narratives of Masculinity: Commonalities and Differences in European Constructions of Masculinity, organisiert von Walter Erhart, Stefan Horlacher und Victoria Robinson, hatte sich zum Ziel gesetzt, Repräsentationen und Konstruktionen europäischer Männlichkeit im 20. und 21. Jahrhundert zu untersuchen und aus vergleichender und vor allem literaturwissenschaftlicher Perspektive nach den Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschieden zu fragen, die in den (Selbst-)Beschreibungen, den Bildern, Transformationen und Praktiken europäischer Männlichkeiten während der letzten 100 Jahre zu beobachten sind. Die aus Großbritannien, den USA, Spanien, Israel und Deutschland stammenden Konferenzteilnehmer, unter ihnen mit Jeff Hearn, Todd Reeser, Martin Dinges und Michael Meuser national und international führende Vertreter der Critical Masculinity Studies, nahmen nach 40 Jahren interdisziplinärer Männlichkeitsforschung eine kritische Bestandsaufnahme von theoretischen und historischen

Zugangsweisen vor, die das heterogene Forschungsfeld der mit Männlichkeit befassten Wissenschaften bisher bestimmt haben. Durch die Kooperation von bislang nur sehr bedingt miteinander kommunizierenden Disziplinen (anglistische, germanistische, slawistische und romanistische Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft, Soziologie, Geschichtswissenschaft, Psychoanalyse) gelang es, erfolgreich an einer Synthese des über Männlichkeit vorhandenen Wissens zu arbeiten. Zugleich wurde die in vielen mit Geschlechterforschung befassten Disziplinen bemerkbare Hinwendung zu einer ›narrativen‹ Konzeption von Geschlecht aufgenommen und im Sinne einer komparatistischen Männlichkeitsforschung in Europa weitergedacht.

Tagungsbeiträge Contributions

Theoretical framework

- Stefan Horlacher Comparative masculinity studies and the importance of literature and the arts
 Jeff Hearn Men of the world: contributions of the transnational to studies and explorations of men and masculinities, and beyond
 Victoria Robinson Embodying men's narratives through empirical research on masculinities
 Todd Reeser Theorizing affective masculinities

Discourses of fatherhood and caring

- Michael Meuser Involved fatherhood: discourses, practices and institutions
 Mechthild Bereswill The construction of disadvantaged boys and caring men
 Toni Tholen Narrating the relation between masculinity and care in modernity. Perspectives on a transdisciplinary problem

Territorialities I: Comparing masculinities in Europe

- José María Armengol Carrera Iberian masculinities from the margins
 Elahe Haschemi Yekani Narratives of geeks and terrorists—how do 'other' British masculinities compare?

Psychoanalysis and medicine

- Ilka Quindeau Constructions of masculinity in psychoanalysis
 Martin Dinges Man: from healthy model towards deficient creature. Discourses and practices—new positioning of gender inside the actual discourse on health in German speaking countries. A historical revision?

Territorialities II: Comparing masculinities in Europe

- Ofer Nordheimer Nur The rise of post-heroic masculinity in Israel since the 90s
 Alexander Wöll The construction of 'postcolonial' emancipating narrative masculinities in Ukrainian literature

Media-Analysis I: Literature, videogames

- Gregor Schuhen The sons of Lazarillo: constructions of masculinity in 20th-century picaresque narratives
 Ralf Schneider Narratives and discourses of British masculinities in late 20th-century prose fiction
 Jan Kucharzewski Playing men: constructions of hypermasculinity in European video games

Media-Analysis II: Film

- Jennifer Kapczynski Scripting the body in west German films of the 1950s
 Walter Erhart Comparing narratives of masculinity: *True Grit*
 Wieland Schwanebeck Masters of scripted reality: what impostors and con men can teach us about masculinities



oben

Walter Erhart, Victoria Robinson,
 Stefan Horlacher (v. l. n. r.)

Mitte

José María Armengol Carrera

unten

Martin Dinges, Alexander Wöll, Stefan
 Horlacher, Todd Reeser, Jeff Hearn
 (v. l. n. r.)

