

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Creative Families: Gender and Technologies of Everyday Life (working title)

In the book series: Palgrave Studies in Mediating Kinship, Representation, and Difference

Editors of the collective volume: Jana Mikats, Susanne Kink-Hampersberger, and Libora Oates-Indruchová; University of Graz, Austria

The collective volume aims to bring together two strands of current discussions in gender research through the concept of creativity. The first concerns the changing and newly emergent family forms, the second new media and technologies. The collection takes the perspective of social sciences, exploring creative processes as relational and contextual (Gauntlett 2011).

This concept of creativity departs from the traditional, mostly psychological approaches to creativity as an abstract product or invention of a singular – usually male – genius (Eisler et al. 2016, Taylor 2015). Social perspective on creativity includes its place in the public and professional as well as private spheres, in family life and everyday interactions with others. It also concerned with the ways individuals employ new technologies to maintain intimate relationships and how they creatively transform the family and kin formations themselves.

Social upheavals and technological advancements that have taken place since the 1970s have reached deeply into the organization of family structures and day-to-day family practices (Beck-Gernsheim 1998, Gillies 2003, Charles et al. 2008). Women's and LGBTQ movements, the collapse of the Eastern bloc, globalization and migration are just a few of the processes effecting kinship relations and family patterns. The norm of the heterosexual nuclear family, represented through a married co-resident couple with their biological children, fades in Europe, while elsewhere it has never been the ideal in the first place. The non-kin and also the non-human are included into the understanding of a family unit and a variety of long-distance or cyber arrangements are becoming increasingly frequent. In the European context, the everyday life of families is shaped by complex spatial and temporal involvements of all members, as they alternate between diverse places of work, education, leisure and living. The changeable and creative nature of family life and intimacy comes into the foreground, instead of approaching them as fixed and normative structures (Widmer and Jallinoja 2008, Dermott and Seymour 2011, Bertone and Pallotta-Chiarolli 2015, Schadler 2016, Pfeffer 2017). Whether in stories, homes, care or leisure activities, creativity constitutes a part of everyday family practices, imaginations and relations.

Technological innovations and digitalization have penetrated deep into all areas of family life. The use of smartphones and tablets, apps and social media platforms stimulate creative organizing of daily family life. Technological change further enables the creation of new forms of family organization and offers a chance to overcome traditional constellations of gender. Queer forms of parenthood become possible, aided by new reproductive technologies.

We welcome original contributions from a range of social science disciplines, including, but not limited to, sociology, media and communication studies, cultural studies, political science, legal studies, anthropology, family research, gender and queer studies. We are looking forward to receiving chapter proposals that draw on empirical research, as well as theoretical reflections. The topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Creative practices to maintain intimate relationships and connectedness despite the progressive dissolution of segmented time and space due to globalization, migration and heterogeneous ways of living. Information technologies (ICT) and their role of and consequences for family routines, relationships, intimacy and privacy.
- The creativity of becoming and doing kinship and family in different contexts, the involvement of different actors against the background of the increasing fluidity of gender identities, diversity of relationships and the permeation of technology.
- Reproductive technologies, the formation and maintenance of intimate and family relationships, such as, queer forms of motherhood, fatherhood and childhood and the creativity in the modes of their perception and expression.
- The mantra of authenticity and creativity, digitalization and the emergence of alternative forms of working and living as a family. Transformation of the gendered organization of family life, blurring of the boundary between home and workplace.
- Adoption of new technologies in families from, say, online grocery shopping to self-driving cars, and their creative potential in achieving work-life balance and organization of leisure time.
- Creative communication strategies developed by family members, employing the new media (e.g. GPS-tracking app to monitor the whereabouts of teenage children, or checking homework online).
- Creative representations of family life through Web 2.0 (e.g. blogging or YouTube) and their gendered dimensions.
- Representations of these diverse family transformations in culture, the media and political discourses.

We invite 300-word abstracts for book chapters of around 8,000 words.

Please send the abstract and a 150-biographical note by 31st March 2018 to:

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Key dates and deadlines:

Abstract submission:	31 st March 2018
Notification on acceptance of abstracts:	15 th May 2018
Full versions of book chapters due:	31 st August 2018
Editors' feedback	October, 2018
Final versions due	31 st January 2019
Expected delivery of the manuscript to the publisher:	30 th April 2019

About the editors:

Jana Mikats is Lecturer at the Department of Sociology of the University of Graz and PhD candidate in sociology at the University of Vienna. In her dissertation, she studies family practices in the context of home-based work.

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About the book series

Series editors: May Friedman, Associate Professor, Ryerson University, Canada; Silvia Schultersmandl, Assistant Professor, University of Graz, Austria

This book series brings together analyses of familial and kin relations with emerging and new technologies that allow for the creation, maintenance and expansion of family. We use the term “family” as a working truth with a wide range of meanings in an attempt to address the feelings of family belonging across all aspects of social location: ability, age, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, gender identity, body size, social class and beyond. This book series aims to explore phenomena located at the intersection of technologies including those that allow for family creation, migration, communication, reunion and the family as a site of difference. The individual volumes in this series will offer insightful analyses of the representations of these phenomena in media, social media, literature, popular culture and corporeal settings.

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