

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR A STUDENTS' CONFERENCE

"Understanding Imaginary Worlds": A Students' Conference on World-building in Fantasy, Science Fiction, and Beyond

The creation and expansion of (imaginary) worlds has always been an important feature of literature. It can be traced back centuries and is presumably found most prominently in fantasy and science-fiction literature. World-building is not only a feature of literature, however, it can likewise be found in comics, films, video games or cross-medial approaches. Thus, the Students' Conference understands world-building as a feature that is characteristic of several media.

World-building is a highly complex phenomenon which requires a lot of trans- and interdisciplinary knowledge. Immersing oneself into imaginary worlds is not necessarily an escapist pastime; the experience can also improve the understanding of one's own world and cultures, and it can offer room for social criticism, including discussions of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religions, and various other issues.

The focus of this Students' Conference is expanding the discussion regarding the creation of imaginary worlds: How are they built, conceptualised, expanded, narrated and/or re-created in different media? We invite academic papers of 20 minutes exploring diverse aspects of world-building.

Potential paper topics may include, but are not limited to:

- the creation of new worlds, peoples and cultures (with regards to the invention of new names, races, genders, animals, customs, technologies, intelligent life, spaces and landscapes, new natural laws, etc.)
- the construction, maintenance and negotiation of political, legal, environmental and/or social systems and/or their interaction with the real world

- the significance of philosophy, ethics, science, sociology, history and/or anthropology, etc. for world-building
- representations of (in no hierarchical order!) gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity and other relevant social categories
- examples of rewritings and re-imaginings, e.g. in Afrofuturism and Indigenous Futurisms
- audio-visual adaptations of fantasy and science fiction literature and their impact on the source material
- the influence of fans through e.g. fan fiction and fan art on world building processes

The students' conference, which will take place from 13-14 June 2019 at the University of Bonn, seeks to examine world-building in different genres as well as its transformations into other media. If you are interested in presenting a paper, please send an abstract of no more than 300 words and a short biographical note (of 3-5 lines, including your current field of studies) by 31 December 2018 to the following email address: worlds19@uni-bonn.de. Both students from the University of Bonn and from other universities from all around the world are welcome! If you have any questions, please, feel free to contact us via the email address above. There is no conference fee to be paid and technical equipment for the presentation will be provided. Conference participants will be responsible for organising and paying for their own accommodation and food.

Organisers:

Marion Gymnich, Franziska Göbel, Marthe-Siobhán Hecke, Max Stottrop & Aleksandra Szczodrowski