

**Relative to What?**  
**Exploring Concepts of Identity and Family in Germanic Studies**  
**November 13-14, 2015**  
**Madison, Wisconsin**

**Keynote Speaker:**

**Katharina Brizić**

Berkeley Language Center, University of California, Berkeley  
University of Freiburg

**Call for Papers**

Issues of identity and family have important consequences for individuals and for societies. Changes to Germany's dual citizenship laws in 2014 highlighted the question "Who is German?" and Austria continues to revise partnership and adoption legislation, recognizing new family structures. In an increasingly global and technology-driven landscape, scholarly investigations inform our understanding of how identities are (de)constructed and the ways people relate to each other. Improved access to data from the past and present, such as census data and genetic analyses, have also enabled researchers to gain critical insights into cultural and linguistic phenomena.

With such developments in mind, this conference aims to examine literal and metaphorical families and identities through the lenses offered by Germanic Studies. We encourage submissions from both historical and contemporary perspectives, and questions that can serve as a starting point for reflection include, but are not limited to:

**Literature**

- How are concepts related to family and identity represented in literature?
- What insights do different genres, including the *Familienroman*, lend to an understanding of "family"?

**Linguistics**

- How can we better understand the language varieties that result from contact situations, both within and across language families?
- What linguistic similarities and differences exist between generations of heritage language speakers?

**Second Language Acquisition**

- What role do language learners' biographies play in the language classroom and in the language learning process?
- How can the concepts "relatedness" and "familiarity" shed light on second language acquisition?

**Culture Studies**

- How has migration in and out of Germany influenced the identities of individuals and families?
- What concepts of family exist in Germanic language-speaking societies, how have these developed, and how have they been portrayed across different forms of media?

Abstracts for single or multi-authored 20 minute presentations should be no more than 300 words and are due by **May 1, 2015**. The primary language of this conference will be English, but submissions in German or Dutch are also welcome. Abstracts should *not* include the presenter's name. Please include the following as a separate attachment: name, title of paper, department and university affiliation, phone number, and e-mail address. Please submit your abstracts to Christine Evans at [cmevans3@wisc.edu](mailto:cmevans3@wisc.edu). For further details on the conference, keynote speaker, and accommodations (including the option to stay with UW-Madison graduate students), please see our conference website: <http://gdgsaconference.german.wisc.edu/>.