



MAY 22-23,  
2025

# ENFREAKMENT IN (TRANSNATIONAL) NORTH AMERICAN CULTURE

CONFERENCE AT LEIPZIG UNIVERSITY, GERMANY

*The conference will examine the underlying dynamics of constructing somebody as a “freak” in depictions of non-normativity, deviance, or extraordinariness — the highly complex, dynamic, and contradictory processes that have been described as “enfreakment.”*

ORGANIZED BY: KATJA KANZLER, ELLA ERNST, LAURA PRÖGER, ANNA GAIDASH, ANNICKA SCHADEWALDT, STEFAN SCHUBERT

# Conference Program

## “Enfreakment in (Transnational) North American Culture”

**Thursday, May 22, 2025**

**9:30AM - 2PM | INSTITUTE FOR AMERICAN STUDIES,  
BIBLIOTHECA ALBERTINA**

---

**9:30-  
9:50am** Conference Opening

---

**9:50-  
10:40am** **Ulla Kriebernegg (Graz)**  
“A Sideshow of Frailty: Enfreakment, Aging, and Disability in North American Care Home Narratives”

---

**10:40-  
11am** Break

---

**Ella Ernst (Leipzig)**  
“Blood, Guts, and Gore in *Invincible* (2021) – Enfreakment and Genre Subversion in Superhero Animation”

**11am-1pm** **Małgorzata Olsza (Poznań)**  
“The Enfreakment of the Reproductive Body in Beth Hetland’s *Tender* (2024)”

**Alena Cicholewski & Krutika Patri (Bremen)**  
“‘Primitive, Drug-Loving Freaks’ – Enfreakment and Anti-Colonial Resistance in R. F. Kuang’s *The Poppy War Trilogy* (2018-2020)”

---

**1-2pm** Lunch (Catered)

# Conference Program

## “Enfreakment in (Transnational) North American Culture”

**Thursday, May 22, 2025**

**2PM - 6PM | INSTITUTE FOR AMERICAN STUDIES,  
BIBLIOTHECA ALBERTINA**

---

**2-  
2:50pm** **Jessica Williams (SUNY Old Westbury / via Zoom)**  
“Decoding Enfreakment: The Intersection of Disability and Morality in Visual Media Portrayals of the Freak Show”

---

**2:50-  
3:10pm** Break

---

**Laura Pröger (Leipzig)**  
“Staging Survival, Performing the American Dream: Enfreakment, Melodrama, and the Affective Spectacle of Class in *Hillbilly Elegy*”

**3:10-  
5:10pm** **Milo Miller (Leipzig)**  
“Deviance and Modes of Self-Enfreakment in Reader Self-Insert Creepypasta Fanfiction”

**Stefan Schubert (Leipzig)**  
“Monster, Alien, Animal? Spectacular Bodies and ‘Freakish’ Cinematography in Jordan Peele’s *Nope* (2022)”

---

**6pm** Dinner (Self-Pay)

---

Albertina Lecture Hall, Biblioteca Albertina,  
Beethovenstraße 6, 04107 Leipzig

# Conference Program

## “Enfreakment in (Transnational) North American Culture”

**Friday, May 23, 2025**

**9:30AM - 1:40PM | INSTITUTE FOR AMERICAN STUDIES,  
BIBLIOTHECA ALBERTINA**

---

**9:30-  
10:20am** **Heike Steinhoff (Bochum)**  
“(Dis-)Enfreakment and the Body Politics of Popular Feminisms”

---

**10:20-  
10:40am** Break

---

**Anna Gaidash (Kyiv/Leipzig)**  
“Emotional Abuse in Beth Henley’s Drama: The Secret Self of  
*Control Freaks*”

**10:40am-  
12:40pm** **Natalia Vysotska (Kyiv)**  
“She Is Almost a Freak’: De/Resacralizing the Big Female Body in  
Eugene O’Neill’s *A Moon for the Misbegotten*”

**Elisa Heuser (Tübingen)**  
“Mollie Fancher and Josephine Marie Bedard — The Enfreakment  
of (Show)Fasting Women in North America in the Late 19th  
Century”

---

**12:40-1:40pm** Lunch (Catered)

---

# Conference Program

## “Enfreakment in (Transnational) North American Culture”

**Friday, May 23, 2025**

**1:40PM - 5PM | INSTITUTE FOR AMERICAN STUDIES,  
BIBLIOTHECA ALBERTINA**

---

**Katja Kanzler (Leipzig)**

“Enfreakable Bodies and the Global Dynamics of the 19th Century Freak Show”

**1:40-  
3:40pm Gabriele Pisarz-Ramirez (Leipzig)**

“Fresh From the Bush Country’: Antillean Women in US Popular Writings on the Panama Canal Zone”

**Annika Schadewaldt (Leipzig)**

“The Scales of Enfreakment in Eudora Welty’s Short Fiction”

---

**3:40-  
4pm Break**

---

**Evangelia Kindinger (Berlin)**

**4-  
4:50pm** “She Was Large Beyond Any Woman Most Had Ever Seen’: Mountain Womanhood and Appalachian Otherness in US Literature”

---

**-5pm Farewell**

---

Albertina Lecture Hall, Biblioteca Albertina,  
Beethovenstraße 6, 04107 Leipzig