

Conceived by Rüdiger Zill, Potsdam

Einstein Forum

Am Neuen Markt 7

14467 Potsdam

Tel.: 0331 271 78 0

Fax: 0331 271 78 27

<http://www.einsteinforum.de>

[einsteinforum@einsteinforum.de](mailto:einsteinforum@einsteinforum.de)

As the role of the family in everyday organization, social life, and elderly care has declined across much of Europe, another social relationship has come to the fore: friendship. A flood of self-help books has hit the market to instruct the public on what true friendships are and how to cultivate them. Much of this advice rests on a romantic idea of intimacy, whose earliest and best-known source is Michel de Montaigne's eulogy to his deceased friend Etienne de la Boétie. A very different model is provided by Leon Battista Alberti, who a century earlier described friendship as a calculated means of securing power and influence, especially in societies whose state institutions are weak. Today, friendship appears to be flourishing in the digital age, though many have wondered whether Facebook "friends" still merit the name. The conference investigates friendship in all its forms, the importance of emotion as a binding force, and the validity of earlier concepts of friendship in a rapidly changing world.

**Petra Boden, Berlin**

## *Heidelberger Zement*

### *Vom langen Halt einer frühen Mischung*

*HeidelbergCement. On the Durability of an Early Mixture*

The over thirty-year lifespan of the interdisciplinary working group *Poetik und Hermeneutik*—it was formed at the University of Giessen in 1963 and disbanded in 1994—is the longest such collaborative effort in German academia; its name and leading members are still well-known today. Given the typically short duration of university-based projects and ever-changing trends in the humanities, what kept *Poetik und Hermeneutik* together for a generation? What role did friendships play? After all, quite a few of the group’s members had met while students at the University of Heidelberg, where they participated in groups such as *Semper Apertus*. How do friendships in academia relate to everyday forms of collegiality in collaborative work, networks and other close-knit groups? How are these forms distinguishable from each other?

**Petra Boden** is a literary scholar with a PhD from the Humboldt University of Berlin on German literary scholarship in the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich. She was on the research staff at the Central Institute for the History of Literature at the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic and has served in various projects funded by the German Research Foundation on the history of humanities disciplines, mostly recently at the German Literature Archive in Marbach as part of a project on the *Poetik und Hermeneutik* group. Her publications include *So viel Wende war nie: Zur Geschichte des Projekts “Ästhetische Grundbegriffe”* (2014) and the co-edited volumes *Poetik und Hermeneutik im Rückblick* (2016), *Populäres Wissen im medialen Wandel seit 1850* (2009), *Modernisierung ohne Moderne: Das Zentralinstitut für Literaturgeschichte an der Akademie der Wissenschaften der DDR (1969–1991)* (2004), and *Geisteswissenschaften und Gesellschaft* (2003).

**Anne Cronin, Lancaster**

*Experiencing Friendship's Contradictions –  
Creating New Spaces of Connection*

This presentation explores how people *experience* friendships and specifically how the lived, felt experience of friendships creates alternative spaces for thinking, feeling, and acting. In many academic studies from a range of different disciplines, friendships have been considered relationships that exist outside of, or beyond, institutionalized relationships such as family or formalized couple relationships (e.g. marriage). Michel Foucault argued that friendships therefore offer possibilities for living in alternative modes. However, it is not the case that friendships exist fully *outside of* other more institutionalized relationships such as family or dominant social formations such as the market—in fact they exist in complex *relationships* to them. This creates intriguing tensions that people experience in a bodily, emotional way rather than in a more intellectual, analytic way. Drawing on interview material, this presentation analyzes how people's felt experience of these tensions create spaces for feeling, thought and interpersonal connection that are both inside and outside of conventional, formalized social relations. This opens up important questions about how the felt experience of friendship may reflect, but also influence, society and social change.

**Anne Cronin** is a sociologist at Lancaster University. Her current research is devoted to consumer and advertising culture in the context of neoliberal capitalism, with a focus on urban spaces and gender. 2011–2012 she worked on the third-party funded project *Friendship, Social Ties, and Urban Experiences*, which resulted in several articles: "Gendering Friendship: Couple Culture, Heteronormativity and the Production of Gender" (*Sociology*, 2015), "Distant Friends, Mobility and Sensed Intimacy" (*Mobilities*, 2015), and "Between Friends: Making Emotions Intersubjectively" (*Emotion*, 2014).

Homepage:

<http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/sociology/about-us/people/anne-cronin>

**Oleg Kharkhordin, St. Petersburg**

*Personal and Political Friendship. How Does it Matter for the Classical Republican Tradition?*

Studies of friendship in contemporary Russia have shown that there are two prevalent forms: the tight emotional interpersonal friendship and the instrumental one that is practiced in patron-client relationships or that ties together cliques aspiring to win in economic or political battles. But these studies ignore two other types of friendship: the one that is expressed and solidified in inter-country (international) treaties and the one that is residually practiced in those types of ties that the ancient Greeks would have called “politike philia.” The talk will consider all those variegated forms of friendship from the standpoint of the classical republican tradition and evaluate the prospects of using these forms of friendship to expand islands of republican freedom in contemporary Russia.

**Oleg Kharkhordin** is a professor of political science and sociology at the European University in St. Petersburg. After studying at the University of Leningrad and the Academy of the Sciences at the UdSSR, he earned a PhD at the University of California, Berkeley. He went on to serve as a visiting professor at Harvard, Yale, and the Institut d'études politiques de Paris. He studies political theory, the classical republican tradition, and the pragmatic turn in the social sciences. Some publications germane to the conference are “Friendship and Politics in Russia” (*Common Knowledge*, 2016), and “The Politics of Friendship: Classic and Contemporary Concerns” (*Unravelling Ties*, 2002).

Homepage:

<https://eu.spb.ru/en/political-science/about/faculty/3414-kharkhordin>

**Andreas Kraß, Berlin**

*“Mein Prinz, ich sterbe mit tausend Freuden für Sie!”*

## *Die Katte-Tragödie in der Literatur*

*“My Prince, I die for you with joy in my heart!” The tragedy of Hans Hermann Katte in literature*

On November 6, 1730, Frederick William I of Prussia put an abrupt end to the boyhood friendship between his son, the later Frederick II, and the Prussian officer Hans Hermann von Katte, when he had the latter beheaded at the Küstlin fortress for conspiring with Frederick to flee Prussia for France. The cruel example that the Prussian king made of Katte—he even forced Frederick to watch the execution—has been a frequent subject of later writers. Using texts from Theodor Fontane, Heiner Müller, and Michael Roes, allows for a reconstruction of the representation and appraisal of male friendship from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The talk supplements Kraß’s recent book on male friendship *Ein Herz und eine Seele*.

**Andreas Kraß** is a professor of German literature at the Humboldt University of Berlin. Since 2012, he has led the Humboldt University’s research unit *The Cultural History of Sexuality* and the DFG project *Online-Repertorium der mittelalterlichen deutschen Übertragung lateinischer Hymnen und Sequenzen*. He has previously served as visiting professor at New York University, King’s College London, and the University of Washington (Seattle). His work focuses on the German literature of the medieval and modern eras, gender, and animal studies. His publications include *Geschriebene Kleider: Höfische Identität als literarisches Spiel* (2003), and *Ein Herz und eine Seele: Zur Geschichte der Männerfreundschaft* (2016).

Homepage: <https://www.literatur.hu-berlin.de/de/derzeitige-institutsmitarbeiterinnen/1686208>

**Katja Kraus, Hamburg**

## *Freundschaft. Geschichten von Nähe und Distanz*

Lesung und Gespräch

*Friendship: Stories of Intimacy and Distance*

Over the course of a year starting in the summer of 2013, Katja Kraus interviewed 21 public figures from politics and economics, sports and the arts. The subject of the interviews was friendship, whether prominent ones like that between Egon Bahr and Willy Brandt or the personal relationships between the interview subjects and their friends. The interviews revealed not only very different concepts of intimacy. Kraus herself came so close to her subjects that some were occasionally astonished by their own frankness. Speaking about friendship, it turns out, requires a high degree of trust, even a certain form of friendship. Katja Kraus will begin by reading a short passage from her book and continue with some further thoughts about the forms and conditions of friendship—and the situation of those who ask others about their intimate lives.

**Katja Kraus** was a professional soccer player from 1986 to 1998. As goalkeeper for FSV Frankfurt, she became a three-time national champion and four-time German Cup winner. She later joined the German national team, which went on to win the 1995 European championship, finish second in the FIFA World Cup, and compete in the 1996 Olympic Games. She has served on the executive board of Hamburger SV and since 2013 has been the business manager of the advertising agency Jung von Matt/SPORTS. After her career as an athlete, she studied German literature and political science at the University of Frankfurt. Her books include *Macht: Geschichten von Erfolg und Scheitern* (2013), and *Freundschaft: Geschichten von Nähe und Distanz* (2015).

**Sebastian Kühn, Hannover**

## *Trinken mit Gelehrten. Über Freunde, Feinde und “andere Freunde” in der Frühen Neuzeit*

*Boozing with Scholars. On friends, enemies and “other friends” in the early modern period*

What friendships are in practice can best be discerned from the typical behaviors we associate with friendship. Scholars, in invoking their friendship, often drank together at home, in the pub, during visits, or whenever an occasion offered itself. Yet we shouldn't have the distorted image of a beer-filled past. Nor was their friendship the cement that held them together. Far from being unifying, liberating, and equalizing, friendship often had a corrosive, fragmenting effect, creating hierarchies of power more characteristic of enmity than affection.

This talk discusses the friendships of English, French, and German scholars in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries as they drank together and occasionally met with other friends. They made tough moves and trades—as if at a marketplace—and drinking only facilitated the transactions. The brutal honesty of these practices brought people together more than the gentle brutality of polite discourses on friendship could.

**Sebastian Kühn** is a historian at the University of Hanover, where he has worked since 2013 on a DFG project about servants at court. For his dissertation, which appeared in 2011 under the title *Wissen, Arbeit, Freundschaft: Ökonomie und soziale Beziehungen in den Akademien von London, Paris und Berlin um 1700*, he received the Friedrich Meinecke Prize and the Ernst Reuter Prize. He studies the history of the early modern era, the history of anthropology, social history, the cultural history of politics, and the history of scholarly culture. His other publications include “Feindschaft in der Gelehrtenkultur der Frühen Neuzeit” (*WerkstattGeschichte*, 2011) and “Konflikt und Freundschaft in der gelehrten Kommunikation um 1700” (*Kommunikation der Frühen Neuzeit*, 2009).

Homepage: [https://www.hist.uni-hannover.de/sebastian\\_kuehn.html](https://www.hist.uni-hannover.de/sebastian_kuehn.html)

**Peggy Mädler, Berlin**

## *Wohin wir gehen*

Lesung und Gespräch

*Where we are going. A literary reading*

Peggy Mädler's new novel *Wohin wir gehen* will appear in February 2019. It tells the story of Almut and Rosa, two friends growing up in 1940s Bohemia. When Almut's father dies suddenly and her mother commits suicide, Rosa's mother, a German communist facing her own difficulties in Czechoslovakia, decides to take both girls with her to Brandenburg. There the girls share experiences of loss and uprootedness but also a growing attachment to the newly established East German state. Almut and Rosa become teachers and move to Berlin. But when Rosa turns thirty she wants a new beginning. Several months before the erection of the wall, she enters a train bound for West Berlin with only her purse. Almut's world breaks apart, she loses her sense of orientation, she searches for something that remains. Half a century later, Almut's daughter Elli also has a best friend, the dramatist Kristine, and she is the one who cares for the aging Almut after Elli takes a job at the Basel theater. Experiences and memories accrue like sediment. Journeys through life become intertwined between families and generations as they grapple with questions of leaving, arriving, and remaining—and the moment when one finally realizes what really counts.

**Peggy Mädler** is a freelance dramatist and writer who holds a PhD in cultural studies. In 2007, she helped found the Berlin-based artists group *Labor für kontrafaktisches Denken*, and remained on as a founding chair until 2009. She is also a member of the theater collective *She She Pop*. Her first novel, *Legende vom Glück des Menschen*, appeared in 2011.

**Angela von Rahden, Berlin / Bremen**

*“...daß mich dünkt, ich sei nur noch zur Hälfte“ Totengespräche unter Freunden*

*“... methinks, I were but half“. Dialogues of the dead among friends*

Along a gloomy coast, waves lap languidly against the shore. A man dressed in black moves hurriedly down the beach. The man is Michel de Montaigne. He is in search of his beloved friend Etienne de la Boétie, now lost to Montaigne again in death as in life. On his journey Montaigne meets more or less benevolent shadows who engage him in conversations about friendship. Aristoteles, Friedrich Schiller, Rahel Varnhagen, Hannah Arendt, and others question the convictions of Montaigne's *Essays* hundreds of years after they were published.

**Angela von Rahden** is a freelance writer who writes about political philosophy, media theory, and literature. Several years ago she began work on a series of conversations with the dead, including “Über das Alter: Ein Dialog zwischen Marcus Tullius Cicero und Philip Roth” (*Gegenworte*, 2011) and “Totengespräche: Wer sich in die Vergangenheit begibt, führt Unterhaltungen besonderer Art” (*Wespennest*, 2017). She is also the coauthor of *Medientheorien: Eine Einführung* (1997/2012). She holds a degree in philosophy from the Free University of Berlin.

**Janosch Schobin, Kassel**

*Symbolische Lebenspfänder und Intimkommunikation.  
Versuch einer verallgemeinerbaren soziologischen Theorie der Freundschaft*

*Symbolic Life Pledges and Intimate Communication. Towards a Generalized Sociology of Friendship*

Friendship is an uncommonly diverse and fluid form of social interaction. The practices and ideals of friendship vary greatly in intercultural and historical comparison—so much so, in fact, that one might see in them entirely different phenomena, linked only by vague similarities in form. The idea of the life-token, I suggest, offers a way to bridge these apparent differences. The concept, which has received scant attention in sociology despite its relative prominence in Marcel Mauss's *The Gift*, refers to a symbolic artefact that stands for the life of a person and remains inseparably tied to it. Historical forms of friendship such as the blood brotherhood can be decoded as a ritual exchange of symbolic life-tokens. Viewed at a sufficiently general level, this exchange describes the common denominator underlying all forms of friendship. One possible candidate for a modern-day life-token is the intimate secret.

**Janosch Schobin** is a sociologist at the University of Kassel, where he leads a group of doctoral candidates studying the role of digital games in encouraging low-carbon and zero-carbon behaviors as part of the German Ministry of Education and Research's project *DeCarbFriends – Dekarbonisierung – Freundschaftsnetzwerke – Gamification*. He earned his PhD from the University of Kassel in 2001 with a dissertation on friendship and care, which appeared in 2013 under the title *Freundschaft und Fürsorge: Bericht über eine Sozialform im Wandel* with Hamburger Edition. He has held positions as a research assistant at the Hamburg Institute for Social Research and as a freelance software developer. His work focuses on the sociology of friendship, social network theory, social isolation, family, death, work and gaming. He has published numerous essays on the sociology of friendship and is the coauthor of *Freundschaft heute: Eine Einführung in die Freundschaftssoziologie* (2016).

Homepage: <https://www.uni-kassel.de/projekte/decarbfriends/projektpartner/projektteam/dr-janosch-schobin.html>

**Björn Vedder, Herrsching am Ammersee**

## *Warum Facebook-Freunde echte Freunde sind*

*Why Facebook-Friends are Real Friends*

How do friendships relate to our desire to be loved for who we are and find recognition in our personal relationships? The friendships made on online social networks such as Facebook seem to be exemplary in this regard. But the desire for recognition that underlies these friendships raises the question of pathological narcissism. I contrast this type of friendship with one in which narcissistic ties are not pathological but forge half-way decent individuals—while better accommodating the desires and expectations placed on friends today than traditional models such as comradeship, friendship in need, and selfless friendship do. The idea of friendship as a moralizing force ties into Aristotle's notion of friendship as a relationship that conveys specific virtues.

*Björn Vedder* is a freelance writer and curator who holds a PhD in literature from the University of Bielefeld. His books, which address topics in art, literature, and philosophy, include *Neue Freunde: Über Freundschaft in Zeiten von Facebook* (2017), *Erkenntnis und Spektakel: Über Kunst und Illusion* (2014), and *Wilhelm Heinse und der so genannte Sturm und Drang: Künstliche Paradiese der Natur zwischen Rokoko und Klassik* (2011).

Homepage: <http://www.bjoernvedder.de/>

**Tanya Zaharchenko, Oslo**

*The Culture(s) of Human Connections. Expectations and Stereotypes*

This talk attends to the main perceived cultural differences in definitions and expectations of friendship, focusing primarily on the speaker's experience in America and in her home post-Soviet region. A selection of literary references provide helpful illustrative parallels.

*Tanya Zaharchenko* is a guest researcher in the Department of Literature at the University of Oslo. After completing a master's in Russian and East European Studies at Oxford University, she worked at the United Nations Development Programme and the Children's Defense Fund. She subsequently returned to academia and earned a PhD from the University of Cambridge in Slavonic Studies with the dissertation *Where Currents Meet: Post-Soviet Fiction of Kharkiv, Ukraine* (published in 2016). 2014–2015 she was a fellow at the Center for Historical Research at the Higher School of Economics in St. Petersburg and the following year was an Einstein Fellow of the Daimler and Benz Foundation and the Einstein Forum. She studies cultural memory, the relationship of identity and nation, and dissident movements. Her most recent publication is "Ninth Circle: Intellectuals as Traitors in the Russo-Ukrainian War," which appeared in *Collaborators and Deserters in Contemporary European Politics of Memory: Formulas of Betrayal* (2017).

Homepage: <https://www.hf.uio.no/ilos/english/people/aca/tanyaz/index.html>

**Rüdiger Zill, Potsdam**

## *What makes the friend a friend?*

Introduction

Friendship is an old theme, yet one which in recent years has gained new relevance due to changing social structures and network communication. It is precisely because of the inflationary use of the word "friend" in the Facebook community that a need has arisen to communicate what a real, a true friend is. There are many suggestions how to give the term meaning, not least in the philosophical tradition since Aristotle. But instead of defining what it takes for a person to merit this laurel, one can also ask the question which emotional needs are being satisfied in the friendships that we are already cultivating. It turns out that it is not always the one and only true friend who determines our emotional experience, but rather an ecology of friendships, in which groups are as important as twos and threes. The introduction will preview a range of issues to be discussed over the course of the conference.

**Rüdiger Zill** studied philosophy, history and sociology at the Free University of Berlin and at the Warburg Institute London. For his dissertation on *Meßkünstler und Rossebändiger. Zur Funktion von Modellen und Metaphern in philosophischen Affekttheorien* he received his doctorate at the Free University of Berlin. Selected publications: *Hinter den Spiegeln. Zur Philosophie Richard Rortys* (co.-ed. 2001); *Gestalten des Mitgefühls* (ed., 2006); *Ganz Anders? Philosophie zwischen akademischem Jargon und Alltagssprache* (ed., 2007); *Zum Lachen!* (co.-ed., 2009); *Metapherngeschichten. Perspektiven einer Theorie der Unbegreiflichkeit* (co.-ed. 2011); *Wahre Lügen. Bergman inszeniert Bergman* (co.-ed. 2012); *Werner Herzog. An den Grenzen* (co.-ed. 2015); *POETIK UND HERMENEUTIK im Rückblick. Interviews mit Beteiligten* (co.-ed. 2016); *Science -- Fiction – Film* (co.ed. 2017).

Homepage: [www.ruedigerzill.de](http://www.ruedigerzill.de)

## Dec. 6, 2018

19.00

*Eröffnung / Opening*

19.15

Peggy Mädler, Berlin

*Wohin wir gehen.*

Lesung und Gespräch

## Dec. 7, 2018

10.00

Rüdiger Zill, Potsdam

*Wann ist der Freund ein Freund? Einführung*

11.00

Angela von Rahden,  
Berlin / Bremen

*»...daß mich dünkt, ich sei nur noch zur Hälfte.«  
Totengespräche unter Freunden*

12.30

Anne Cronin, Lancaster

*Experiencing Friendship's Contradictions – Creating New Spaces of Connection*

13.30

*Mittagspause*

15.00

Andreas Kraß, Berlin

*»Mein Prinz, ich sterbe mit tausend Freuden für Sie!«*

*Die Katte-Tragödie in der Literatur (Fontane, Müller, Roes)*

16.30

Oleg Kharkhordin, St. Petersburg

*Personal and Political Friendship. How Does it Matter for the Classical Republican Tradition?*

18.00

Janosch Schobin, Kassel  
*Symbolische Lebenspfänder und Intimkommunikation Versuch einer verallgemeinerbaren soziologischen Theorie der Freundschaft*

19.30

Gerrit Gohlke, Potsdam

*»Social Portraits« von John Miller*

Einführung zur Ausstellung

## Dec. 8, 2018

10.00

Björn Vedder, Herrsching  
am Ammersee

*Warum Facebook-Freunde echte Freunde sind*

11.00

Tanya Zaharchenko, Oslo

*The Culture(s) of Human Connections. Expectations and Stereotypes*

12.30

Katja Kraus, Hamburg

*Freundschaft: Geschichten von Nähe und Distanz*

Lesung und Gespräch

13.30

*Mittagspause*

15.00

Petra Boden, Berlin

*Heidelberger Zement Vom langen Halt einer frühen Mischung*

16.00

Sebastian Kühn,  
Hannover

*Trinken mit Gelehrten. Über Freunde, Feinde und »andere Freunde« in der Frühen Neuzeit*