

Friday, July 1

JK 33/121

09.00 Dr. Claudia Löschner (Stuttgart),
"Schöne Bücher, schöne Menschen:
Buchausstattung als Programm in der
praktischen Ästhetik des Schiller-
Urenkels Alexander von Gleichen-
Russwurm (1865–1947)"

10.00 Stefanie Martin (Mainz),
"The Reflection of the Social Status of
the Book in Foreign Cultural Policy Due
to its Material Characteristics"

11.00 Break

11.30 Laura Rivas Gagliardi (FSGS),
"Bücher ahmen das Leben nach:
Kontraste des brasilianischen
Buchmarkts in den letzten fünf Jahren"

12.30 Break

13.30 Dr. Anthony Enns (Dalhousie),
"Comic Books vs. Graphic Novels:
Commodity Forms and Cultural
Prestige"

14.30 Dr. Christian A. Bachmann
(Berlin), "Consume and/or Destroy!
The Semiotics, Materiality, and Meta-
Mediality of Comics in Print"

15.30 Break

16.00 Anna Rick (Siegen), "Notebooks:
On the Materiality of Wolfgang
Herrndorf's *Arbeit und Struktur*"

17.00 Katharina Warda (FSGS),
"Narrative Industries: Weblogs
between Art, Economics and Social
Status"

18.00 Closing Remarks

For more information:

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Consumerism & Prestige

The Materiality of Literature in the Postindustrial Age



**Friedrich Schlegel Graduate
School of Literary Studies**

Freie Universität Berlin

June 30 – July 1, 2016

Consumerism & Prestige

The Materiality of Literature in the Postindustrial Age

This workshop will explore the relationship between consumerism and prestige by examining how the material properties of books (covers, binding, typography, paper stock, etc.) reflect and influence their cultural status. In the nineteenth century, for example, the industrialization of print democratized literature by making books available to a mass reading public, yet the increased demand for new content also lowered the cultural entrance level, which resulted in a tremendous expansion of popular or trivial literature as well as a wide range of cheap formats, such as dime novels, pulp magazines, and paperbacks. These developments were perceived as a threat to the literary elite, who relied on material distinctions as a way of securing their cultural authority. Some publishers also began to mimic the conventions of exclusiveness through deluxe editions that sought to preserve the highbrow status of literature as a marker of class distinctions.

In many cases, the distinctions between highbrow and lowbrow taste had little to do with the content of the texts themselves, given that books more often functioned as markers of socioeconomic status, like clothing or home décor. At the risk of being provocative, one might even go so far as to say that since the eighteenth century the concept of literary taste has been more closely related to fashion sense than critical judgment, although this claim clearly challenges the hermeneutic and philosophical traditions upon which these cultural distinctions rely for their continued relevance. This same process also informs contemporary debates concerning digital media, as cultural distinctions are now being reconfigured through new forms of electronic display in the postprint era.

The workshop will address this provocative claim by examining how the tensions between consumerism and prestige reflect fundamental historical changes with regard to the development of technology, literacy, and social power. Participants will explore how the cultural status of literary texts can be understood as an inherent consequence of their material form, which often changes the value of texts that are otherwise experienced as more or less prestigious.

All talks are free and open to the public.

Schedule

Thursday, June 30

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13.00 Opening Remarks

13.15 Dr. Andrew Patten (Erfurt), "Excessive Literature and Material Scarcity: The Literary Anthology around 1800"

14.15 Dr. Christoph Rauen (Kiel), "Ludwig Tieck, Paperbacks, and the Novella Craze"

15.15 Break

15.45 Dr. Laura Hatry (Madrid), "Ebook Collections as an Opportunity to Recover Unpublished or Forgotten Texts"

16.45 Bernhard Metz (FSGS), "The Book and the eBook: Materiality and Book Design in the Works of Junot Díaz"

17.45 Break

Evening Lecture

KL 32/202

18.15 Prof. Dr. Arthur Jacobs (FU) and Prof. Dr. Massimo Salgaro (Università degli Studi di Verona/MPI for Empirical Aesthetics Frankfurt), "The Cultural Status of the Book vs. the Cultural Status of the eBook: An Experimental Approach"

20.00 Reception