

Call for Papers

Vegetal Poetics: Narrating Plants in Culture and History

International conference of the [Literary and Cultural Plant Studies Network](#)

in cooperation with [Deutsches Hygiene-Museum](#)

June 6-8, 2019, Dresden, Germany

Whether in the garden, house, field, or forest, plants are all around us, but we often do not notice them. This “plant blindness” ([Wandersee & Schussler](#)) also extends to the abundance of plants in literature, and it obscures their roles in cultural and historical developments. Recent [\(critical\) plant studies research](#) in humanities disciplines such as philosophy, art history, literature, history, gender and cultural studies has begun to bring plants out of the ornamental background and the realm of the symbolic in order to investigate the role of botanical entities and the imagination surrounding vegetal matter(s).

Building on these forays into plant studies, this conference asks about the nature of vegetal poetics. What kinds of stories are told about, with, and by plants, and how? In which ways and to what effect do the differences but also commonalities between people and plants catalyze ecocentric, ecological, or ecocritical literature? And how do plant (hi)stories relate to the material, epistemological, cultural, aesthetic, and affective environments that these narratives co-constitute? The conference invites an exploration of these and other questions about vegetal “texts” and “narration” in the broadest sense. Looking at fictional and non-fictional accounts of plants throughout history, these inquiries will broaden the scope of traditional interpretations of the vegetal world in order to reach a new understanding of the role plants play in our cultural and literary imagination.

By bringing together scholars from a variety of disciplines who engage with plants in literature, culture, and history, this international and interdisciplinary conference provides a space for conversations about the methodologies and materials of this emerging research area. In the spirit of the [Literary and Cultural Plant Studies Network](#), the meeting seeks to create connections and spur collaborations across disciplinary and

geographical borders. All events will take place in the context of the exhibit “[People and Plants](#)” (April 2019-2020) at the [German Hygiene Museum](#).

Interested scholars are invited to submit a CV or short bio and a ca. 350-word proposal for a 30-minute conference paper to Joela Jacobs (joelajacobs@email.arizona.edu), Isabel Kranz (isabel.kranz@univie.ac.at), and Solvejg Nitzke (solvejg.nitzke@tu-dresden.de) by **November 1, 2018**. We are also open to alternative presentation formats of research results, for instance poster presentations. We expressly encourage junior scholars to apply. Pending the outcome of funding applications, we will be able to defray travel and accommodation costs partly or in full. Please direct any questions to the above addresses and become a part of the [Plant Network](#), whether you can join us in Dresden or not.