

## **All in the Family: Theorizing Incest and/as Media Erotics**

University of Pittsburgh, September 30th - October 1st, 2016

Hosted by the Film Studies Graduate Student Organization (FSGSO)

Call for Papers | Deadline: July 10th, 2016

The value neutral concept of film as inherently collaborative exists both in the industry and in academia, but how does the lens of incest highlight something potentially more intimate, charged, and even transgressive in "collaboration"? How is incest, in some ways, the origin story of scholarly and artistic work? What happens when you think about incest as a theory through which to understand philosophical and theoretical genealogies? Does this generate a kind of erotic intimacy in academic relationships? How does this affect the way power is distributed in these relationships? What meaningful lines of influence were the result of productive and destructive genealogies? This conference will explore how repulsion, attraction, and repression of Inter-Family co-mingling appears side-by-side in incest's thematic cinematic representations in film and television and ubiquitously in incestuous film culture, industry practices, and critical inheritance.

Levi Strauss and Georges Bataille argue that the incest rule is primarily a problem of political and social exchange, a necessity for intra-social communication. Incest is what we must forgo, give up within our instinctual selves, in order to function amongst outsiders. The phobia of inbreeding is met conversely with the fear of the outsider and the anxiety of inter-mixing. Incestuous practices primarily seek to separate and segregate in their desire for affinity. Incestuous activities in film and media culture range from obsessions with media purity and proprietary technologies to discriminatory and preferential hiring practices in Hollywood. Where precisely do we delineate between theories and realities of kink, abuse, and conventional romance? Between the comfort of familial homogeneity and the repulsion of claustrophobic intimacy? The politics of familiar inclusion and exclusion based on who-you-know or who-you've-fucked points to the limited and closed-off nature of film institutions including the difficulties of making it as an outsider in the like-bodied film industry (#OscarsSoWhite), or even critically adoptive legacies in film scholarship and criticism (a student of XYZ).

Possible Topics Could Include:

- Interwoven lines of influence and affinity in artistic and scholarly work (citations, homages, institutions)
- Genre and Incest (Romantic Comedy and Horror)
- Incest and television (production, marketing, consumption—binge watching as product/narrative loyalty vs. singular, stifling practice)
- Political and Philosophical theories of Incest: Bataille, Levi Strauss, Freud
- Film Family Dynasties: Coppola, Barrymore, Warner Brothers, De Laurentis
- Medium Specificity, Greenberg, Mixed Media
- Film-Units, Directing Teams, Ensemble Casting: Arthur Freed, Coen Brothers, Orson Welles' Mercury Theater Ensemble
- Kinship as exclusion, xenophobia, Incestuous institutions, nepotism
- Critical schools of thought and theoretical adoptive lineages: Derrideans, Frankfurt School
- Proprietary media technologies and software (“(in)Compatibility” between devices, brands etc.)
- Narrative of Abuse and Theories of Trauma
- Explicit and Implicit Incest themes in Films, Television, and other Media
- Explicit and Implicit representations of Incest in Films, Television, and other Media
- Theories and representations of cloning (the uncanny valley)
- Theories and narratives of sexualized and/or familial creation (Pygmalion, Frankenstein)

Interested graduate students may submit abstracts (maximum 300 words) – along with institutional/departmental affiliations and current email – to [pittfilmgradconference@gmail.com](mailto:pittfilmgradconference@gmail.com) by **July 10, 2016**. We also invite creative submissions (film, video, installation) responding to our theme in forms other than the traditional conference paper. If you go this route, please submit a description (maximum 300 words) that includes spatial, temporal, and technological requirements. For more information, please contact the FSGSO by email at the above address.