

**Dr. Cornelia Gerhardt**

**c.gerhardt@mx.uni-saarland.de**

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Abstract for the session “Food for thought - exploring the relationship between LGBTQ+ identities and linguistic representations of culinary practices”

### **Trans food practices in popular culture? - The TV Show *Transparent***

A burgeoning number of linguistic food studies (e.g. Gerhardt et al. 2013) have drawn attention to pivotal points between language, food, culture and identity. Gender has been linked not only to food production and consumption, but also to the symbolic connotations of food (Counihan et al. 1998, Inness 2001). Erhardt criticizes, however, the heteronormativity of these endeavors: she wishes to queer food studies by analyzing contemporary Chicana lesbian literature about food (2012).

In this wake, the current paper analyzes representations of practices around food in popular culture, analyzing how culinary practices and queer politics are negotiated in recent TV series. In particular, we will focus on the TV series *Transparent* (2014-), a show that has placed a transgender character center stage. In this show, the family is often depicted eating, and the camera enjoys focusing on food-stained faces or fingers. Investigating the interplay between these representations and the gender and sexual identities of the TV personae, we will attempt to queer food studies by showing how in this TV series questions of gender, sexuality, and food intersect. Which claims for “culinary citizenships” are being made in this show (Fellner 2013)? Which language use in the series is related to the foodways of the protagonists? To what extent does the ethnicity of the family have to be taken into consideration? Relying on Queer Theory as well as drawing on insights from (linguistic) Food Studies, we will show how *Transparent* constitutes an important political intervention into sexual/culinary politics.

#### References

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