

## Desegregating the American Family: Interracial Kinship since *Loving v. Virginia*

### Martin Luther King Jr. Day Lecture

Dr. Cedric Essi  
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While the US Supreme Court decision *Loving v. Virginia* in 1967 marks the moment when the interracial family became legitimate on paper, it was only in the 1990s that one could witness a broad paradigm shift toward cultural legitimization — commonly referred to as “multiracialism.” This lecture engages with multiracialism by demonstrating how Americans turned to autobiographical practices to assert interracial familial belonging in public. In providing an overview of this phenomenon, this lecture also explains why Barack Obama’s bestseller memoir *Dreams from My Father* (1995/2004) could be retitled *Dreams from My White Mother*, why white mothers like memoirist Jane Lazarre described the experience of interracial kinship as “becoming black,” and why queer adoptive families are often interracial as well.

Monday  
January 16, 2022  
6:00 c.t.-8:00 pm

Regina-Pacis-Weg 3  
Main Building, Senatssaal

Cedric Essi is post-doctoral scholar at the Collaborative Research Center “Law & Literature” (WWU Münster/Osnabrück University) and associate editor of the journal *Amerikastudien/American Studies*. He graduated from the University of Würzburg, received his Ph.D. in American Studies from FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg, and also taught at the University of Bremen. Essi’s work focuses on Black studies, cultural legal studies, life writing, and queer studies.