



In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
Angela Cazel-Jahn

Will defend her dissertation

**Crossing a Zone of Mutual Oblivion:
Sustainability and Childrearing in the Anthropocene**

Abstract

Raising future generations is a culturally diverse, universally technological human project. This research brought the everyday work of raising children into the domain of sustainability scholarship, by first proposing a model of childrearing as a globally distributed socio-technical system, and then exploring the model with participants in two nodes – an elementary and middle school, and a children’s museum. In the process, the research objective shifted towards using methods that were less academic and more relevant to childrearing agents. The focus on participatory survey data was abandoned, in favor of autoethnographic documentation of a long-term engagement with a third node of the system, a child welfare setting. This approach yielded unexpected findings that fit the proposed model, identified characteristics of a Zone of Mutual Oblivion (ZMO) that exists between childrearing and sustainability, and clarified ways in which people prioritize their own needs and responsibilities, the developmental needs of children, the potential needs and capacities of future generations, and the functional integrity of ecological systems.

Monday, October 28, 2019
2:00 pm
Wrigley Hall, Room 401

Faculty, students, and the public are invited.

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Beth Blue Swadener, Chair
Dr. Brad Allenby
Dr. Jose Lobo