
Session 4: Arts, Sports, and Families



Andrew Gardner

Title: Rethinking the Family: Migration, Mobility and Urban Space in Doha, Qatar

Abstract:

This paper commences with a summary of the analytic architecture underpinning my 2011 publication entitled *Gulf Migration and the Family*. From scholar attendees to the conference, I'm foremost interested in gathering insight concerning the ontological structure of my analysis: that our discussion of family in contemporary Arabia might be conceptually divided into those families left behind in sending states by transnational labour migrants; those families that migrate as a cohesive familial unit; and those families, including many Khaleeji families, that have incorporated domestic workers into the quotidian function of the household. In my estimation, these areas of concern encapsulate the nexus between migration and the family. Building on this, the second portion of this paper articulates two points. First, I want to consider the role of enclaves and the partition of space in the urban landscapes characteristic of the region. I suggest the enclaving of difference in the urban landscape serves a noteworthy purpose in the contemporary era of mobility: for migrants, for families, and for citizen-Khaleejis, these urban spaces establish places where culture might take root amidst the unprecedented plurality and diversity found in the Gulf city. This patchwork cultural fabric is integral to families. The final point is a permutation of the movement to 'decolonize' our growingly cosmopolitan scholarly conversations.

Bio:

*Andrew Gardner is a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, in the United States. A sociocultural anthropologist and ethnographer by training, for the past two decades Andrew's fieldwork has been focused on the places, peoples and societies that interact in the petroleum-rich states of the Arabian Peninsula. He has conducted extensive fieldwork in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Qatar, throughout South Asia, and elsewhere. Between 2008 and 2010, he also served as an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Qatar University. In addition to numerous journal articles and book chapters, he is the author of *City of Strangers: Gulf Migration and the Indian Community in Bahrain* (Cornell, 2010). His current scholarly pursuits examine the juncture between transnational migration, urban planning, and urban life in Doha, Qatar, and his new book — *The Fragmentary City* — will be published early next year (Cornell 2024).*
