



Annual Report 2024 & 2025





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2024 & 2025

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Opening Remarks

American Studies at JGU

Eight Years of the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies

Alfred Hornung
Speaker

The last two years of the High-Potential Research Area of the Obama Institute, the seventh and the eighth year since its foundation in 2017, was the start into our new research projects (2024-28) funded by the Ministry of Science and Health. The approval and promotion of the proposed research project "The Return of the Submerged: Recovering Marginalized Knowledges" intends to identify alternative knowledges and counternarratives present in a variety of environments and communicative fields within the dominant culture in the U.S. and Canada. We will investigate the location and preservation of submerged knowledges in these cultures and direct our special attention to their observation in new media, Indigenous communities, and immigrant cultures. A major component of this research is the collaboration with colleagues at our long-time exchange partner, Georgia State University in Atlanta. It builds on and enhances joint ventures of the past and connects with the research goals of the GSU Center for Studies on



Africa & Its Diaspora, directed by Elizabeth West, our participation in the GSU Mellon Intersectionality Studies grant and the organization of a joint conference at the Obama Institute. During her research stay at GSU, Mita Banerjee successfully reshaped the original proposal with Elizabeth West. To address the inter- and transdisciplinary areas they were able to win the participation of PIs from cultural and social studies and from the natural sciences with a focus on digital humanities. In July 2025, the group met with a similarly constituted group of PIs in Mainz for a first conference to set up research teams and their topics.

This joint research as well as teaching profit from the excellent research ideas of our Obama fellows whom we select to advance the examination of submerged

knowledges. Michael Lackey (U of Minnesota) explored the differences in the simultaneous biofictional treatment of Moses by Zora Neale Hurston and Thomas Mann. David Louis Brown (Claremont U) presented his hemispheric studies of Blackness and Latinidad in Transnational Print Culture. Vanessa Evans (Appalachian SU) focused on the Resurgence in the Contemporary Indigenous Novel." We were especially pleased to welcome the first Native American Obama fellow, Renae Watchman, Diné and Tsalagi (an enrolled citizen of the Navajo Nation, Shiprock Branch and Cherokee), a professor of Indigenous Studies at McMaster University in Ontario. Her work on Karl May and her Stanford Univ. doctoral thesis on "Fictionalizing the Indigenous in German Travel Literature (1772-1834): Chamisso, Forster, Humboldt, and Maximilian" and previous stays in Germany precede her ambitious attempt to establish an Indigenous narrative theory based on Native American storytelling in her monograph *Restoring Relations Through Stories: From Dinétah to Denendeh* (University of Arizona Press, 2024), which she elaborated on in her Obama lecture. Amy Katherine King (Asst. Prof. English, Tuskegee U) worked on her Book Project "Speculative Plantation," exemplified in her Fourth-of-July speech on "Haunted/ Haunting Whiteness in *Atlanta*, Season 3." Kanika Batra (English, Texas Tech Univ.), presented her book project "Black Freedom from Selma to Soweto: Gender, Work, Consciousness." In his Obama lecture Ottmar Ette (Univ. of Potsdam, Director of

the Alexander von Humboldt Research projects funded by the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences) presented on "Vielbewegte Leben: Zu Georg Forster, Adelbert von Chamisso und Alexander von Humboldt," which connected Humboldt's American travels with Latin American and Transnational American studies and the University of Mainz history of Georg Forster. The social sciences building which bears his name, also holds the USA Library, a gift of the US Armed Forces Camp Lindsey Library in Wiesbaden in 1995. In the 30-year celebration of its existence the University head librarians Dr. Michael Hansen and Dr. Nora Kuster together with Dean Axel Schäfer and members of the Obama Institute expressed our gratitude to Consul General Brian Heath and his team. Ottmar Ette agreed to joining our research program as a member of the Advisory Board.

In addition to the treatment of the general topic of submerged knowledges, the projects of Scott Zukowski (American Studies, Univ. of Graz), "*Freedom's Journal* and the Intermedial Power of Periodicals" and of Scott Hames (English, Univ. of Stirling), "How International Was *Scottish International* and its World?" also addressed Oliver Scheiding and Jutta Ernst's research on Magazines Studies. Yuan Shu (Assoc. Prof. American Studies, Texas Tech Univ.), drafted a return of postwar politics "Cold War 2.0 and Transnational American Studies" from his Chinese American perspective. On his return visit, past Obama fellow Jeffrey Herlihy-Mera (Univ. of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez) presented his

plans for new projects in conjunction with his journal *Nuevos Horizontes* on "Taino as a diasporic language and tourism opportunity" and "Share reading across continents and languages," to apply for funds from the Bravo Foundation and Teagle Foundation, in which we are invited to participate. We also started an exchange program for students and faculty arranged during Alfred Hornung's visit to Mayagüez. This exchange will open up new student and faculty activities on Latin American and hemispheric American Studies and complements existing exchange programs with American and Canadian universities, including the Agreement with Georgia State University for dual international supervision ("Co-Tutelle") of a Doctoral Thesis granting both a PhD and Dr. phil. for successful graduates. As part of Prof. LeeAnne Richardson's visit, chair of the Department of English, new terms were implemented to allow for greater flexibility in accomplishing the required course work.

These innovative approaches and programs are also reflected in teaching and research of all members of the Obama Institute: Mita Banerjee's graduate students organized a conference on "Human Enhancement: Ethics, Life Sciences, and the Human Body in Cultural Representations," Sandra Meerwein conducted a hybrid conference on "Interdisciplinary Insights in Transpacific Studies: Transpacific Studies Network," Alfred Hornung was invited by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences to present his research on "Confucius and American Democracy" at the conference on

"Third International Forum on Democracy: The Shared Human Values" in Beijing and to give a lecture on "The Silk Road and Cultural Exchanges" at the "2025 International Forum on Mutual Learning among Civilizations" organized by The Cultural Affairs Bureau of Macao, covered in the national CCTV news. Oliver Scheiding cooperated with colleagues at the University of Bordeaux MONTAIGNE in the conference on "The Indian Citizenship Act at 100: Indigenous Rights, Indigenous Futures." All of these engagements contribute to our interests to communicate Transnational American Studies concerns and ideas to the general public. In this effort we shared the public outreach of our colleagues at Georgia State University who ran the third and fourth publicly broadcast Read-a-thon in the Black history month of February 2024 and 2025 in which we joined our colleagues in the US and Africa in recovering submerged African knowledges in publications in Europe, the US and Africa. Likewise, our Fourth-of-July speakers addressed current issues of common concern. Thomas Austenfeld (Université de Fribourg) used a quotation from Rudyard Kipling's poem "The English Flag" "World-losers elsewhere, conquerors here!" as a critical perspective for his analysis of "The Fourth of July in American Poetry," and Atiba Pertilla (German Historical Institute, Washington, DC) focused on monetary issues in "Red, White, and Blue — and Greenbacks: Money and American Identity since the Civil War." Students of Dr. Claudia Görg's, Dr. Allison Nick's and Dr. Julia Velten's courses complemented

the subjects of the presentations with an exhibition of posters. The events were rounded off with a get-together over pizza and drinks. The US elections was one of the major topics of discussion and the focus of a presentation by Megan Shai, director of the Technology Policy Center for American Progress (Washington, DC) on "Tech-Powered Democracy: The Role of Social Media in the U.S. Elections" and continues to determine teaching and research as well as public statements, in which we cooperated with the Atlantic Academy and its director Dr. David Sirakov, a member of our Advisory Board.

The Obama dissertation prizes awarded at the annual Obama lecture event in November went to Dr. Naima Green-Riley for her Harvard University thesis "How to Win Friends and Influence People Overseas: The U.S., China, and the Microfoundations of Public Diplomacy" and Dr. Cora Friederike Schmidt-Ott (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg) "Samuel P. Huntington (1927-2008): Eine intellektuelle Biographie." The awards for the Hans-Galinsky-Memorial Prize for undergraduate and graduate work in Early American Studies went to Enrico Marx for his term paper "Frederick Douglass' Blueprint Literacy and Violence as a Way of Achieving Manhood," to Kyra Sposny for her master thesis "Two-Spirit Print and Indigenous Media Activism Kai Minosh Pyle's Plurimedial Creativity" and Carina Stein for her master thesis "Shaping National Identity through Food: State-Produced US Propaganda Posters during World War I."

Members of the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies are active and esteemed principal investigators in collaborative third-party projects on Categories of Human Differentiation, which after review was extended (Mita Banerjee, Axel Schäfer, Oliver Scheiding), Periodical Studies (Jutta Ernst, Oliver Scheiding), Indigenous Studies (Mita Banerjee, Oliver Scheiding), Life Writing and Medical Humanities (Mita Banerjee, Alfred Hornung), CORE: Critical Online Reasoning in Higher Education (Mita Banerjee). The Obama Institute serves as the editorial office of *The Journal of Transnational American Studies* in the fifth and sixth year with Alfred Hornung as editor-in-chief, Dr. Sabine Kim as managing editor, and Ahngeli Shivam as one of the editorial assistants. In December 2024 the members of the editorial staff of *JTAS*, based in Canada, the US, Scotland, Germany and Turkey, presented their current research projects and shared their editorial expertise with the audience of this talk shop on the Collaboration of Transnational American Studies. Among the many excellent degrees achieved by students and staff of the Obama Institute the summa cum laude dissertations of Jonas Müller on "Climate Anxiety and the Contemporary American Novel" and Maren Emde "The Survival Memoir: Reading and Writing in Survivor Culture" as well as Dr. Britta Muszeika's completion of her habilitation degree with a thesis on "Narrative Reconciliation - Literary Encounters of Care" deserve special recognition. We also congratulate

proudly Dr. Jens Temmen, graduate and Adjunct Faculty member of the Obama Institute, on his professorship for American Studies at the University of Eichstätt. We welcome Prof. Dr. Claudia Landwehr (Political Theory and Public Policy) and Jun.-Prof. Dr. Angela Kölling (Anglophone Literatures and Cultures) on the board of Associate Members of JGU.

We gratefully acknowledge the academic and financial support of the heads of Johannes Gutenberg University and the Ministry of Science and Health for carrying out our research program and pursuing our new research projects. The generous funds provides us with a good basis for planning our future programs.

This Annual Report documents the impressive output of the members of the Obama Institute in terms of research activities, publications, and innovative approaches to Transnational American Studies. It lists our very productive exchange program with 18 American and Canadian universities, exchanges with Chinese and Australian partners and European Erasmus connections. We also recognize gratefully the cooperation of all our colleagues worldwide, especially Prof. J.R. Duke's biennial organization of the American Studies summer program focusing on the South of the US. On behalf of the Executive Board, I would like to express our gratitude to the members of our Advisory Board and the Associate Members at the Johannes Gutenberg University as well as the Atlantic Academy for their invaluable support and cooperation.

Thanks are due to all students and faculty members who empower the Obama Institute with their energy and commitment. Special thanks go to the editor Christine Plicht, who compiled and edited this double issue of the Annual Report expertly. Last but not least, we owe special thanks to Anette Vollrath and Christine Plicht, who untiringly and proficiently handle all administrative tasks and manage the Obama Institute professionally all year round.



American Studies in Mainz and Its U.S. Connections in the Rhine-Main Region

The 30th Anniversary of the USA Library at JGU

Translated JGU Press Release

Events co-organized by
Anja-Maria Bassimir and UB Mainz

On Thursday, 20 November 2025, the University Library and the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies hosted a celebration marking the 30th anniversary of the USA Library. The ceremony, held from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the AMA Lounge of the University Library, opened with addresses by Dr. Michael Hansen, Director of the University Library; U.S. Consul General Brian Heath; and Prof. Axel Schäfer, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Media and Cultural Studies. Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung, speaker of the Obama Institute, joined the event online to deliver a welcome address. In her keynote lecture, former USA Library librarian Dr. Monika Hagenmaier reflected on the library's founding and early development and highlighted its continuing importance for research and teaching.

Consul General Heath, who assumed his post in Frankfurt in August 2024, visited the USA Library prior to the anniversary celebration. The library was established on 20 November 1995 with the support

of a donation from the U.S. military. Its original collection consisted of holdings from the Camp Lindsey Library, a library for Air Force personnel in Wiesbaden. Today, with more than 80,000 print publications as well as access to digital newspapers, journals, and e-books, the library is one of the largest collections on the United States in Germany.

During his visit, Consul General Heath discovered books from the original Wiesbaden collection, covering a broad range of subjects, including travel guides to his home state of New Jersey. The holdings acquired since 1995, identified by blue labels, now far outnumber those bearing the original white labels. Together, the two parts form a complementary collection of literature on the historical, cultural, political, and social dimensions of the United States.

In his address, Consul General Heath recalled that, during his university studies, he had found libraries to be places of quiet and gateways to the knowledge of the world. Dr. Michael Hansen and Prof. Dr. Axel Schäfer likewise reflected on the formative role that libraries had played in their own academic and professional careers. Prof. Dr. Schäfer emphasized the historical significance of open-access libraries in the American tradition: free access to books marked the beginning of a process of democratizing knowledge.

From the outset, the USA Library at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz was open not only to students, but also played a pioneering role in the adoption of new technologies. Dr. Hagenmaier recalled that



From left to right: Dr. Michael Hansen, Dr. Anja-Maria Bassimir, Consul General Brian Heath, Dr. Nora Kuster ©Universitätsbibliothek Mainz

the USA Library was home to the university's first publicly accessible computer, that digital subscriptions enabled access to a previously unimaginable range of newspapers and journals, and that the USA Library was the first location on campus to provide access to online databases.

Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung described the donation of the Camp Lindsey Library to Johannes Gutenberg University as a symbol of German-American friendship and emphasized that the library continues to serve as a cornerstone of knowledge about the United States for students of American Studies and beyond.

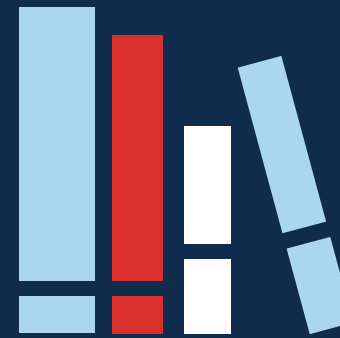
As part of the anniversary program, the University Library, in cooperation with the Obama Institute for Transnational American

Studies, screened the documentary film *The Librarians* at 6:30 p.m. on 20 November in the Muschel lecture hall (N3). The film addresses book bans in schools in Texas. Further information is available at: [About the Film – The Librarians Film | Official Site](#).

In addition, a small exhibition on book bans in the United States was presented in the area between the Georg Forster Building and the Central Library, as well as in the display case in the AMA Lounge. The exhibition remained on view until the end of November.

2024 & 2025

at a Glance



72
Publications



2
Locations in
Mainz & Germersheim



131
B.A., M.A., Ph.D. Graduations
(B.Ed./M.Ed. not included)



57
OI Faculty &
Staff Members

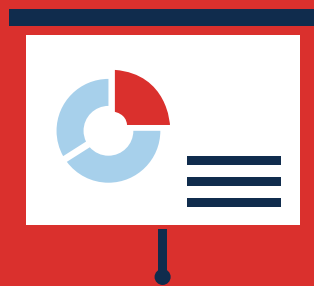
4
Conferences



109
Guest Talks

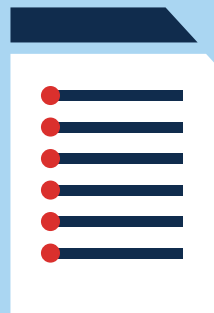


1826
Students



113
Presentations Given
by OI members

14
Different Study
Programs Benefit
from OI Course Offers



29
International
Exchange
Partners



The Obama Institute

“ The Obama Institute aims to foster an understanding of the U.S. as a vibrant, complex culture in a changing world order, in which different visions of “Americanness” are taken up by communities across the globe.

Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee

Mission and History of the Obama Institute

The history of the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies begins with the institution of the chair for American literature at Johannes Gutenberg University in 1952. After the establishment of the first professorship on the culture of North America in Germany at the University of Berlin in 1930, also in the service of providing useful information for the political regime, American authorities instituted positions at German universities for the study of the United States after the war in Munich and Erlangen-Nürnberg in 1946. Mainz followed in 1952 as an addition to the field of English philology. The establishment of this third chair of American Studies in postwar Germany was certainly connected to the strong presence of American troops in the state of Rhineland-Palatinate in the Southwest of Germany with important air bases in Ramstein and Spangdahlem.

Mainz, the capital of Rhineland-Palatinate, and Wiesbaden, the capital of the state of Hesse across the Rhine River, used to have several barracks until the relocation of troops to the United States in the 1990s. Today there are still 18,500 troops stationed in Rhineland-Palatinate, and Wiesbaden-Erbenheim is the home of the Lucius D. Clay Garrison and became the Headquarters of United States Army Europe (USAREUR) in 2012. When the American troops left Camp Lindsey in Wiesbaden in 1993, they donated their extensive library with digital data bases

to Johannes Gutenberg University where it now forms the USA-Bibliothek in the Georg Forster Building, complementing the holdings of the departmental and university library. The cultural influences of this American presence transformed German society and animated the course of American Studies at Mainz. Hans Galinsky, the first chair and founder of American Studies, followed an all-inclusive and comprehensive approach to American literature and culture from the multi-language colonial beginnings to its modern expressions in the twentieth century with a link to an American language education in German *Gymnasiums*. His successors, Winfried Herget and Oliver Scheiding, as well as his professorial colleagues, Klaus Lubbers, Hans Helmcke, Renate von Bardeleben, and Frieder Busch, followed this path. Together with new professorial appointees, Alfred Hornung, Mita Banerjee, Jutta Ernst, and Axel Schäfer, they transformed the original one-chair basis over the years into a cooperative research platform with an international standing.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the CHE (Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung) ranking recognized the quality of American studies at Mainz as one of the four research intensive fields of the University. In the research rating of English and American Studies in Germany, administered by the German Council of Science and Humanities in 2010-12, Mainz

American Studies, together with the John F. Kennedy Institute in Berlin, received the highest score in research excellence. In 2012, we also celebrated our 60-year anniversary and organized the Annual Convention of the German Association for American Studies on the topic of "American Lives," with Ambassador Philip Murphy of the U.S. Embassy in Berlin addressing the audience in the opening ceremony. In our talks, we introduced the idea to found an Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies. Both the eminent status of Mainz American Studies and the popular acclaim of the American President Barack Obama in Germany motivated us to pursue the formation of such an institute, similar to the John F. Kennedy Institute in Berlin, but with a different research agenda.

The re-election of the President and his political objectives coincided with major research and teaching goals of our American Studies program: the multi-ethnic constitution of the United States of America, interreligious communication, the importance of life writing, and the transnational dimension of American politics and culture. In addition to the idea of liberty and freedom, one of the major incentives for the foundation of the John F. Kennedy Institute, the proposed Obama Institute would be guided by the idea of diversity underlying the development of American society in the twenty-first century. This also includes research on the activities of his family members at home and abroad, such as Michelle Obama's concerns for health issues and nutrition, the welfare programs of the president's Luo sister Auma in Kenya, and the musical education of children in

Chinese orphanages pursued by his Kenyan brother Mark. The president of Johannes Gutenberg University, Georg Krausch, and the members of the University Council strongly supported the idea of the Obama Institute. To gain President Obama's permission for the Institute, Dr. Hans Friderichs, former Economic Affairs Minister and chairperson of the University Council, served as a liaison with Ambassador Philip Murphy and the White House. In the summer of 2013, the Embassy communicated to us that "President Obama would be pleased to have an Institute named after him." The general agreement was to plan the official inauguration of the Obama Institute after the second term of his presidency. In preparation of this event, we organized an international conference on "Obama and Transnational American Studies" in October 2014, in which Dr. Auma Obama participated as a keynote speaker relating aspects of her German academic education and presenting her Foundation Sauti Kuu, a self-help program for young people in Kenya. We also had to clear several administrative hurdles and get the agreement of the Department of English and Linguistics, the Faculty of Philosophy and Philology, the University Boards of the Senate and the University Council. President Krausch proved to be a great help and saw to it that the "Regulations of the 'Obama Institute' (OI) research platform" within the Department of English and Linguistics successfully passed all bodies and went into effect on December 16, 2016. The appendix lists the members of the Executive Board, Advisory Board Members, and Associate Members.

Alfred Hornung

Obama Institute Bylaws

**Regulations of the "Obama Institute" (OI) research platform
within the Department of English and Linguistics,
Faculty of Philosophy and Philology
(Resolution of the Faculty Council on November 30, 2016)**

Preamble

"The Obama Institute (OI) researches the roles of the USA in a changing global world in the most diverse areas, including culture, history, literature, media, economics, religion, medicine, the arts, and music. The research undertaken by the OI is interdisciplinary and transnational and leads the way in the new definition of area studies and cultural studies in the 21st century. In doing so, the OI fills a gap in current research by no longer restricting American Studies to the national borders of the USA. The OI studies not only processes of cultural exchange, but also shifting relations of the most various kinds. Staff from different research groups are currently working collaboratively across disciplines, including scholars of Cultural and Literary Studies, Law, Geography, History, and Sociology."

§ 1 (Tasks)

The OI undertakes interdisciplinary and transnational research on the roles of the USA with the most diverse approaches, including how nation-states such as the USA are redefining themselves at the beginning of the 21st century, how the complex demands of global migration and refugee displacement contribute to new forms of social relations, and how communication – such as between Indigenous groups and settler societies – can be opened.

§ 2 (Members)

The work in the areas outlined in § 1 is principally a prerequisite for membership in the OI. Founding members are those members of the Executive Board, Advisory Board, and Associate Members who are named in the appendix to these regulations. The Executive Board will decide on the acceptance of further members (§ 3).

§ 3 (Executive Board)

The Executive Board consists of professors from the teaching area American Studies in the Department of English and Linguistics, Faculty of Philosophy and Philology, and from the American Studies, British Studies, and Anglophone Studies divisions, Faculty of Translation Studies, Linguistics, and Cultural Studies.

§ 4 (Tasks of the Executive Board)

The Executive Board has the following tasks:

- Advising and deciding on basic matters concerning the OI
- Development of the conceptual direction and the research program
- Deciding the financial and personnel arrangements
- Electing the OI Director
- Advising and deciding on the acceptance and exclusion of OI members.

The Executive Board will meet at least twice per semester.

§ 5 (Speaker)

The Speaker of the OI is a member of the Executive Board and is elected by the other members of the Executive Board. The term of office will usually be one year. The Speaker's role will be assumed in rotation by the members of the Executive Board.

§ 6 (Tasks of the Speaker)

(1) The Speaker represents the OI externally. The rules of § 79, Subsection 1, No. 1 of the Higher Education Act und § 9, Subsection 1 of the organizational regulations of the Department of English and Linguistics are not affected. (2) The Speaker is responsible to the Executive Board. (3) The Speaker can, in urgent, pressing circumstances effect interim decisions on behalf of the Executive Board. The Executive Board must be informed immediately; the Board can annul the interim decision or measure as long as these were not legally required and third-party rights were not created as a result of the decision. (4) The Speaker shall inform all members of the Advisory Board and all Associate Members concerning the current projects of the OI.

§ 7 (Advisory Board)

The Advisory Board is formed of: representatives with American Studies expertise in Rhineland-Palatinate, the Atlantic Academy Rhineland-Palatinate e.V., as well as outstanding researchers in Germany and abroad.

§ 8 (Tasks of the Advisory Board)

Via (virtual) conferences once per semester, the Advisory Board advises on questions and issues relating to the research strategies of the national and international collaboration with the Executive Board members.

§ 9 (Associate Members)

The Associate Members are Mainz University scholars. They shall establish and ensure the interdisciplinary networking of the OI at JGU.

§ 10 (Tasks of the Associate Members)

Associate Members will be consulted on the basis of their research specializations as well as their expertise for advice in ongoing conversations and will work jointly with members of the Executive Board on the development of the research program.

Appendix

Executive Board Members

Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee
Prof. Dr. Jutta Ernst
Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung
Prof. Dr. Axel Schäfer
Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheiding

Advisory Board Members

Prof. Dr. Herman L. Bennett
(CUNY, New York)
PD Dr. Florian Böller
(Heidelberg Center for American Studies)
Prof. Dr. Martin Brückner (U of Delaware)
Prof. Dr. Rita Charon (Columbia U)
Prof. Dr. Ottmar Ette (U Potsdam)
Prof. Dr. Shelley Fisher Fishkin (Stanford U)
Prof. Dr. Paul Giles (U of Sydney)
Prof. Dr. Craig Howes (U of Hawai'i)
Prof. Dr. Ursula Lehmkuhl (U Trier)

Prof. Dr. Greg Robinson (U du Québec)
JunProf. Dr. Nele Sawallisch (U Trier)
Dr. David Sirakov (Atlantic Academy
Rhineland-Palatinate)
Prof. Dr. Werner Sollors (Harvard U)
Prof. Dr. Elizabeth West (Georgia State U)
Prof. Dr. Charles Wilson (U of Mississippi)
Prof. Dr. Zhang Longxi
(City U of Hong Kong)

Associate Members

Prof. Dr. Manfred Beutel
(Psychosomatic Medicine)
Prof. Dr. Dieter Dörr (Law)
Prof. Dr. Thomas Efferth
(Pharmaceutical Biology)
Prof. Dr. Oliver Emrich
(Management and Social Media)
Prof. Dr. Anton Escher (Cultural Geography)
Jun.-Prof. Dr. Angela Kölling
(Anglophone Literatures and Cultures)
Prof. Dr. Friedemann Kreuder
(Theater Studies)
Prof. Dr. Matthias Krings (Anthropology)
Prof. Dr. Claudia Landwehr
(Political Theory and Public Policy)
Prof. Dr. Franz Rothlauf (Economics)
Prof. Dr. Marc Siegel (Film Studies)

Executive Board

The Executive Board has the following tasks:

- Advising and deciding on basic matters concerning the OI
- Development of the conceptual direction and the research program
- Deciding the financial and personnel arrangements
- Electing the OI Speaker
- Advising and deciding on the acceptance and exclusion of OI members.

The Executive Board will meet at least twice per semester. Its current members are:

Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee

Mita Banerjee is professor for American Studies, specializing in American literature and culture, with a focus on Ethnic and Indigenous Studies. Her research interests include life writing research, whiteness studies, indigenous studies, aging studies, and medical humanities. She currently serves as the director of the Gutenberg Research College (GFK) at JGU, and she is a member of the advisory board of the German Association for American Studies. From 2014–2023, she was co-speaker of the DFG Research Training Group "Life Sciences, Life Writing." Currently, she is a principal investigator in the DFG Collaborative Research Unit "Humandifferenzierung" (SFB 1482), the DFG Research Group "CORE: Critical Online Reasoning in Higher Education," and the BMFTR Innovation Network "ETOS: Electrifying Technical Organic Syntheses." Banerjee is the author of seven monographs, including *Color Me White: Naturalism/Naturalization in American Literature* (Winter, 2013), *Medical Humanities in American Studies* (Winter, 2018) and *Centenarians' Autobiographies* (De Gruyter, 2023).



Prof. Dr. Jutta Ernst

As a professor of American Studies, Jutta Ernst is attached to JGU's Germersheim campus. She is the author of *Edgar Allan Poe und die Poetik des Arabesken* (1996) as well as *Amerikanische Modernismen: Schreibweisen, Konzepte und zeitgenössische Periodika als Vermittlungsinstanzen* (2018). She has also overseen and co-edited various editions, including *The Canadian Mosaic in the Age of Transnationalism* (2010) and *Transkulturelle Dynamiken Aktanten – Prozesse – Theorien* (2015), and has authored a multitude of book chapters, encyclopedia entries, and academic articles.



Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung (Speaker)



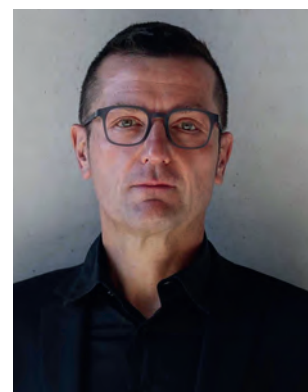
A research professor of American Studies and English specializing in Transnational American Studies and Life Writing, Alfred Hornung is the speaker of the Obama Institute. He cooperated in the foundation of the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies at Mainz as a forum of exchange with the universities of the state of Rhineland-Palatinate, the Atlantic Academy, and international partner universities. He was general editor of *American Studies: A Monograph Series* on behalf of the GAAS, is editor in chief of the *Journal of Transnational American Studies*, and serves on the editorial boards of several other academic journals. Recent publications are *The Routledge Companion to Transnational American Studies* (2019, paperback 2022), *Al Capone: Der amerikanische Traum und das organisierte Verbrechen* (2021), and *Handbook of Life Writing* (2026).

Prof. Dr. Axel Schäfer

Axel R. Schäfer is Professor of U.S. History and Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and Philology. In his research and teaching he focuses on U.S. intellectual and political history, with a particular emphasis on religion and politics, transatlantic social thought, migration, and public policy. His main publications examine the political mobilization of the New Christian Right, the relationship between conservative Protestants and the state, and the international engagement of U.S. evangelicals since World War II. In his current research he explores the historical relationship between immigration and the politics of consumption in the U.S., and how democratic societies, whose functioning is tied to economic growth policies, manage the transition to a post-consumerist age. He is the author of three monographs: *Piety and Public Funding: Evangelicals and the State in Modern America* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); *Countercultural Conservatives: American Evangelicalism from the Postwar Revival to the New Christian Right* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2011); and *American Progressives and German Social Reform, 1875-1920: Social Ethics, Moral Control, and the Regulatory State in a Transatlantic Context* (Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000).

**Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheiding**

Oliver Scheiding is professor of North American Literature and Early American Studies. His research focuses on magazine studies, short fiction studies, media history and material culture studies. He is author of *Worlding America: A Transnational Anthology of Short Narratives before 1800* (Stanford UP, 2015) and the monograph *The Early American Novel* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2003). His most recent book chapters appeared in *The Cambridge History of Native American Literature* (2020) and *The Cambridge Companion to the American Short Story* (2023). He co-edits the book series *Transnational Periodical Cultures* (Leiden/Boston: Brill). He was awarded the Gutenberg Research College



2022/23 senior fellowship for his book project titled "Print Technologies and the Emergence of American Literary Cultures," forthcoming with Wiley-Blackwell. He serves on the board of the American Literature Association and edited the journal *Amerikastudien – American Studies* on behalf of the German Association of American Studies (2011-2019).

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board is formed of representatives with American Studies expertise in Rhineland-Palatinate, the Atlantic Academy Rhineland-Palatinate e.V., as well as outstanding researchers in Germany and abroad. Via (virtual)

conferences once per semester, the Advisory Board advises on questions and issues relating to the research strategies of the national and international collaboration with the Executive Board members.



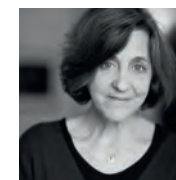
Prof. Dr. Herman L. Bennett
(CUNY, New York)



PD Dr. Florian Böller
(HCA, Heidelberg)



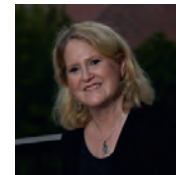
Prof. Dr. Martin Brückner
(University of Delaware)



Prof. Dr. Rita Charon
(Columbia University)



Prof. Dr. Ottmar Ette
(Universität Potsdam)



Prof. Dr. Shelley Fisher Fishkin
(Stanford University)



Prof. Dr. Paul Giles
(University of Sydney)



Prof. Dr. Craig Howes
(University of Hawai'i)



Prof. Dr. Ursula Lehmkuhl
(Universität Trier)



Prof. Dr. Greg Robinson
(Université du Québec)



JunProf. Dr. Nele Sawallisch
(Universität Trier)



Dr. David Sirakov
(Atlantische Akademie)



Prof. Dr. Werner Sollors
(Harvard University)



Prof. Dr. Elizabeth West
(Georgia State University)



Prof. Dr. Charles Wilson
(University of Mississippi)



Prof. Dr. Zhang Longxi
(City University of Hong Kong)

Obama Fellowship

Through the Obama Fellowship program, the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies invites outstanding international scholars to lecture and work at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. The Fellowship offers financial support, office space, and facilities for visiting scholars. Fellows spend a significant amount of time at the Obama Institute, usually between two and four weeks. They pursue their individual research, but are expected to participate in graduate teaching, as well as offer a public lecture and make themselves available to postgraduate students.

Obama Fellows 2024-25

Amy King (Tuskegee U)
Yuan Shu (Texas Tech U)
Scott Zukowski (U of Graz)
Katherine Benton-Cohen
 (Georgetown U)
Vanessa Evans (Appalachian State U)
Irene Gammel (Toronto Metropolitan U)
Michael Lackey (U of Minnesota, Morris)
David Luis-Brown
 (Claremont Graduate U)
Renaë Watchman (McMaster U)
Scott Pincikowski (Hood College)

Previous Obama Fellows 2015-23

Chad Seales (U of Texas at Austin)
Sean Theriault (U of Texas at Austin)
Moustafa Bayoumi (CUNY)
Herman L. Bennett (CUNY)

Jeffrey Herlihy-Mera

(U of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez)

Ruth Stanford (Georgia State U)

Cristina Stanciu

(Virginia Commonwealth U)

Ian Afflerbach (U of North Georgia)

Hsuan L. Hsu (U of California, Davis)

Richard King (em., U of Nottingham)

Walter Benn Michaels

(U of Illinois at Chicago)

Mathias Nilges (St. Francis Xavier U)

Elizabeth Tandy Shermer (Loyola U)

David K. Thomson (Sacred Heart U)

Denise Uyehara (Performance Artist)

Elizabeth West (Georgia State U)

Celeste-Marie Bernier (U of Edinburgh)

Michael Boyden (Uppsala U)

Suzanne Ferriss

(em., Nova Southeastern U)

Mark Noonan (CUNY)

Markus Reisenleitner (York U)

Laura Stevens (U of Tulsa)

Craig Howes (U of Hawai'i at Manoa)

Michaela Hoenicke Moore (U of Iowa)

Nina Morgan (Kennesaw State U)

Patrick Erben (U of West Georgia)

Rebecca Harrison (U of West Georgia)

Sandy Isenstadt (U of Delaware)

Alan Lessoff (Illinois State U)

Charles Wilson (U of Mississippi)

Greg Robinson (U du Québec)

Martin Brückner (U of Delaware)

Shauna Morgan Kirlew (Howard U)

Obama Dissertation Prize

Each year, the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies awards the Obama Dissertation Prize for outstanding Ph.D. work in the field of transnational American studies. The recipient will be announced in September. They will be invited to Mainz to present their dissertation project and receive their award as part of the talks taking place around the Obama Institute's annual Thanksgiving Obama Lecture.

Eligible for submission are dissertations completed at either a German or a foreign university in transnational American Studies and related fields, such as Early American Studies, Indigenous Studies, Life Writing, Ecology, Transnational History, Asian American/Pacific Studies, Material and Media Studies, Religious Studies, International Politics, and Economy. Unpublished manuscripts of dissertations, defended in the last two years, written in German or English, will be evaluated by an international panel to select the awardee.

Awardee 2025

Cora Friederike Schmidt-Ott

(University of Freiburg)

"Samuel P. Huntington (1927-2008): Eine intellektuelle Biographie"

Awardee 2024

Naima Green-Riley

(Harvard University)

"How to Win Friends and Influence People Overseas: The U.S., China, and the Microfoundations of Public Diplomacy"

Previous Recipients 2015-23

See obama-institute.com/opportunities/obama-dissertation-prize/

Hans Galinsky Memorial Prize

Prof. Dr. Hans Galinsky (1909–1991) was the founder and first chair of American Studies at Johannes Gutenberg University, which he held from 1952 to 1977. He established the field of American Studies in Mainz from a comprehensive and multilingual perspective, covering the literatures, languages and cultures from the colonial period to modern times in the twentieth century. His research became the basis for his dedication to teaching, which he considered an essential part of his engagement in the subject. In close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and teachers of English, he implemented an ambitious curriculum, including the use and practice of American English at *Gymnasiums* in Rhineland-Palatinate. In addition, he used his personal relations to American and Canadian colleagues to create the direct exchange program. His special area of interest was the colonial period, to which he also dedicated his post-retirement with a planned five-volume history of Colonial American literature, of which four have appeared (1991-2000).

He decreed in his will that he did not wish any flowers or wreaths for his grave. Instead, the money should be collected as the basis for a fund to be used to reward excellent work by undergraduate or graduate students in the field of Colonial American literature, language, and culture.

The money was put in a trust administered by the Hans Galinsky Memorial Prize committee, consisting originally of Hans Galinsky's successor, Prof. Dr. Winfried Herget, Dr. Karl Ortseifen, and Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung. The committee agreed that all student papers and theses on any aspect from the beginning of the colonial era to the end of the Early Republic would qualify for submission. In more recent years, the members of the Executive Board of the Obama Institute have selected the awardees.

The Hans Galinsky Prize is awarded once a year to the winner and a runner-up at the annual Karl Dietz Memorial and Obama Thanksgiving Lecture.

Recipient 2025

Carina Stein

"Shaping National Identity through Food: State-Produced US Propaganda Posters during World War I" – M.Ed. Thesis

Recipients 2024

Enrico Marx

"Frederick Douglass' Blueprint: Literacy and Violence as a Way of Achieving Manhood" – Term Paper

Kyra Sposny

"Two-Spirit Print and Indigenous Media Activism: Kai Minosh Pyle's Plurimedial Creativity" – M.A. Thesis

Prof. Dr. Gustav Blanke and Hilde Blanke Prize

Every year, the Prof. Dr. Gustav Blanke und Hilde Blanke-Stiftung awards cash prizes to promising junior scholars in American Studies at JGU's Gernersheim campus. Named after Univ.-Prof. Dr. Gustav H. Blanke, who headed the American Studies department in Gernersheim from 1967 to 1979, the Blanke Foundation was established by Blanke himself in 1999 on the occasion of his 85th birthday. Since then, it has given out annual awards to junior scholars (M.A. and doctoral students as well as post-docs) whose individual research projects reflect the goals and the spirit of Blanke's life work: examining the beginnings, the development, and the global impact of the United States of America as well as documenting the efforts of the U.S. to strengthen relations among the nations.

After Blanke's death in 2001, the name of his wife was added to the official name of the foundation, yet its goal has remained unchanged. The foundation's board, which selects the winners of the awards, consists of the JGU Chancellor, the Dean of FB 06, former and current members of the American Studies faculty in Gernersheim, as well as the former mayor of the city of Gernersheim.

Recipients 2024

Charlotte Fischer, B.A.

"The Power of Language: Kuang's *Babel* Through the Lens of Postcolonial Translation Theory"

Dr. Michael Lörch

"The Politics of the Scholarly Journal: The *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik* (ZAA) as a Link between Academia, Publishing Industry and Politics"

Recipient 2025

Anna Flörchinger, B.A.

"Populistische Strategien in Donald Trumps Inaugurationsrede vom 20. Januar 2025: Eine Analyse präsidentieller Rhetorik"

Obama Lectures

Each year, the Obama Institute holds two special lecture events, which take place around the time of two important U.S. holidays.

4th of July Obama Lectures

In the summer, we invite keynote speakers to give a lecture on a topic related to our work in Transnational American Studies.

While Independence Day often serves as a focal point, we complemented the lecture in 2024 with presentations on what the holiday can mean today and in 2025 with a timely exhibition on banned books by students from some of our classes. We concluded these special events with pizza and drinks, and enjoyed the opportunity to mingle with guests and students.

Thanksgiving Obama Lectures

On Thanksgiving, we also give thanks and award the Obama Dissertation prize and other awards to outstanding students for their contributions to our field. The Dissertation Award recipient gives a talk on their doctoral work and the student award recipients briefly present their (under-)graduate work. To commence the

ceremonies, an invited keynote speaker presents excerpts of their work and a glimpse into current developments in American Studies research. In 2024 and 2025, these keynote lectures ranged from futurisms in Indigenous Studies to interdisciplinary research on the life and travel writing of Alexander von Humboldt and others.



Event

July 4, 2024
4-8 p.m.
P4 & Foyer P2-P5
Philosophicum

**4th of July
Obama Summer Lecture
& Get-together**

4-6 p.m. | Guest Talks

"World-losers elsewhere, conquerors here!"
The Fourth of July in American Poetry
Thomas Austenfeld
Université de Fribourg, Switzerland

6-8 p.m. | Get-together

Summer get-together with food and drinks
(Graduate) Student Project Exhibition
Posters and other presentations by students from Dr. Claudia Göngs and Dr. Allison Nick's courses

What might the 4th of July mean to Americans and foreigners in general and especially in 2024?
From American Poetry to Money and American identity to students' takes on the meaning of the holiday. Join us in discussing the day's importance and possible criticism but also in celebrating an informal Obama Institute summer get-together of students, faculty, and friends.

Pizza and drinks will be provided!

www.obama-institute.com/news



Fourth of July Event

July 4, 2024 | 2-6 p.m.
P5 & Foyer P2-P5
Philosophicum

Obama Summer Lecture & Get-together

2-4 p.m. | Keynote Lecture

Speculative Plantations: Reimagining Past, Present, and Futures through Gothic Horror
Amy King | Tuskegee University, AL, USA

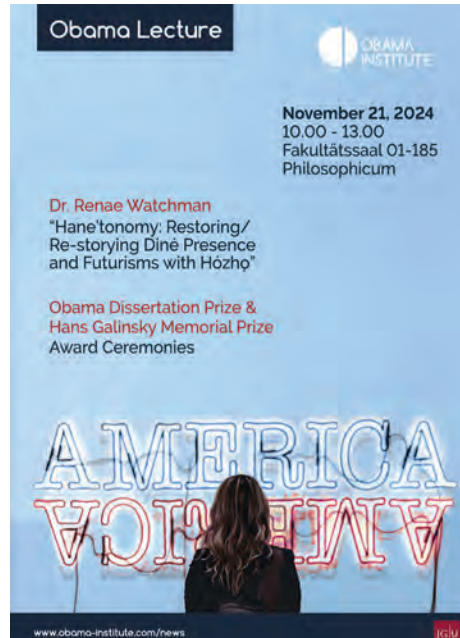
4-6 p.m. | Get-together

How can we tell, preserve, and engage with stories of resistance in the U.S. of 2025?
Student Project Exhibition
Posters and presentations by students from Dr. Sonja George's CS III course

From the practice of banning books across the United States to art and reading as social justice: join us in discussing and sharing, but also celebrating these narratives and stories during the Obama Institute's informal get-together of students, faculty, and friends.

**Pizza and drinks will be provided!
Everyone welcome.**

www.obama-institute.com/news



Obama Lecture

November 21, 2024
10.00 - 13.00
Fakultätssaal 01-185
Philosophicum

Dr. Renae Watchman
"Hane'tonomy: Restoring/
Re-storying Diné Presence
and Futurisms with Hózhó"

**Obama Dissertation Prize &
Hans Galinsky Memorial Prize
Award Ceremonies**

www.obama-institute.com/news



Obama Lecture

November 27, 2025
10.00 - ca. 12.30
Fakultätssaal 01-185
Philosophicum

LECTURE IN GERMAN
Prof. Dr. Ottmar Ette
Vielbewegte Leben.
Zu Georg Forster,
Adelbert von Chamisso und
Alexander von Humboldt

PRESENTATIONS IN ENGLISH
**Obama Dissertation Prize &
Hans Galinsky Memorial Prize
Award Ceremonies**

www.obama-institute.com/news

Appointments, Awards, and Fellowships

Awards

Özge Hosgör, M.A.

- Outstanding Thesis Award from JGU's Faculty 05 for M.A. thesis "Reading Resilience – The Power of Communicating Resilience in African American Young Adult Fiction," 2024

Fellowships

Carolin Jesussek, Ph.D. (then M.Ed.)

- Junior Fellow of JGU's Gutenberg Academy Honors Program and speaker of the group, 2024-25



Group of new GAHP Junior Fellows 2024 at induction ceremony; photo credit: Stefan F. Sämmer for JGU.



Carolin Jesussek, M.Ed. on April 22, 2024 next to the poster describing her dissertation project; photo provided by Oliver Scheiding.



Teaching at the OI in 2024-25

In our teaching at the Obama Institute, our goal is to involve our students in all projects of the institute. On the undergraduate level, we want to familiarize students with all aspects of American history and culture, from historical beginnings – Native American oral cultures and traditions as well as the beginning of Puritan settlement – to the present moment. Our courses are designed in such a way that they explore multiple media and genres (literature, short stories, films, comics, popular culture, political rhetoric, history of ideas) to

delve into the vibrancy of American cultural production both past and present. We invite our more advanced students to participate in current research projects at the Obama Institute through a variety of frameworks such as student conferences or internships. Moreover, we introduce new teaching and learning techniques into the American studies classroom, such as video presentations and mock trials, writing exercises and problem-based learning.

Selected Teaching Projects

Propaedeutic Program for the Master of Arts in American Studies

Started Winter Term 2023/24

led by Sonja Georgi, Claudia Görg, and Birgit Wetzel-Sahm

In the winter term of 2023/24, the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies introduced a Propaedeutic Program to support students transitioning into the American Studies Master of Arts program at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. The M.A. program itself provides an interdisciplinary approach

that encompasses American literature, cultural studies, and history. It is especially appealing to international students from other disciplines, such as political and film studies, history, general and comparative literature, or related language and literary studies programs, as it gives a global perspective on the USA and North America due to its transnational focus in Mainz.

The Propaedeutic Program at the Obama Institute offers a specialized introduction to academic methodologies, research techniques, and key discourses in literature, cultural, and historical studies. Designed to support international students





or those coming from different academic backgrounds, this program equips participants with research and study skills needed to transition into the regular M.A. program by the second semester.

The Propaedeutic Program consists of three core courses, each focusing on a specific area of academic development. The first course, "Academic Writing and Research: From Essay to Term Paper," led by Dr. Birgit Wetzel-Sahm, focuses on essential academic writing skills. Students learn to select topics, follow the MLA style guide, cite sources correctly to avoid plagiarism, and craft well-structured, coherent arguments using appropriate academic language. In the second course, "American Literary and Cultural Studies," taught by Dr. Sonja Georgi, students gain an overview of key periods and texts in American literature through selected readings. The seminar provides an overview of significant literary-historical contexts, ensuring students develop familiarity with foundational works in American literary and cultural studies. The third course, "Conversation and Presentation," instructed by Dr. Claudia Görg, emphasizes oral and discursive

skills. Through this class, international and external students will practice engaging in literary and cultural studies discourse, develop their own research projects, and present them using the appropriate specialized terminology for a postgraduate degree program. These three courses are organized into modules of in-class sessions, tutorials, and self-study units, with students earning 16 credits upon completing the program.

In the course of 2024, 15 students successfully completed the program and have now transitioned into the regular master's program. Starting in the winter term of 2025/26, the Propaedeutic Program will be integrated into the Master's curriculum as a dedicated module.



Student Project Exhibitions "Current Social Problems in Children's Literature and Film" and "Young Adult Fiction"

February 2024 and March 2025

led by Mita Banerjee

In two project seminars taught by Mita Banerjee in the winter terms 2023/24 and 2024/25, students were encouraged to, first, explore the courses' topics and, subsequently, develop their own research projects, the results of which they then presented in two poster exhibitions at the Obama Institute. The projects in both

exhibitions asked: Can children's and young adult literature address serious or controversial topics? Are such topics simply inappropriate for children? Or is it rather a matter of the narrative strategy that is being used? Is Young Adult Literature lacking in depths to be more digestible to its audience? The students' research showed how creative, diplomatic, subversive, and inspiring books from both genres can be in addressing topics that are difficult to grasp or cope with, even for adults.



**Thursday, Feb 1, 2024
14:00 – 16:00
Philo II, room 02.102
Jakob-Welder-Weg 20**

**14:00 Opening | Introduction
Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee (Course Leader)**

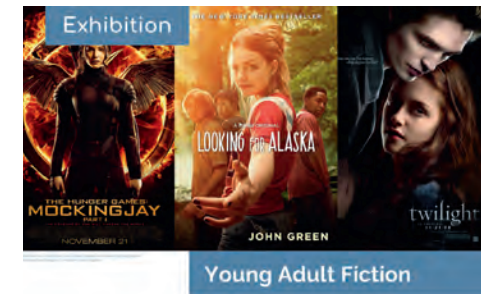
**followed by
Poster Presentations | Food & Drinks**

Selected topics:
Loneliness as a Universal Childhood issue in the Anime series *Norito* and *Norito Shippuden*
Life and Death in "The Fall of Freddie the Leaf" by Leo Buscaglia
Spookley: the Square Pumpkin
"Superstars in History": The Civil Rights Movement

Everyone welcome!

The posters and presentations in this exhibition are the results of students' projects from the American Studies Advanced Research Seminar 522 "Current Social Problems Expressed in Children's Literature," which was taught by Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee. ©2024 Obama Institute. All rights reserved.

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**Friday, March 14
10am-2pm
Philo II, room 02.102
Jakob-Welder-Weg 20**

**10am Opening | Introduction
Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee
(course instructor)**

**followed by
Poster Presentations
Food and Drinks**

Developed from student projects during the American Studies Graduate Seminar 522 "Young Adult Fiction," this exhibition shows how creative, diplomatic, and inspiring young adult literature and movies can be in addressing topics that are difficult to grasp or cope with, even for adults.

Everyone welcome!



The Science Market of the Mainz Science Alliance

September 7-8, 2024

led by Oliver Scheiding and team

On September 7 and 8, 2024, the Mainz Science Market once again invited visitors—this year for the 22nd time—to engage with researchers and learn about their work. The partners of the Mainz Science Market, including Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, presented projects and recent discoveries throughout the weekend with a thematic focus on “Humans and Growth.” Among JGU's selected projects was the interdisciplinary research group Transnational Periodical Cultures (TPC).

On both days, the TPC group hosted a booth at Gutenbergplatz. Visitors were

invited to learn more about ongoing projects that explore and work with periodicals, including gaming magazines, Indigenous periodicals, art zines, and independent magazines. Among other questions, we presented how video games are represented in print publications, how alternative representations of the body emerge, and how an Indigenous periodical landscape developed in the United States.

On the second day, Dr. Sabina Fazli, Lydia Kleinstück, M.A., Frank E. Newton, M.Ed., and Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheiding also discussed their projects on the market's so-called “Science Sofa.” Afterwards, visitors had the opportunity to ask further questions and learn more about periodical studies.



GLK Student Conference “Being (In-)Visible: Representations of Disability and Ableism in Popular Culture”

January 16-17, 2024

led by Ayishat Aluko, Samira Schwarz, and Jill Reuter with support from Julia Velten; project phase 05/2024-01/2025

According to the WHO, almost 1.3 billion people – about 16% of the world's population – live with a disability. Disabilities and the issues surrounding ableism are topics that are increasingly incorporated/discussed in(to) popular culture, but, nonetheless, disability is still a topic that is chronically overlooked in society. To this day, the general public often lacks knowledge and understanding about disabled people and the realities of their lives. People with disabilities exist across all nationalities, genders, sexual orientations, age groups, and economic classes. Despite this fact, they still face exclusion and marginalization in different areas of society.

This interdisciplinary conference, organized by Ayishat Aluko, Samira Schwarz, and Jill Reuter, aimed to broaden the scope of academic research dealing with interdisciplinary disability studies and tried to aid in highlighting inclusive and realistic representations of disabled people, as well as discussing how popular culture contributes to the (in)visibility of people with disabilities and creates cultural imaginaries.

The idea for this project was introduced to us by Julia Velten after we participated



in a mock student conference in a course of hers. Decided on the topic of disability representation, we formulated the proposal for the Gutenberg Lehrkolleg stipend. After being granted the stipend, we published a call for papers, selected the speakers from a group of applicants, and advertised the conference on campus and online. The organization of the two-day conference included tasks ranging from planning the schedule, planning a conference dinner, providing snacks and drinks, and helping our participants in any way possible.

Students of interdisciplinary fields were offered the opportunity to present their work and broaden their research and knowledge of the topic. The conference brought



together students from all over Germany and enabled an exchange of academic knowledge and interests. With the grant money from the Gutenberg Lehrkolleg, we were able to offer the possibility of participation not only to students from JGU but universities nationwide. Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee was kind enough to give a keynote speech titled "Life Writing, Writing Life: Disability and Visibility in Jason Kingsley's and Mitchell Levitz's *Count Us In*." Her presentation as well as the students' talks and presentations incited thoughtful and interesting discussions about disability and ableism and their (lack of) representation in mainstream popular culture.



Student Podcast *Make It Make Sense*

2025–present

created by Paulina Schlosser and Marlene Winkler
with production support from JGU's
Zentrum für Audiovisuelle Produktion

Make It Make Sense is the student-led podcast of the Obama Institute. The project was initiated in early 2025, when Marlene Winkler and Paulina Schlosser approached the Institute with the idea of creating a research-focused podcast platform dedicated to American Studies.

Following the initial approval of the concept, the project entered an intensive phase of conceptual development. The podcast was designed with three core objectives in mind: strengthening student engagement and acquisition, providing a platform to showcase faculty members' research interests and current projects, and increasing the visibility of American Studies at JGU beyond the seminar room. The aim was to create an accessible yet academically grounded format that translates complex research topics into conversations that "make sense" to a broader audience.

In spring 2025, episode scripting began, and guests were invited prior to the start of production in June 2025. The production



process was largely student-led, while taking place in close cooperation with the Zentrum für Audiovisuelle Produktion (ZAP) at JGU. Through this collaboration, the team was able to use the ZAP studio facilities and access professional streaming and distribution services through ZAP and the university library's REMIX platform.

Episodes were recorded throughout the summer and early autumn of 2025. The post-production process was also managed internally: audio editing was done by Paulina Schlosser, while video editing was done collaboratively. This hands-on production model ensured both creative control and the development of valuable technical skills within the student team.

The first episode launched at the beginning of the winter semester 2025/26.



Since then, episodes have been released biweekly. The podcast has received positive feedback from students and faculty alike, particularly for its ability to bridge academic research and accessible discussion.

Building on this encouraging reception, a second season is currently in production and is scheduled for release in the summer semester of 2026. With *Make It Make Sense*,

the Obama Institute has established a sustainable, student-driven format that fosters academic exchange, promotes research visibility, and strengthens the Institute's public presence.

ZENTRUM FÜR
AUDIOVISUELLE
PRODUKTION



American Studies Summer School 2025

The American Studies Summer School has been an ongoing program at the Obama Institute since 2013. Established as a collaboration between Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung and Dr. John Richard Duke, Jr. (Professor of History and Executive Director of the American Studies Institute at Harding University, Searcy, Arkansas), it takes students through the U.S. American South, exploring the Civil Rights Movement, Southern Literature and Culture, as well

as Southern Food and Music. Currently a biennial opportunity, the Summer School of 2025 was organized for the Obama Institute by Dr. Claudia Görg. Planning and coordination, however, would not be possible without Dr. John Richard Duke, Jr.'s outstanding support. It is through his continued commitment to this program, the Obama Institute, and our students that the Summer School is such a unique academic but also personal experience.

Summer School

OBAMA INSTITUTE

American Studies Summer School
"The American South"

July 22 – August 09
2025

Arkansas – Tennessee – Mississippi – Louisiana – Alabama – Washington, D.C.

JOHANNES GUTENBERG
UNIVERSITÄT MAINZ

JGU

Teaching at Germersheim

Teaching American Studies at JGU's Germersheim campus draws on the various research projects currently conducted by the faculty members and simultaneously reflects the department's focus on educating translators and interpreters. Students learn the necessary tools to translate a variety of American texts from different fields and sectors into German (e.g., literary, legal, economic, and medical, among others) and are provided with the crucial cultural and literary competencies to transfer the culturally specific ideas and concepts these texts draw on.

Seminars and lectures in American Studies cover a wide range of topics and genres: e.g., Jutta Ernst, "American Literature and Culture II: 1865 to Present"; Michael Lörch, "Post-WWII African American Theatre"; Ines Veauthier, "Latino Lives in/and the USA." Due to our special focus on Canadian Studies, many classes take an explicitly comparative North American perspective: Michael Lörch "Explorations of the Canadian West."

Our faculty members also adapt interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and collaborate on joint projects (e.g., Jutta Ernst and Oliver Scheiding, "Magazine Studies").

On Monday evenings, students are invited to join the Research Colloquium in North American Studies to discuss their current research projects and any concomitant issues or questions.

American Studies classes at JGU's Germersheim campus are part of the following programs:

B.A. Translation

M.A. Translation

The Germersheim faculty graduated 15 B.A. students and 4 M.A. students in 2024, and 20 B.A. students and 5 M.A. students in 2025.

Bachelor of Arts in American Studies (Mainz)

The Bachelor's Program of American Studies offers a wide range of courses. In six semesters, students will be introduced to the central fields of American literature, culture, history, language, and media. In the advanced courses of the Bachelor program students deepen their knowledge of American literature and culture in topical seminars and conclude their course of studies with a BA thesis on a topic of their choice.

The B.A. program is structured in two phases of introductory (GMK) and advanced modules (AMK):

GMK I: Language and Communication

GMK II: Literary Studies

GMK III: History and Cultural Studies

GMK IV: Advanced Literary Studies

GMK V: History and Cultural Studies

AMK I: Professional Communication and Orientation

AMK II: Key Topics

AMK III: Advanced American Studies

AMK IV: Specialization

The introductory modules (GMK I-III) will familiarize students with the basic methodologies and subject matters of American literary studies and American cultural studies. In addition to expanding their proficiency in English, students will explore a broad range of literary texts, historical documents, as well as cultural artifacts from all eras of American history. In advanced classes (GMK IV-V), students will study topics related to historical and current developments in American literature, society, politics, culture, and media. In the course of the first two years of their studies, students will also get familiar with relevant methodologies for doing American Studies.

In the final courses of the Bachelor program students deepen their knowledge of American literature and culture in topical seminars and conclude their course of studies with a BA thesis on a topic of their choice.

Master of Arts in American Studies (Mainz)

The American Studies Master's Program is designed to emphasize research-oriented perspectives on American language, literature, culture, and their theories. It builds upon the B.A. program in American Studies at Mainz University, but also welcomes applications of students from American Studies programs in Germany, Europe, and other parts of the world.

American Studies has seen a number of major changes in theory and practice in the last decade. Its traditional emphasis on the language, literature, and culture of the United States has been expanded both conceptually and methodologically. Reaching beyond the continental geographical focus of the United States, the more recent concept of Transnational American Studies includes new regions of language and literature, branching out into Atlantic, Caribbean, and Pacific Studies.

The Mainz M.A. program responds to these new developments and encourages students to explore the transnational dimensions of American Studies. The program offers a broad spectrum of courses and the opportunity to conduct research on American literature and culture from pre-colonial times to the 21st century. It maintains long-established exchange programs and international cooperation

with North American, European, and Chinese universities.

The program includes a special project module on current issues, allowing students to expand their research and transfer their knowledge to the public, make use of it during internships, or broaden their horizons by studying abroad at one of our international partner institutions. The M.A. program especially emphasizes the need for students to communicate their knowledge and research and therefore also includes a module on professional language and communication.

The M.A. program consists of several modules:

Modul 1: Methodology

Modul 2: Literature and Media

Modul 3: History and Society

Modul 4: Advanced Literature, History, and Media

Modul 5: Current Issues: Project

Modul 6: Professional Language and Communication

Modul 7: Advanced Research

Based on students' previous B.A. experience, seminars in modules 1-4 let students discuss and apply methods, theories, and techniques of academic research to the core fields of the program.

One of the central aims of the M.A. program is to introduce students to different forms of textual and cultural analysis and to involve them in current research projects.

In the second year, students engage in a larger guided research project that combines different historical, thematic, and methodological approaches. At the same time, the M.A. program enables students to further develop their own professional goals in modules 5-7 in order to prepare for careers outside or inside academia.

Study abroad is recommended for the second year and highlights the importance of an international training program for students seeking a Master's degree in American Studies.

MAST3R Model with a Selectable Focus Area

As a part of JGU's master's programs with a selectable focus area, our M.A. can be pursued as

- a **single-subject** master's degree, i.e., a master's **subject** + master's **subject specialization**, OR
- a master's **subject in combination with a (different) supplementary subject**, OR
- a master's **subject with a supplementary qualification (certificate programs)**, OR
- a **supplementary subject** (as part of another major, with or without previous knowledge).

Further information on the MAST3R model: <https://master-mit-profil.uni-mainz.de/das-modell/>

Propaedeutic Program

The Propaedeutic Program at the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies offers a specialized introduction to academic methodologies, research techniques, and key discourses in literary and cultural studies. Designed to support international students or those coming from different academic backgrounds, this program equips participants with the skills needed to transition into the regular M.A. program by the second semester.

Modul 0: Preparatory Course American Studies (Conditional Admission)

The Propaedeutic Program consists of three core courses focused on academic writing, American literary and cultural studies, as well as presentation and communication techniques. These courses are organized into modules of in-class sessions, tutorials, and self-study units, with students earning 10 credits upon completing the program.

Students with less than 10 credits in American Studies, including candidates from interdisciplinary backgrounds, are eligible to apply for and expected to participate in this program.

Ph.D. in American Studies

The institute hosts a vibrant Ph.D. program, bringing together scholars from Germany, the U.S., Canada, and China. In addition to the conventional topics of American Studies, our Ph.D. students specialize in life writing research, Indigenous studies, early American studies, material culture studies, and transnational American histories. Our Ph.D. students benefit from our partner institutions as well as from the international Ph.D. programs we are associated with.

Individual Doctoral Studies

Depending on their research interests, students contact one of our program's professors. After admitting the candidates, the professors serve as supervisor and mentor. The duration of an individual doctorate usually ranges from three to five years. Depending on the requirements of the project, funding is possible for a period of up to three years. This is provided by Stiftung Rheinland-Pfalz, Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes, DAAD or foundations such as Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, and others.

Binationl Ph.D. Mainz–Atlanta

For individual doctoral studies we offer a dual degree in American Studies jointly supported by Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and Georgia State University, Atlanta. The five-year program includes a mutual student exchange for 12 months as well as full integration in course work and teaching in the academic programs of both universities. The program is subsidized by both departments and is open to all graduate students who have earned a Master's degree in American Studies.

Ph.D. candidates can also participate in the following exchange programs (10–12 months):

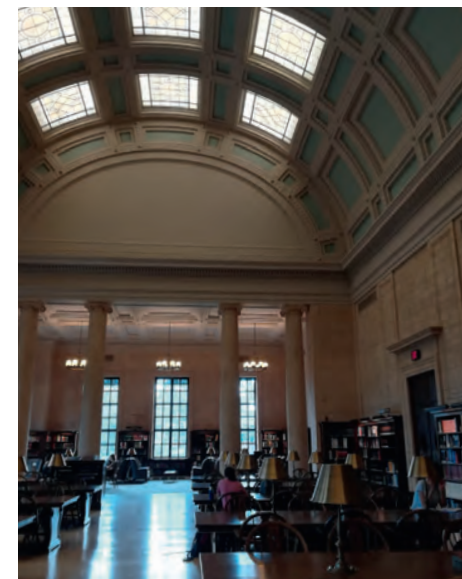
Columbia University, New York City
(contact: Professors Banerjee and Hornung)

University of Mississippi, Oxford
(contact: Professors Banerjee and Hornung)

University of California, Davis
(contact: Professor Scheiding)

Harvard University Institute for World Literature (IWL) Summer School

The Obama Institute is a member of Harvard University's annual IWL summer school program. This global program offers four weeks of coursework led by the world's most renowned literary scholars and hosted by different universities worldwide, alternating with Harvard University every third year. Through our membership, we can offer up to two PhD students the amazing opportunity to join an international group of young scholars for a short but intensive term abroad. In 2022, the Obama Institute was honored to host the IWL summer session in Mainz.



Study Abroad

The Obama Institute offers its students a wide variety of ways to go abroad during their studies, whether in the B.A., M.A., B.Ed., or M.Ed. programs, as well as as part of our Ph.D. training. We actively promote our students' applications to national funding programs such as those run by the German Academic Exchange Service and the Fulbright Commission, and regularly place our students in those programs, and we participate in the European ERASMUS scheme. But beyond that, the Obama Institute also offers a number of unique opportunities to go abroad that are based on the initiative of the institute's professors and teaching staff. With the Mainz Direct Exchange program, which annually sends nearly twenty students from all levels of our teaching program abroad to study at selected universities in the United States and Canada, the Obama Institute offers one of the most exciting exchange opportunities in American Studies. In addition, the annual Summer School, which takes a group of students on a research trip through the American South as part of their Culture Studies course work, regularly exposes students to what is to most a different and less-well known America.

The Middlebury College invites applications of Mainz American Studies graduate students to participate in the Bread Loaf School of English for an intensive six-week program from mid-June

to mid-August on its campuses of Bread Loaf in Vermont or Monterey in California. The participation of up to five students is graciously sponsored by the State of Rhineland-Palatinate. For more information consult www.middlebury.edu/blse.

We believe that the opportunity to study abroad is crucial to a successful education in a literature, history, and culture program, and even more so in a teaching program. It is not just about finding additional opportunities to speak the language you are learning, or to participate actively in the culture you are studying; it is also about learning about the different traditions of American Studies in other academic cultures. Therefore, our exchange programs are not limited to the United States, although that remains a natural focus. ERASMUS exchanges also lead our students to universities in Britain, France, Denmark, Poland, and other European countries, whose own traditions in the studies of the humanities are capable of rounding out the experience of studying American Studies in Germany.

Direct Exchange Program

The Direct Exchange Program, established in 1956, is a unique opportunity for American Studies students at Mainz, connecting them directly with partner universities in the United States and Canada. The various exchange opportunities we offer—from

simple undergraduate studies with tuition waivers to teaching/research assistantships for graduate-level studies—enable students to experience the United States and Canada firsthand. Based on years of cooperation, the Direct Exchange Program is a tailored and competitive program. Currently, the institute offers direct exchanges with the following American and Canadian partner universities:

- Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine
- California State University, Chico, California
- Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts
- Columbia University, New York City, New York
- Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia
- Hood College, Frederick, Maryland
- Kansas University, Lawrence, Kansas
- Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont
- University of California, Davis, California
- University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky
- University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi
- Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland
- York University, Toronto, Ontario

At Germersheim, exchange opportunities exist with the following universities in the U.S. and Canada:

- Kent State University, Kent, Ohio
- Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont
- Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

- Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois
- Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, British Columbia

Erasmus Exchange Program

The EU-funded ERASMUS program enables students to spend a semester or two at a different European university free of tuition, and pays a small monthly stipend. The Obama Institute's ERASMUS partner universities for student exchanges currently are:

- Universität Bern, Berne, Switzerland
- Université de Bourgogne, Dijon, France
- University of Brighton, Brighton, UK
- Université de Fribourg, Fribourg, Switzerland
- Universiteit Gent/Ghent University, Belgium
- Università degli Studi di Padova, Padua, Italy
- Uniwersytet Warszawski/University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland
- Universität Wien, Vienna, Austria

In addition, the Institute also has lecturers' exchanges with several universities:

- University of Warwick, Warwick, UK
- University of Kent, Canterbury, UK



Research at the OI in 2024-25

The Obama Institute is dedicated to transnational research into American history, literature, and culture. It builds upon the commitment of "traditional" American Studies to interdisciplinarity, but extends it to studying the entanglements of American histories with intercultural transfers across oceans, continents, and regions. Broadly speaking, the transnational project has two main dimensions. First, it offers a research perspective that, while still regarding the state as a significant

actor, examines circulations, interactions, and connections beyond the nation-state. This involves the study of the movement of peoples, ideas, technologies, literatures, and institutions across national boundaries. Second, anchored in a postmodern and postcolonial outlook, transnationalism seeks to "dis-integrate" U.S. history and culture. This includes exploring all forms of diversity and inclusion implicit in American national narratives. Transnationalism's focus

on connections and circulations thus seeks to give voice to those who are not represented by nation-states. Based on this understanding the Obama Institute sees itself as a meeting place and a research space for transnational American Studies. It maintains one of the strongest American Studies research programs in German-speaking countries. It offers full coverage of research into the history, literature, and culture of the United States, from the colonial period to the 21st century, including issues of translation and adaptation.

Our research areas highlight the Institute's wide range of activities. Early American Studies, which includes DFG-funded research projects on American periodicals and magazine fiction, promotes research projects that explore the textual and material grounds on which the many cultures – both Western and Non-Western – meet in the Atlantic and Pacific worlds. The Center for Comparative Native and Indigenous Studies is designed as a platform to bring together scholars and students who work on Indigenous issues in a global context. Projects in Political and Intellectual History focus on topics such as migration and social policy, transnational social thought and politics, and nationalism and internationalism in American society. Research on Religion and American Culture explores the global history of American evangelicalism and the relationship between religion and politics, as well as religion and media. Material Culture Studies is a research initiative that connects the Institute to other disciplines, such as book

history, art history, and sociology. And the collaborative research project Transnational Periodical Cultures contributes to the burgeoning field of periodical studies, exploring magazines, newspapers, and other forms of serialized mass media in transnational contexts.

Three senior and four junior members of the Obama Institute are PIs and project members in the DFG-funded Collaborative Research Center "Studies in Human Categorisation". The Obama Institute also cooperates with the Medical School and American Studies at Columbia University, New York in Narrative Medicine programs. The Obama Institute sees itself as a node connecting scholars in American Studies and beyond. It invites the cooperation of scholars throughout the international academic community who are interested in manifestations of transnationalism in a multiplicity of contexts.

In 2019, the Obama Institute received a research grant on the topic of "Disruption and Democracy in America: Challenges and Potentials of Transcultural and Transnational Formations" that supported our research until 2023. In 2023, our funding from the 'Forschungsinitiative des Landes Rheinland-Pfalz' as a 'JGU Potentialbereich' was renewed until 2028 on the basis of our research proposal on "The Return of the Submerged: Recovering Marginalized Knowledge within Fracturing Democratic Societies". Next steps include preparations for the establishment of a transdisciplinary research group together with our partners at Georgia State Univ. in Atlanta.

Conferences

Transcending Boundaries – Interdisciplinary Insights in Transpacific Studies Hybrid Conference

February 9-11, 2024

Organized by the Transpacific Studies Network and the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies (Sandra Meerwein)

"I think the world can learn a great deal from the epistemologies of Chamorro peoples or, in fact, the epistemologies of

indigenous peoples, and be better for it." With these words, Ajani Burrell opened his presentation on restorative indigenous writing at the conference *Transcending Boundaries – Interdisciplinary Insights in Transpacific Studies* (Feb 9-11, 2024). With his statement, Burrell reflected the crucial goal of the event to highlight neglected and marginalized perspectives dealing with transpacific issues, especially with an emphasis on indigenous approaches to and interpretations of them. The two day-event was organized and executed by the Transpacific Studies Network (TPSN)



and the Obama Institute for Transnational Studies, and invited scholars from all over the world to share their research and exchange perspectives on and approaches to Transpacific Studies. In this context, scholars from various fields enriched the international and interdisciplinary atmosphere of the conference while literally carrying out the efforts of *Transcending Boundaries*. Covering issues of literary and geographic representations and reconfigurations, indigenous knowledge and culture, health security, nuclear colonialism, transnational terrorism, the event provided various intersecting insights of the Transpacific from different angles. The inclusion of cultural and poetic performances by John Taukave, Yasmina Benachour, and Eva Aguon Cruz added tremendous value to such perspectives and provided alternative interpretations of the Transpacific in an academic framework. Further prospects in this regard were moreover highlighted by renowned scholar in the field of Transpacific Studies, Dr. Iris-Aya Laemmerhirt, who approached the issue in her lecture on oceanic poetics and investigated it further leading the workshop "Engaging with Transpacific Spaces."

The event was marked by an open and welcoming atmosphere that enriched and facilitated the discourse about Transpacific issues and the definition of the field itself. Resulting from the conference, the event successfully concluded on Day 3 with a roundtable during which participants critically discussed current approaches to

Transpacific Studies, and how to further provoke to complement existing ways and provide valuable alternative ones to issues pertaining to the field.

In this context, the TPSN seeks to continuously invite open-minded and innovative thinking. Interested scholars and practitioners are welcome to reach out for further information about the network's future projects and involvement in it: transpacificstudiesnetwork@gmail.com

TPSN organizers: Nina De Bettin Padolin (University of Graz), Ana Elisa Gomez Laris (University of Duisburg-Essen), Alissa Lienhard (Leibniz University Hannover), Julia Machtenberg (Ruhr University Bochum), Carole Martin (Ludwig Maximilian University Munich), Hanna Masslich (Friedrich Schiller University Jena), Sandra Meerwein (Obama Institute, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz), Olga Thierbach-McLean (PhD, Independent Scholar)

Organizational assistance: Jessica Sophie Baumann (JGU Mainz), Jan Burger (JGU Mainz), Esther Ruderman (JGU Mainz)

The network wants to thank the following institutions for their support:



Migration and Consumption Workshop

June 27-28, 2024

Organized by project B06 of the SFB 1482 on Human Differentiation (Axel R. Schäfer and Anja-Maria Bassimir)

This workshop brought together leading scholars in the fields of migration, political economy, and consumerism in United States history. Immigration debates and policies are an early domain in which both state administrative capacities and consumerist categories of human differentiation were generated, formalized, and institutionalized. Elizabeth Cohen (Harvard University) is an expert on postwar consumerism, and Rosanne Currarino (Queen's University) has investigated labor questions and economic democracy during the Gilded Age. Katherine Benton-Cohen (Georgetown University) studied the Dillingham Commission's role and legacy in categorizing and "inventing



the immigrant problem," while Joel Perlmann (Bard College) traced processes of classifying immigrants from Ellis Island to the 2020 Census. Jan Logemann (Georg-August-Universität) focused on the role of European émigrés in making consumer capitalism, while Atiba Pertilla's (German Historical Institute) new project asks how immigrants used money in the time period from 1870 to 1930. We invite workshop participants to engage these scholars in a critical discussion on their key texts.



The Persistence of the Short Story: Traditions and Futures

International Symposium

July 10-12, 2024

Co-Hosted by the Obama Institute (Oliver Scheiding), the Society for the Study of the American Short Story, and the American Literature Association, and the European Network for Short Fiction Research

Over the past decade several fresh approaches to the study of the short story in English have appeared illustrating both the durability and portability of the genre. This seems to be rather surprising in the context of digitization's impact on consuming, producing, and publishing short stories. Analog publication outlets still exist in the shape of reputable literary

magazines or short story collections, but outside these traditional venues often short-lived short story websites and digital self-publishing platforms seem to prevail. While there are countless creative writing programs, it appears that there is little market for the short story. In this context of manifold uncertainties in the transition from the past to the present and the future, the conference addressed a wide range of trends and developments, issues and problems pertaining to short story writing, reading, publication, and dissemination.

For the conference booklet and program see: <https://www.obama-institute.com/shortstoryconferencemainz2024/>

Made possible by funding from:



The Collaboration of Transnational American Studies:

Collaboration at JTAS

Online Talkshop

December 11, 2024

Organized by Alfred Hornung

This annual online talkshop provides young researchers in Transnational American Studies with a platform for the presentation of their current research projects. The presenters in this online venue were members of the editorial management team of the *Journal of Transnational American Studies* (JTAS) affiliated with American, Canadian and European universities. The Obama Institute is the current host of JTAS in collaboration with Stanford University, Alfred Hornung serving as editor in chief. https://escholarship.org/uc/acgcc_jtas



Sabine Kim
(Obama Institute; based in Glasgow)
"The Need for Transnational Perspectives in American Studies Today"

Aiko Takeuchi-Demirci
(Stanford University)
"Possibilities for Dialogue and Reconciliation in America and in the World"

Vanessa Evans
(Appalachian State University)
"Constellating Co-Resistance: Resurgence and the Contemporary Indigenous Novel"

Immigration and the "American Standard of Living": How the Encounter with Foreign Peoples in the Progressive Era Shaped the Politics of Consumption in the U.S.

Panel at the Annual Conference of the Organization of American Historians (OAH), Chicago, IL, USA

April 3-6, 2025

Anja-Maria Bassimir and Axel Schäfer in collaboration with Atiba Pertilla, Katie Benton-Cohen, and Rosanne Currarino

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries mark the epochal transition to a consumption-oriented economy and society. The possibilities of material abundance, the promise of prosperity for all, and the vision of "freedom from want" are among the central experiences of modernity. At the same time, restrictive immigration laws, including the Chinese Exclusion Act and the National Origins Act, paralleled the rise of consumer capitalism in the United States since the 1880s. Yet the relationship between immigration as the period's "great American problem" (Robert Zeidel) and the politics of consumption has rarely been studied in detail. This panel examines the way in which the highly racialized and ethnicized discourse on immigration is related to the transformation of the political economy and state-building since the late nineteenth century.

The panelists approach the issue from three perspectives. First, they explore how a range of experts, social reformers, bureaucrats, trade unionists and other public figures used their engagement with the "immigration problem" to define the American consumer. These prophets of abundance developed a reasonably coherent social vision that translated the consumerist shift in the economy into consumer-oriented public policy. On the one hand, Progressive-era social scientists and reformers challenged laissez-faire capitalism and laid the foundations for the modern welfare state. On the other hand, many of them offered scientific legitimacy to hierarchies of race, gender, and class as part of legitimizing and operationalizing consumer politics and the social remit of the state.

Second, the papers investigate social taxonomies and the making of statistics as ways of connecting immigration policies, the "age of surplus," and state-building. The late nineteenth century is characterized by what historian Lutz Raphael has called the "scientization of the social." The veritable explosion of statistical reports and surveys generated a huge new body of data largely centered on issues such as immigrant health, nutrition, income, education, housing, employment, and consumption. This occurred primarily in the form of surveys and reports, including the Hull House Maps and Papers (1895),

the Pittsburgh Survey (1907-8), and the reports of the U.S. Industrial Commission (1902) and the Dillingham Commission (1907-11). Immigration debates and policies thus became an early domain where consumerist categories of human differentiation were generated, formalized, and institutionalized.

Third, the panelists examine the ways in which immigrants themselves partook in creating the ideas, institutions, subjectivities, and taxonomies associated with consumer society. They explore this in regard to immigrant social visions, food cultures, and financial systems. Both immigration

debates and immigrant self-creation are thus at the center of the imaginaries of consumer society, the concept of the consumer, and the politics of consumption.

Collectively, the papers show how debates about and practices of immigrants are at the center of the structures, policies, and social identities that constitute the politics of consumption. On this basis they seek to contribute to a better understanding of the mutual construction of migration issues, consumer society, and public policy relevant to both historical and contemporary debates.



Model Minority Intelligence: Scientific Racism, Education, & Citizenship, 1910-1965

Workshop with American Studies Scholar
Jeannie Shinozuka on Her New Book
Project

July 1, 2025

Organized by Anja-Maria Bassimir and
Axel Schäfer (CRC Project B06)

Jeannie Shinozuka's research interests center on Asian American studies and history, environmental history, and the history of medicine and science. Her current book project, "Model Minority Intelligence:



Scientific Racism, Education, & Citizenship, 1910-1965" is on the relational racial construction of Asian American and African American students in the early twentieth century in order to better understand the interrelationship between intelligence testing, scientific racism, and citizenship.



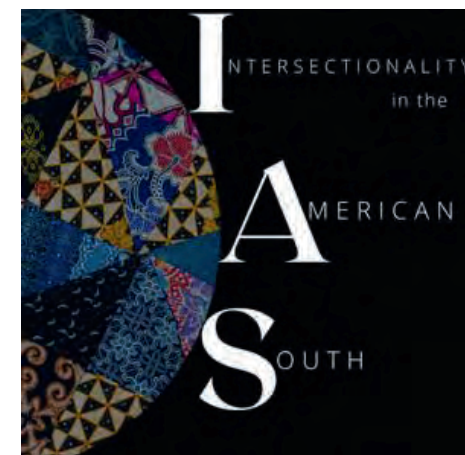
Intersectionality in the American South Symposium

July 18-19, 2025

Organized by Mita Banerjee in collaboration with Elizabeth West at the Center for Studies on Africa and Its Diaspora (CSAD) and Intersectionality in the American South (IAS), Georgia State University, Atlanta (GSU)

This symposium collaboration between GSU Intersectionality in the American South (IAS) and JGU Obama Institute represents the culminating event of a three-year Mellon grant (2022-2025) for Intersectional Studies. This international gathering offers a collective platform for knowledge sharing, critical reflection, and exploration on the American South in the era of a 21st century science and technological whirlwind. The focus is anchored in a look at the transforming southern population demographic fueled by migrations and movements. It is a moment when innovation in data generation and interpretations in science and technology prompt key queries on southernness. In this vein, the IAS 2025 Summer Symposium challenges scholars to consider how advancements and uses of data and technology have converged with mythological paradigms of southern identity and how that might inform the future of southern studies.

The symposium was held in Mainz and included a keynote address by Evelyn Hu Dehart (Brown University/University of



Bonn), three panels with topics ranging from AI technology to hip hop, podcast recordings, and a special evening event with comedians and their takes on Black lives in Germany.



Selected Research Projects

Humandifferenzierung
(DFG Sonderforschungsbereich/
Collaborative Research Center)
Johannes Gutenberg University and
Leibniz Institute for European History, Mainz
(SFB 1482/1; First Funding Period: 2021-25)



Mita Banerjee, Oliver Scheiding and Axel R. Schäfer continue their work as principal investigators within this cluster. The SFB addresses an elementary phenomenon: that people continuously categorize themselves and others. Human differentiation means first the external differentiation of humans from animals and artifacts such as robots, then the division of people into categories and groups such as ethnicities, nations, linguistic and religious communities, and finally the internal social differentiation based on characteristics such as age, gender, disability or performance.

The results of human differentiation usually appear in public discourses as given characteristics of people. In contrast, the SFB aims to raise awareness of the fact that people and social groups only acquire their characteristics by being differentiated in social practices. The research focus is on the question of how historical and contemporary societies categorize and spatially separate their members, thus making them "others" to each other and suggesting social affiliations and identities

to them. The goal is to develop a general theory of human differentiation that determines its sociocultural functions.

The SFB thus seeks to bring together a specialized and separated variety of research branches on the categorization of humans in a new overarching field "Studies in Human Categorization". This will no longer focus on individual distinctions—such as those based on gender, ethnicity, or religion—as has been the case in the past. Instead, the interplay of the many different affiliations of people is in focus.

The SFB will be funded with a total of about 10 million euros for an initial period of four years. Researchers from sociology and ethnology, American studies and linguistics, theater, media culture and translation studies at the JGU, and history at the IEG are participating.

<https://humandifferenzierung.uni-mainz.de>



SFB 1482 Humandifferenzierung
(Studies in Human Categorization)
Project A04
**Successful Aging: Best Ager at the
Intersection between Differentiating
Age and Achievement**

Principal Investigator: Mita Banerjee
(Funding 2021-2025)

This project explores how human differentiations in terms of "age" and "performance/achievement" converge in current discourses on "successful aging". It discusses (self)representations of "successful aging" in different media in order to ascertain what effects the new choreography of "age-indifferent forms of aging" may have on normative constructions of age. On the one hand, extreme old age is connoted as positive in discourses of "best aging"; on the other hand, however, elderly high achievers may be seen as an implicit counter-narrative to "normal" aging, which is often associated with deficiency and disability.



For more information see:
<https://humandifferenzierung.uni-mainz.de/en/forschung/projekt/successful-aging>



**SFB 1482 Humandifferenzierung
(Studies in Human Categorization)**

Project A06

**Curated Bodies: Aesthetics and Human
Differentiation in Lifestyle Magazines**

Principal Investigator: Oliver Scheiding
(Funding 2021-2025)

The research projects investigates magazines as an operational space for human differentiations and uses sociological concepts to open up the magazine and its specific mediality and aesthetics for American studies and literary studies. It focuses on lifestyle magazines as spaces proliferating images of bodies in the mass-medial performance of human differentiation. The performative processes of categorizing people are predicated on the media-specific aesthetics of genres in magazines and their materiality. Magazines are powerful medial infrastructures of cohesion and mediation circulating the societal dynamics of human differentiation and creating opportunities for readers to tentatively imagine and define body- and lifestyles, identities and communities. The project hence introduces the role of aesthetics into the mechanics of human differentiation.



For more information see:

<https://humandifferenzierung.uni-mainz.de/en/forschung/projekt/kuratierte-körper>

**SFB 1482 Humandifferenzierung
(Studies in Human Categorization)**

Project B06

**Migration and Welfare States in the
USA: Global and National Dynamics in
Bureaucratic Human Differentiation**

Principal Investigator: Axel R. Schäfer
(Funding 2021-2025)

New migratory flows and government efforts to control immigration paralleled the rise of consumer capitalism and the incipient welfare state in the United States since the 1880s. This project examines how the encounter with foreign peoples both at home and abroad shaped the political economy and state-building in the "age of surplus." In particular, we explore the tools and methods of categorizing immigrants as part of the biopolitical construction of new consumer subjectivities and the politics of consumption. On this basis the project also sheds new light on the link between the highly racialized and ethnicized discourse on immigration and the more recent crisis of consumer society in an age of limited resources.

Among the events in 2024 and 2025 was a Workshop on "Migration and Consumption" featuring renowned scholars in the field from Harvard University, Georgetown University, Queen's University (Canada), Bard College, and Georg-August-Universität Göttingen.



For more information see:

<https://humandifferenzierung.uni-mainz.de/en/forschung/projekt/migration-und-sozialstaat-in-den-usa>

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Periodicals and Indigenous Modernity: Building a Text Corpus of American Indian Newspapers and Magazines, 1890-1930

Oliver Scheiding
(SCHE 1616/12-1; Funding 2020–2023;
Project Ongoing in 2024)

This research project examines Native American periodicals and how they function as particular media formats to shape society and culture. Current research understands periodicals as serialized and aesthetic artifacts serving both as means of socialization and for establishing textual communities. Moreover, communication and media studies focus primarily on content, topic and the overall subject matter of periodicals. Scholarship tends to overlook, however, the Indigenous periodicals' aesthetic and material dimensions to address questions of sovereignty and modernity. Despite the central role of periodicals as public institutions that fulfill social functions, innovations in print and public communication specific to Indigenous periodicals have yet to be empirically and theoretically integrated into the fields of periodical studies and Native American studies. The project aims at differentiating Native American periodicals as aesthetic products and curated artifacts (i.e. the magazine as an experience not as a commodity), addressing questions of collaboration, interaction, and ethnic differentiation in a period of social and technological transition. The project



seeks to find out more about what makes Native American periodicals a powerful middle ground to affect the wider culture and mediate various types of Indigenous modernity.

For an overview of our project, please take a look at this video we produced to introduce you to our work:

<https://seafire.rlp.net/d/5d98df257ae14fbd515/files/?p=%2Fv2.mp4>

For more information and publications see:

<https://indigenoussamericanperiodicals.uni-mainz.de>



Transnational Periodical Cultures (Interdisciplinary Research Unit)

Oliver Scheiding and Jutta Ernst

The research group on Transnational Periodical Cultures (TPC) contributes to the burgeoning field of periodical studies, exploring magazines, newspapers, and other forms of serialized mass media in transnational contexts. Funded by the state of Rhineland-Palatinate and Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, TPC serves as an interdisciplinary forum for organizing workshops, conferences as well as graduate and postgraduate research, bringing together students and international scholars from literary studies, media studies, book studies, journalism studies, sociology, translation studies, text design, archival studies, and digital humanities.

For further TPC activities see:

www.transnationalperiodicalcultures.net

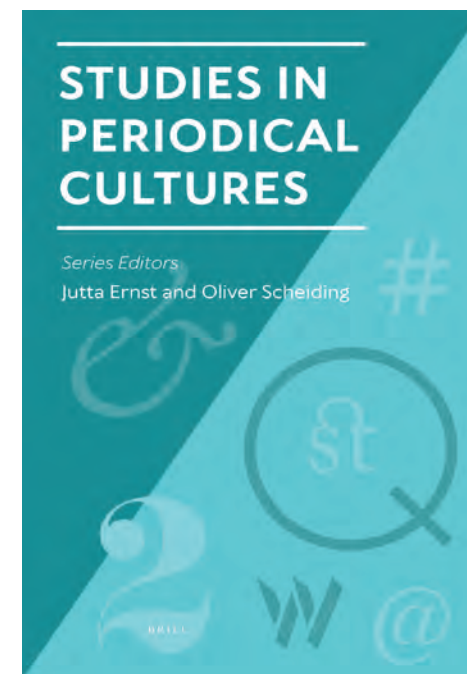
TPC organized the following workshops in 2024 and 2025:

Workshop Periodical Studies and Human Differentiation II

– Workshop, November 28, 2025
(in cooperation with project A06 of the SFB 1482 on Human Differentiation)

Current Research in Periodical Studies

– Workshop XV, December 4, 2024



For TPC's book series *Studies in Periodical Cultures* (Brill) see:

<https://brill.com/page/spc/forthcoming-series-studies-in-periodical-cultures>



Selected Dissertations

Michael Lörch

**The Politics of the Scholarly Journal:
The *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und
Amerikanistik* (ZAA) as a Link between
Academia, Publishing Industry and
Politics**

Advised by Jutta Ernst

The dissertation explores how politics shapes academic output and discourse within scholarly journals of the humanities, studying the case of the *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik* (ZAA, 1953-present). Published in the German Democratic Republic, the ZAA, thanks to its unique position in Cold War print culture, offers insights into how political factors influence journal conception, production, management, and international reception.

Building upon Andrew Abbott's concept of 'linked ecologies,' this work focuses on negotiations, collaborations, and competitions among actors from academia, publishing industry, and politics, each pursuing distinct interests in the publication of the journal. As such, this work represents a radical departure from the 'container approach' that uses periodicals as mere sources. Instead, it turns away from the readable matter to include all what goes on behind the artifact. It underscores the relevance of analyzing scholarly periodicals



as complex, multi-agent systems where academic, political, and economic interests converge, shaping scholarly outputs in ways often invisible to readers.

As "house organ" of East German Anglistik-Amerikanistik, the ZAA contributed significantly to the discipline's establishment in the GDR. However, its international orientation led to a certain division in its readership. For Western readers, the ZAA offered insights into East German research, while for East German readers it provided access to international academic discussion. Despite what one might assume following the still prevalent opinions on GDR media, political control occurred indirectly, by

influencing the university and publishing industry. Thus, while never challenging the official course, the editors and publishers of the ZAA occasionally managed to ally themselves against this political dominance to realize their own goals, such as expanding the East German canon of American literature.

The dissertation comprises three parts: The first addresses an important desideratum in periodical studies and delineates the humanities journal genre, its functions, and historical evolution. The two subsequent chapters delve into critical junctures in the ZAA's evolution, exploring its inception and early challenges in 1953, amidst the biggest transformation German universities ever encountered, and its institutional stabilization by 1972. The conclusion includes an epilogue reflecting on the ZAA's survival through the tumultuous events of 1989/90.

In conclusion, this work not only fills crucial gaps in periodical research but also prompts a reevaluation of East German intellectual history and its legacy. By highlighting the agency of East German journals and their readers, it challenges simplistic portrayals of these periodicals as mere propaganda tools. Ultimately, this book serves as a reminder of the significance of periodicals in shaping academic discourse. By examining the ZAA's trajectory, the study contributes to understanding periodicals beyond the familiar Western context, indispensable in our increasingly multipolar world.

Laura Sawade

**New Black Aesthetics:
Contemporary African American
Poetry and the Poetics of Form**

Advised by Oliver Scheiding

This dissertation examines how Terrance Hayes, Tracy K. Smith, Claudia Rankine, and Amanda Gorman transform poetic form into a site of racial and cultural negotiation. Drawing on Caroline Levine's New Formalism, the study argues that poets of the New Black Aesthetics reimagine form as a political and historical instrument. Through lyrical forms, such as the sonnet, erasure, documentary, and visual poetry, they reclaim the aesthetic space of American verse as a democratic forum for racial recognition and historical recovery. The dissertation proposes the concept of a "poetics of recognition" to describe how these poets curate and reinterpret the African American archive, confronting historical erasure and reasserting Black cultural memory. Through a New Formalist lens, the study shows how formal experimentation enables Black poets to merge the personal and the historical, the aesthetic and the political, transforming poetry into an agent of social change. Ultimately, this dissertation contends that the New Black Aesthetics articulate a new vision of American democracy through form—one grounded in inclusivity, interracial dialogue, and the continual reformation of the poetic tradition.

Jonas Müller
Climate Anxiety and the Contemporary American Novel

Advised by Alfred Hornung and
 Phil C. Langer (IPU Berlin)

Asking the question of how emotional stress caused by climate change materializes in American culture and exploring how the contemporary novel may be productively mobilized to address such feelings, this dissertation offers a theory of climate anxiety and an analysis of four relevant novels. By combining perspectives from literary and narrative theory, psychology, as well as posthumanism and its related theoretical discourses, my dissertation formulates an interdisciplinary approach to climate anxiety that focuses on its relationship with narrative and meaning-making.

Through an analysis of four novels—Jenny Offill's *Weather*, Ben Lerner's *10:04*, Jeff VanderMeer's *Annihilation*, and Richard Powers' *Bewilderment*—climate anxiety is established as an anticipatory form of psychological distress that differs from feelings provoked by more tangible, instantaneous disasters. Rather, it emerges from the distinct Slow Violence of the climate crisis and threatens processes of narrative meaning-making through its unpredictability and gradual nature. Nonetheless, climate anxiety is theorized as an adaptive feeling that is capable of alerting us to the intertwinement of the mundane and the unimaginable, as well as the human



and nonhuman. Such feelings of anxiety are thereby shown to draw attention to the urgency of the climate crisis, countering dualistic thinking and anthropocentrism. In the Anthropocene, previously serviceable processes of meaning-making are therefore destabilized, evoking anxiety and a loss of trust in the stability of everyday life, while also opening up alternative perspectives. To conclude, the climate anxiety novel is proposed as an emotional test environment that is capable of stimulating healthy engagements with such environmental emotions.

Carolín Magdalena Jesussek
**Gothic Realities:
 Space, Ecosystems, and Marginalization
 in Contemporary North American Literature**

Advised by Oliver Scheiding

Gothic Realities examines how structural and spatial discrimination in the built environment are experienced as a form of everyday horror, which the book conceptualizes as "gothic realities." Focusing on contemporary North American literature from queer, Asian American, African American, and Indigenous perspectives, the monograph demonstrates how the gothic's focus has shifted from representing marginalized figures as monstrous to exposing dominant white heteronormative structures as sources of horror for marginalized people.

Through readings of neighborhoods, cities, and domestic spaces, the book shows how characters negotiate exclusion through practices of space-making, boundary transgression, and the creation of alternative archives. Bringing together theories of space from social geography and new materialism, *Gothic Realities* develops the concept of "gothic materialism" to address ongoing critiques of new materialism's treatment of the human as a universal category. The dissertation intervenes in contemporary gothic studies by foregrounding race, queerness, Indigeneity, and gender as material and spatial conditions.



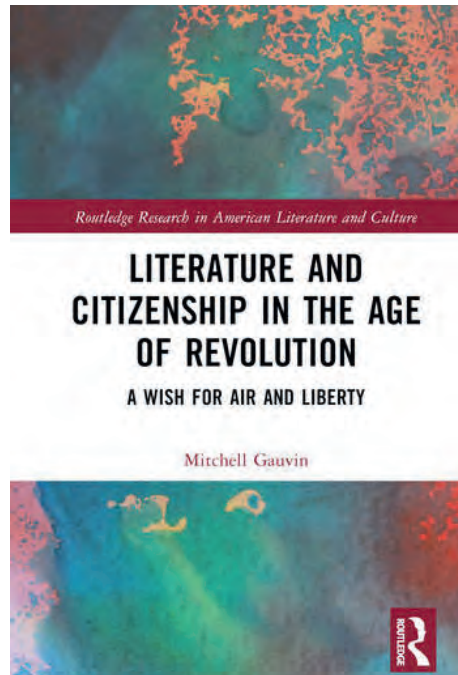
Selected Publications

Mitchell Gauvin

Literature and Citizenship in the Age of Revolution: A Wish for Air and Liberty
Routledge Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Literature

Routledge, 2024

This book examines how literature contours and contests imaginings of citizenship by focusing on a critical historical juncture in its development. Playing on the double meaning of "revolution" as both rupture and rotation, it explores how literature reflects the forces of migration and circulation that are the heart of citizenship as a concept and practice, contradicting popular associations of citizenship with rootedness and territoriality. In turn, it argues that a paradoxical fixation on the non-citizen has endured in how citizenship is culturally and legally reproduced. focus on works by Olaudah Equiano, Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, and Herman Melville. The book addresses how the literary text was a foundational medium for writers to develop visions of citizenship amidst social and imperial forces that proffered exclusionary epistemologies and policies.



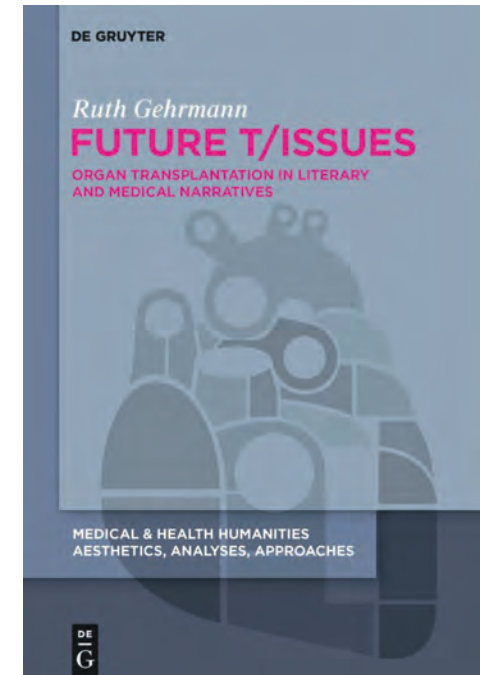
Ruth Gehrman

Future T/Issues:
Organ Transplantation in Literary and Medical Narratives
Medical & Health Humanities

De Gruyter, 2024 (open access)

Transplant practices are discussed in the medical realm, in fictional texts and in popular advertisement. Yet how do these sectors intersect and influence each other? How can the accounts of surgeons invested in transplant practice be brought into conversation with fictional voices?

Future T/Issues positions transplantation at the intersection of natural science and the humanities and adds to the discussion of organ transplantation by focusing on one specific aspect that is commonly overlooked: the idea of speculation. By engaging with speculative fiction in conversation with life writing, it contributes to a more thorough understanding of transplantation as a cultural practice, showcasing that transplantation is imagined as part of the future both within and beyond the literary sphere. Hereby, this book establishes the relationship between literary and medical narratives as reciprocal, in effect eroding boundaries between the life sciences and literary studies.



As an interdisciplinary endeavor, this study contributes to literary studies, specifically to the fields of life writing, speculative fiction, and young adult fiction, it offers insights for the study of transplantation in the popular realm and adds to the medical humanities.

<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111414638>

Michael Lörch

The Scholarly Journal in the GDR:
Politicizing the *Zeitschrift für Anglistik*
und *Amerikanistik* (1953-1990)
 Studies in Periodical Cultures

Brill, 2025

This volume goes beyond treating periodicals as mere sources of information and explores the forces shaping scholarly journals that typically remain hidden to their readers. It examines the four-decade run of the *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik* (ZAA) in the German Democratic Republic using numerous, previously unpublished archival sources. It reveals how, beyond economics and academia, politics and ideology can play a decisive role in how a humanities journal is produced and read across borders. The volume thus provides an eye-opening look at the ways journals are shaped by much more than academic trends, not only in the context of the Cold War, but also today, in our increasingly politicized world.



<https://brill.com/display/title/70661>

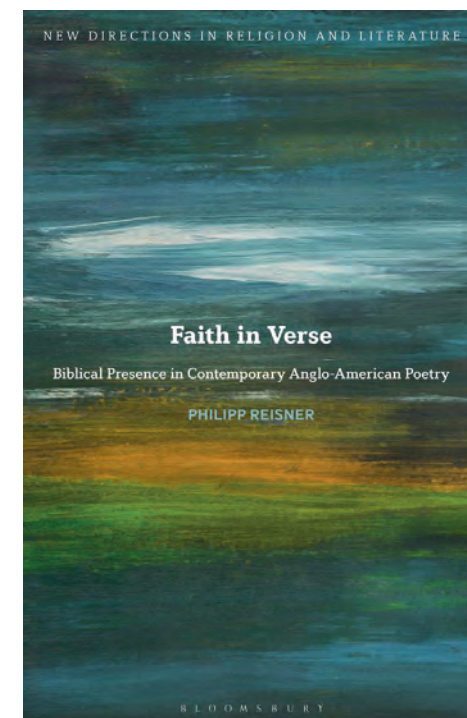
Philipp Reisner

Faith in Verse:
Biblical Presence in Contemporary
Anglo-American Poetry
 New Directions in Religion and Literature

Bloomsbury, 2025

Examining the profound influence of biblical themes on contemporary poetry written in English, this book explores the work of Brooks Haxton, Suji Kwock Kim, Kevin Hart, and Li-Young Lee.

Going beyond a mere examination of literary works, it considers how the presence of biblical references shapes and transforms contemporary Anglo-American poetry in unique and compelling ways. It argues that these poets' engagement with the biblical text transcends spirituality and cultural identity to constitute a form of theology deeply rooted in specific denominational concerns, situating the poets in relation to Romantic and Modernist antecedents and addressing the cyclical, political, and poetic dimensions of their work.



<https://www.bloomsbury.com/ca/faith-in-verse-9781350532229/>

Oliver Scheiding and Jutta Ernst
(series editors)

Studies in Periodical Cultures

Brill, 2022-present
(in part open access)

Studies in Periodical Cultures (SPC) contributes to the burgeoning field of periodical studies, exploring magazines, newspapers, and other forms of serialized media in (trans)national contexts. The book series produces a much-needed bridge between historical/archival approaches and present work in the field of media studies by highlighting the legacies and trajectories of the periodical business from 18th-century print to the digital age.

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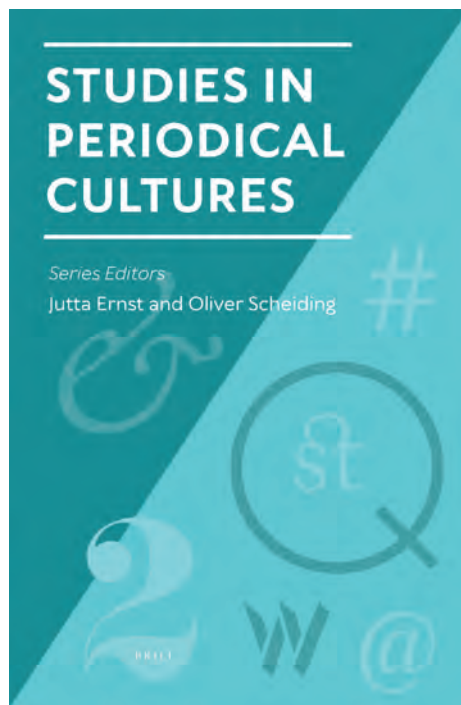
*Prismas de la diversidad cultural:
Estudios revisteriles latinoamericanos*

Volume 6, 2025

*The Scholarly Journal in the GDR:
Politicizing the Zeitschrift für Anglistik
und Amerikanistik (1953-1990)*

Volume 5, 2024

*Transnational Feminism in
Nineteenth-Century Swedish Literature
and Periodical Culture:
Entangled Dreams and
Cross-cultural Encounters*



<https://brill.com/display/serial/SPC?contents=toc-141798>

Mita Banerjee, Monika Pietrzak-Franger,
and Anita Wohlmann
(series editors)

Medical & Health Humanities: Aesthetics, Analyses, Approaches

De Gruyter, 2023-present
(open access)

Over the last decades, the medical and health humanities have established themselves as vibrant interdisciplinary fields. Responding to these developments, the series seeks to encourage further innovation by stressing three points.

First, in looking at health and illness as a spectrum of cultural practices, it sets out to spotlight both individual and collective experiences. With that, it draws attention to the questions of inequality and social justice and expands the purview of current research to include more-than-human subjects, entanglements, and perspectives.

Second, it aims to broaden the current cultural and geographical scope beyond Western cultures and Western medicine to address different cultural and medical imaginaries as they can be found, for instance, in the Global South and Eastern Europe.

Third, it emphasizes the historical and aesthetic dimensions of the expression of illness experience. With this, it draws attention to a variety of forms and media used in this context and decidedly goes beyond the narrow focus on illness narratives. This attention to the aesthetic



dimension of medical and health humanities has significant consequences on the methodological level, since it opens up new spaces for conversations between media analysis, artistic practice, and empirical research.

Encompassing monographs, edited collections, and critical explorations either in English or German, the peer-reviewed series offers ground-breaking interventions into the field, well-focused multidisciplinary dialogues as well as in-depth, methodologically and theoretically innovative studies.

<https://www.degruyterbrill.com/de/serial/mhh-b/html>

Alfred Hornung (editor in chief.)
**Journal of Transnational American
 Studies**

2009–present

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https://escholarship.org/uc/acgcc_jtas

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Obama Institute for
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- . *The Scholarly Journal in the GDR: Politicizing the Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik (1953-1990)*, De Gruyter Brill, 2025.

- Meerwein, Sandra.** "Pacific Islands' Perspectives on Maritime Security Issues and Their Implications for Regional Ocean Governance in the Pacific." *KIMS Periscope – Korea Institute for Maritime Strategy*, no. 369, 2024. <https://en.kims.or.kr/issubrief/kims-periscope/peri369/>. Accessed 26 February 2025.
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- Obenland, Frank.** "Dissensual Performances of Race and Community in Claudia Rankine's *The White Card* and Jackie Sibblies Drury's *Fairview*." *Journal of Contemporary Drama in English*, vol. 12, no. 1, May 2024, pp. 110–27. www.degruyter.com, <https://doi.org/10.1515/jcde-2024-2006>.
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- Schäfer, Axel R.** "Hans-Jürgen Grabbe's 'The End of the Redemption System in the United States': A Commentary." *Amerikastudien/American Studies*. Vol. 70, no. 4, 2025, pp. 695–699.
- Scheiding, Oliver and Frank Newton.** "Native American Periodicals: The Art and Politics of Early Twentieth-Century Indigenous Printscapes." *Amerikastudien / American Studies*, vol. 69, no. 2, 2024, pp. 111–132.
- and Friedemann Kreuder. "Rasse und Ethnizität im künstlerischen Aktivismus nordamerikanischer indigener Zines und im deutschen postmigrantischen Theater." *Humandifferenzierung im Vergleich*. Eds. Anne Friedrichs, Stefan Hirschauer, Peter Hofmann, and Gabriele Schabacher. Weilerswist: Velbrück, 2025. 181–205.
- . "Early American History and Race in Contemporary African American Graphic Novels." *Early America and the Modern Imagination: Rewriting the Past in the Present*. Eds. Rebecca Harrison and Patrick Erben. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2025. 84–105.
- Schmidt, Klaus H.** "Excess and A New Pornographic Imagination: Escalations of Neonaturalism in Transnational Visual Culture. Part I: Departure." *Studies in American Naturalism*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2023 [© 2024], pp. 75–117.

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- . "Excess and A New Pornographic Imagination: Escalations of Neonaturalism in Transnational Visual Culture. Part II: Arrival." *Studies in American Naturalism*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2023 [© 2025], pp. 222–67. Open Access. <https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/17/article/966947/pdf>.
- . Review of *Perspectives on Values: The Network of Satire and Humor, the Tragic and the Absurd, the Grotesque and the Monstrous, Play and Irony, Parody and the Comic Mode*, by Gerhard Hoffmann (Heidelberg: Winter, 2024). *Amerikastudien/American Studies*, vol. 70, no. 2, 2025, pp. 239–42. Open Access. <https://amst.winter-verlag.de/data/article/12420/pdf/102502001.pdf>.
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- Touzos, Amina Antonia.** "The Silver Fox of Video Games: Questions of Aging and Masculinity in CD Projekt's *The Witcher* Series." *Gender, Age, and the New Media*, edited by Ruth Gehrmann and Julia Velten, special issue of *gender forum*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2023, pp. 38–58. Published online 2024. <https://doi.org/10.18716/ojs/gefo/2023.2405>.
- et al. "The Role of Website Narratives in Young Professionals' Critical Online Reasoning." *Students', Graduates', and Young Professionals' Critical Use of Online Information Within and Across Domains: Digital Performance Assessment and Training*, edited by Olga Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia, et al., Springer, 2024, pp. 67–91.

List of Presentations Given by Members

- Banerjee, Mita.** "Towards a Humanities of Care: Life Writing and Thanatic Ethics in Yusra Mardini's Autobiography *Butterfly*." In the Year 2525 – The Future Face of the Humanities lecture series, 16 Jan. 2024, Fachbereich 05, University of Mainz. Guest Lecture.
- and **Ruth Gehrmann.** "Das Andere als Feindbild? Psychoanalytische und soziokulturelle Dimensionen von Othering." Studienprogramm Q+, 19 Jan. 2024, University of Mainz. Workshop.
- , Carla Schelle, Olga Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia, et al. "A Reconstructive Hermeneutic and Narrative Analysis of Students' Critical Reasoning Processes Performing an Internet Search." AERA Annual Meeting, 13 Apr. 2024, Philadelphia, PA. Online presentation.
- , "Telling a New Story About Chemistry: Chemical Humanities as Narrative Blueprint for ETOS." ETOS Summer School, 21 May 2024, KIT Karlsruhe. Vortrag.
- and **Ruth Gehrmann.** "'Waves of Knowing': Gender and Oceanic Landscapes in U.S. American Literature." Ways of Water: Aquatic Poetics and Politics in North American Literature and Culture lecture series, 26 June 2024, University of Bremen. Guest Lecture.
- and Carla Schelle, Olga Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia, et al. "Economics Students' Critical Use of Internet-Information (Bo6)." BERA Conference 2024 and WERA Focal Meeting, 8–12 Sep. 2024, University of Manchester.
- , "Reden wir über Europa! USA und Europa – Eine Beziehung vor der Wahl." Leibniz-Institut für Europäische Geschichte, 23 Oct. 2024, Mainz. Podiumsdiskussion.
- , "Nation – Zum Umgang mit einem schwierigen Begriff und seiner Reflexion in Kunst und Kultur." Forschungsplattform Frühe Neuzeit "Figurationen des Nationalen," Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz in Kooperation mit dem Staatstheater Mainz, Glashaus, Staatstheater Mainz, 31 Oct. 2024. Podiumsdiskussion.
- and Thomas Efferth. "Discussion of Pharmaceutical Humanities." Narrative Medicine International Working Group, chaired by Rita Charon, 15 Jan 2025, Columbia University New York. Online Talk.

- , "The Beauty of Old Cells? Narrating Age between Culture and Biology." Joint Colloquium, SFB 1361 "Regulation of DNA Repair and Genome Stability," 16 Jan 2025, Institute of Molecular Biology, University of Mainz. Guest Lecture.
- , "Life Writing, Writing Life: Disability and Visibility in Jason Kingsley's and Mitchell Levitz's *Count Us In*." Being (In)Visible: Representations of Disability and Ableism in Popular Culture Student Conference, 17 Jan 2025, University of Mainz. Keynote Address.
- , Carla Schelle, Olga Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia et al., "Language Use and Contextualizations in Problem Solving in Internet Learning Environments – Critical Online Reasoning in Student Courses of Economics and Medicine." 12th GEBF Conference 2025, 27 Jan 2025, University of Mannheim. Panel Talk.
- , "Perspectives on Human Differentiation." Sorting and Translating: Politics – Borders – Belongings, CRC 1482 "Studies in Human Differentiation" Conference, 30 Jan 2025, University of Mainz at Gernersheim. Panelist in Panel Discussion.
- , "Europe after Trump's Second Election." Europe after Donald Trump's Second Election FORTHEN Alliance Workshop, 20 March 2025, hybrid format, JGU Mainz, Germany and Uniwersytet Opolski, Poland. Workshop Talk.
- Bassimir, Anja-Maria.** "Christianity Today and the World." Panel "Beyond 'America First': The Competing Global Visions of American Protestants at the End of the Twentieth Century," joint session of the American Historical Association and the American Society of Church History, 4–7 Jan. 2024, San Francisco. Conference presentation.
- , "A Taste of America: How Turn-of-the-Century Marginalization of Immigrant Food Ways Defined an American Standard of Living." European Association for American Studies (EAAS): 1924–2024, The American Immigrant Narrative Revisited, 4–6 Apr. 2024, Munich. Conference presentation.
- , "Scoring Health in Maine: Nutrition Extension and the Measuring of Health Between the Wars." "Health in American History" panel, Annual Meeting of Historians in the DGfA, 3–5 May 2024, Erfurt. Conference presentation.
- , "The Tomato Situation': Dimensions of Vulnerability in California's Wartime Food Production." International Workshop Rethinking the Volatility of Vulnerability against Categorical Constraints, CRC Studies in Human Categorization, University of Mainz, 6–7 June 2024. Workshop presentation.
- , "Essen und Ernährung." Konferenz Menschen Unterscheiden, Institut für Europäische Geschichte and DFG Humandifferenzierung, 23 Sept. 2024, Mainz. Conference presentation.

---. "A Taste of America: How Turn-of-the-Century Marginalization of Immigrant Food Ways Defined an American Standard of Living." Annual conference of the Organization of American Historians (OAH), Chicago, IL, USA. Conference Talk.

Brau-Weglinski, Lisa. "Who Is Old? The Imagination of Age in Young Adults in Margaret Morganroth Gullette's *Aged by Culture* Meets the Construction of Age at the U.S. National Senior Games." LIT 301 Coming-of-Age Narratives, 17 Jan. 2024, organized by Julia Schwarzmeier, Fachbereich II Anglistik, University of Trier. Online guest lecture.

---. "'The Jilting of Granny Weatherall' and Aging Studies." Proseminar 122: American Modernism, 5 June 2024, organized by Allison Marie Nick, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. Guest lecture.

Ernst, Jutta. "Sounding the Avant-Garde in Postwar Germany: Das Lot and Transnational Magazine Practices." Translation in European Periodical Cultures, 1945–65, March 2024, JGU Mainz, Gernersheim Campus. Conference presentation.

---. "The Volume's Structure and Organizational Principle—Periodical Studies Today: Multidisciplinary Analyses." Book launch, The Research Society for Victorian Periodicals, July 2024, online event. Book presentation.

---. "Welcoming Address." Westeuropäische Afrikareisende in der Frühen Neuzeit, exhibition opening, October 2024, LBZ/Pfälzische Landesbibliothek, Speyer. Opening address.

---. "Zeitschriftenmilieus in der DDR und während der Wende," Erfurt University, February 2025. Respondent.

---, Laura Fólca, et al. "Decoding Periodicals: Translators, Data, and Interdisciplinary Insights." Translation, Interpreting, and Culture 4: Translators, Interpreters, and Society, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, September 2025. Panel Talk.

---. "The Magazine as Contact Zone: French-American Cultural Exchanges in the Trump Era." Contact and Engagement: Languages, Cultures and Knowledges, 2nd CRLCC International Conference, York University, Toronto, Canada, May 2025. Conference Talk.

Fazli, Sabina. "Magazines beyond Magazines." Global Book Cultures: Materialities, Collaborations, Access, SHARP Conference, 1–5 June 2024, Reading University. With Alice Morin. Conference presentation.

---. "(Post)human Interest: Magazines as Science Fiction Objects." Transitions, SFRA Conference, 8–11 May 2024, Tartu. Conference presentation.

---. "Print Magazine Fandom?" Roundtable "Material Contexts, Fan Studies and Design Symposium," 1 Mar. 2024, Lancaster University. Roundtable contribution.

---. "Experimental Travel in Indie Magazines." The Depiction of Travel in European Periodicals and Newspapers from the Eighteenth Century to the Present, 27–28 June 2025, Freiburg, Conference talk.

Gauvin, Mitchell. "Ruptures and Remappings: The Transpacific in Herman Melville's *Benito Cereno*." Transcending Boundaries: Interdisciplinary Insights in Transpacific Studies, Feb. 2024, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Germany. Conference presentation.

---. "Textuality and the Last War: Olaudah Equiano and the American Revolution." Intellectual Histories on the American Revolution, symposium, Aug. 2024, Kylemore Abbey Global Centre, University of Notre Dame, Ireland. Symposium presentation.

---. "The Role of the Humanities in the Future of Citizenship." In the Year 2525—The Future Face of the Humanities lecture series, Faculty of Philosophy and Philology, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, 2024. talk.

Gehrmann, Ruth. "Alters(t)räume: Selbst- und Fremdsegregation im hohen Alter." Jahrestagung der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Soziologie, 23–25 Sept. 2024, Osnabrück / online. Conference presentation.

---. "We're not in Nantucket anymore: Women Writing on Board of Whaling Vessels in the 19th Century," A Water's History of the United States, 21–23 May 2025, Middelburg, Netherlands.

Georgi, Sonja. "African American Migration to Native American Lands: The Immigrant–Indigenous–Settler Trajectory as Family History in William S. Yellow Robe's *Grandchildren of the Buffalo Soldiers*." 1924–2024: The American Immigrant Narrative Revisited, 35th Biennial European Association for American Studies Conference, Apr. 2024, Amerikahaus Munich. Conference presentation.

---. "An American 1990s Sci-fi Novel as GOAT in Germany? A Case for Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower* (1993)." Roundtable discussion, Black History Month Global Read-a-Thon 2024: The G.O.A.T., Center for the Study of Africa and Its Diaspora, Georgia State University, with the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies, Feb. 2024, online event. YouTube link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBdP57yG_Gw

Görg, Claudia. "Jewish American Short Stories: Between Tradition and Modernity." Conference on Teaching the Jewish Experience, Speyer, 10-11 May 2025 (Verband Englisch und Mehrsprachigkeit in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Pädagogischen Landesinstitut Rheinland-Pfalz). Workshop Talk.

Höll, Davina. "The Planetary Uncanny: More-Than-Human Entanglements and the Planetary Health Humanities." With Dr. Leonie N. Bossert. Imagining Planetary Health, Well-Being, and Habitability, Rachel Carson Center Conference, Oct. 2024, Tutzing. Conference lecture.

---. "The Limits of Imagination in the Light of Microbe, Nonhuman Animal, and Human Entanglements." With Dr. Leonie N. Bossert. At the Limits of Imagination: Otherness in Humans and Nonhuman Animals, Sept. 2024, Vienna. Lecture.

---. "'What Men Have Hopelessly Yearned For': Gendered Visualities in Poor Things (1992/2023)." Poster presentation, Medical Humanities and the Moving Pictures Symposium, Sept. 2024, Durham. Poster presentation.

---. "The Microbiomic Imagination: Meeting the More-Than-Human in Science and Literature." guest lecture, working group "More-Than-Human-Humanities," July 2024, Bergische Universität Wuppertal. Guest lecture.

---. "Emerging Knowledge in Times of Crisis: Adam Dickinson's *Anatomic* (2018)." International Conference of Three Societies on Literature and Science, Apr. 2024, Birmingham. Conference lecture.

--- and **Amina A. Touzos.** "Playing (in) the Dark: Medical Gothic Video Games and the Digital Future of the American Gothic." American Nightmares: The Inaugural Symposium of the Society for the Study of the American Gothic, 21-23 Mar. 2024, Salem, Massachusetts, USA. Conference presentation.

Hornung, Alfred. "Confucius and American Democracy." Third International Forum on Democracy: The Shared Human Values, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. TV talk Confucius and America, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, Mar. 2024.

---. "Confucianism: Chinese Ideas in the Cultural Foundation of the United States" and "Exchange Programs for Chinese Students in Europe and the US." Hebei University, Baoding, Mar. 2024. Lecture.

---. "The Impact of the Translations of Confucius' Work on the European and American Enlightenments" and "Migration and Medical Humanities." Honorary Guest Professorship, Shandong University, Jinan, Mar. 2024. Lecture.

---. "Confucius and Benjamin Franklin." Qilu University of Technology and Qufu Normal University, Jinan, Mar. 2024. Lecture.

---. "Confucius' Influence on the Foundation of the US." Qilu Normal University, Jinan, Mar. 2024. Lecture.

---. TV Interview: "The Role of Confucius in the West." Confucius Foundation, Jinan, Mar. 2024.

---. "The Transnational Work of African American Women in Germany: Angela Davis, Audre Lorde, and Mary Church Terrell." Transnational American Studies Revisited, Comparative Literature Symposium, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Apr. 2024. Keynote Address.

---. "Al Capone: Drei Faktoren seines Erfolgs." Terra X History, ZDF Mediathek, June 2024. TV appearance.

---. "Life Writing with Scissors: Cut-out and Collage for the Creation of the Self." Fragmented Lives, IABA World Conference, University of Iceland, Reykjavik, June 2024. Conference presentation.

---. TV Interview: "Confucian Principles Have Global Appeal." China Daily, The Home of Confucius, Shandong Province, 20 June 2024.

---. "ChinAmerica: Global Affairs and Planetary Consciousness" and "Translating American Literature." Shandong University, Jinan, Oct. 2024. Lectures.

---. TV Interview: "Confucius and the World." Confucius Foundation, Qufu, Oct. 2024.

---. TV Interview: "Confucius Studies: Comparisons of Cultures." Jinan International Communication Center, Oct. 2024.

---. "The Pursuit of Planetary Harmony: Confucius, Alexander von Humboldt, Henry D. Thoreau." Rethinking the World: Humboldt Day, Humboldt Center for Transdisciplinary Studies, Hunan Normal University, Changsha, Oct. 2024. Conference presentation.

---. Interview: "Trump hat mehr versprochen." Allgemeine Zeitung, Nov. 2024.

---. "Comment on Workshop 'Publishing on Transnational Ground: Grounded Engagement and the *Journal of Transnational American Studies*.'" ASA Annual Convention, Baltimore, MD, Nov. 2024. Workshop comment.

---. "Signs of Different Lives: Conversations and Correspondence of Alexander von Humboldt and Thomas Jefferson," Signs of Life, Conference IABA the Americas, Cape May, New Jersey (June 2025).

---. Roundtable "Commemorating 40 Years of *a/b*," Signs of Life, Conference IABA the Americas, Cape May, New Jersey (June 2025).

---. "Practicing Enlightenment Ideas in the 21st Century," Global Civilizations Dialogue Ministerial Meeting, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing (July 2025)

- . Online Lecture Course "American Studies and China Studies," Summer School Shandong University (16-21 Juli 2025).
- . "The Coalescence of Confucius' Ethics and Humboldt's Aesthetics in American Transcendentalism," Third Humboldt Day: In Alexander von Humboldt's Cosmos: Ethics and Aesthetics, Humboldt Center for Transdisciplinary Studies, Hunan Normal University, Changsha (Oktober 2025).
- . "From the Silk Road to BRI and GCI," International Forum Mutual Learning Among Civilizations, Inheritance and Development, Cultural Affairs Bureau of the Macao Special Administrative Region (Dezember 2025). Keynote.
- . "The Need for Cultural Exchange," Presidential Award Ceremony for Distinguished Member of the Academic Committee of the Institute of Global and Regional Studies, Hebei University, Baoding (Oktober 2025). Keynote.
- . "The Cross-Cultural Importance of Translation," Hebei University, Baoding (Oktober 2025).
- . "Chinese American Literature," Shandong University, Jinan (Oktober 2025). Honoray Chair Professorship lecture.
- . "Transculturation and the Caribbean," Jilo University, Jinan (Oktober 2025).
- . "Alexander von Humboldt and Thomas Jefferson's Relation: European and American Perceptions of Ethnic Differences in the Americas," University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez (November 2025). Charla Magistral Keynote.
- . "Cold War 2.0 and Europe," ASA Convention, San Juan, Puerto Rico (November 2025).
- . Chair of JTAS Business Meeting, San Juan, Puerto Rico (November 2025).
- . Director del Obama Institute ofrece charla magistral en el RUM. TV Interview Puerto Rico, Nov. 2025, 6.12 min.
- Jesussek, Carolin.** "Disability Gothic in William Alexander's Short Story 'The House on the Moon.'" The Persistence of the Short Story: Traditions and Futures, International Symposium co-hosted by the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies, the Society for the Study of the American Short Story, the American Literature Association, and the European Network for Short Fiction Research (DFG-funded), 10-12 July 2023, JGU Mainz. Conference presentation.
- Kathke, Torsten.** "(Un)Divided? – Spaltung der Gesellschaft, Waffen, demographischer Wandel." DAI Saarland/START, 27 Sept. 2024. Online presentation.
- . "Historian Here': Form, Platform, and Community in the Academic Twitter Thread." Workshop "Academic Forms," LMU München, 11 Oct. 2024. Online Presentation.

- Kleinstück, Lydia.** "Digital Gaming Magazines: Infinite Space with Limited Voices?" Presentation at the interdisciplinary workshop Digital Forms: The Long and Short of It, 22-23 Nov. 2024, Mainz.
- . "Electronic Gaming Monthly, 2009+2010." Workshop Zeitschriftenforschung und Humandifferenzierung II (als Teil des Projekts „Kuratierte Körper" des SFB 1482), 28 Nov 2025, Mainz. Workshop Talk.
- Kotel, Kimberly.** "Non-procreative Production: Tending to the Present in Willa Cather's *O Pioneers!*." Sarah Isom Center for Women and Gender Studies' Asexualities Lecture, 13 Nov 2025, Oxford, MS. Lecture in Lecture Series.
- Kreye, Ylva.** "Well-Being for All: Isaac M. Rubinow and the Migrant Knowledge Origins of Early Twentieth-Century American Health Insurance." Annual Meeting of the Historians in the DGfA/GAAS 2024: Health in American History, 4 May 2024, Erfurt.
- Lörch, Michael.** "Reviving Socialist Aesthetics: *Jacobin Magazine's* Visual Identity and Its Global Impact." Contact and Engagement: Languages, Cultures and Knowledges, 2nd CRLCC International Conference, York University, Toronto, Canada, May 2025. Conference Talk.
- Meerwein, Sandra.** "Climate Security in the Pacific: Perspectives at the Intersection of Environmental Humanities and Critical Ocean Studies." International Workshop on Climate Security in the Asia-Pacific, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Jan. 30-31, 2025, Tokyo. Workshop Talk.
- . "Ocean Governance and Environmental Security: Approaches at the Intersection of Environmental Humanities and Critical Ocean Studies." Korea Institute for Maritime Strategy, April 3, 2025, Seoul. Talk.
- . "Environmental Security in the Pacific: Translation of Ocean Ontologies and Knowledge Systems into Ocean Governance." Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, TP-Bridge Program, May 14, 2025, Tokyo. Talk.
- . "Maritime Security in the Pacific: The Impact of Environmental Paradigms on Ocean Governance." 20th Jeju Forum for Peace and Prosperity, May 30, 2025, Jeju. Panel Talk.
- . "Maritime Security and Governance in the Indo-Pacific." Potomac Dialogue, Bridging the Divide: The Vital Role of the Asia Pacific in Global Security, Oct. 16-17, 2025, Center for Asia Pacific Strategy, Washington, D.C. Workshop Talk.
- Newton, Frank.** "I Look the Part, And You Cannot Think of Me Otherwise: Native American Periodicals and the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924." Bordeaux University, June 2024. Lecture.

- . "Circulating Graphic-Visual Markers: Ornamentation in Early Twentieth-Century Pan-Indigenous North American Periodicals." Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Nov. 2024. Lecture.
- . "Assembled Texts: Indigenous Periodicals and/as Archives," Archives, Literary Knowledge, and Modes of Publication in the Long Nineteenth Century, 13–14 March, 2025, Heidelberg. Talk.
- . Newton, Frank. "Recovering Native American Print Products: Digital Archives of Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Native American Periodicals and the Preference of Accessibility," Archiving America/American Archives, 13 June DGFA 71st Annual Meeting, Panel Talk.
- Nick, Allison.** "Pearl S. Buck's Transpacific WWII Novels." Transcending Boundaries: Interdisciplinary Insights in Transpacific Studies, Feb. 2024, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Germany. Conference presentation.
- Obenland, Frank.** "Climate Change and Fantastic Storytelling in Cherie Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves* (2017)." Fantastic Climates, Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in the Fantastic, Kassel, 5–7 Sept. 2024. Conference presentation.
- Reisner, Philipp.** "American Short Fiction in Light of the Chinese Exclusion Act." The Persistence of the Short Story: Traditions and Futures, International Symposium co-hosted by the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies, the Society for the Study of the American Short Story, the American Literature Association, and the European Network for Short Fiction Research (DFG-funded), 10–12 July 2023, JGU Mainz. Conference presentation.
- Schäfer, Axel.** "Migration und Konsumpolitik in den USA seit 1880." Plenartagung des Sonderforschungsbereichs 1482 "Humandifferenzierung," Mainz, July 2024. Presentation.
- . "The 'Tempest Tost' and the 'People of Plenty': Migration and the Politics of Consumption in the U.S. Since the 1880s." Cambridge American History Seminar, 3 March 2025. Cambridge. Talk.
- . "Migrants, Metrics, and the Making of the Politics of Consumption in the U.S. since the 1880s." Organization of American Historians (OAH) Conference, 3–6 April. Chicago. Panel Talk.
- Scheiding, Oliver.** "New Directions in Studying the American Short Story." American Literature Association Annual Conference, 22–25 May 2024, Chicago. Conference presentation.
- . "The Futures of the Short Story." The Persistence of the Short Story: Traditions and Futures, International Symposium co-hosted by the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies, the Society for the Study of the American

Short Story, the American Literature Association, and the European Network for Short Fiction Research (DFG-funded), 10–12 July 2023, JGU Mainz. Conference presentation.

- . "Zines, Fans, Allies: Intensities of Affiliation in Micro-Media." Sorting People into Kinds: Perspectives on Human Differentiation, International Symposium, Collaborative Research Center 1482 Human Differentiation, 7 Dec. 2024, Mainz. Conference presentation.
- . "Indigenous Periodicals as Assembled Texts," 3 – 6 September, ESPRit Conference, Málaga, Spanien. Conference Talk.
- . "The American Short Story in the Age of Disruption," American Fiction: Forms Genres, and Traditions, 16 – 18 October, American Literature Association Symposium, Santa Fe. Conference Talk.
- Schlarb, Damien B.** "Short Stories, Longplay: Formal Influences of the Short Story on Digital Games and the Integration of Narrative and Play." The Persistence of the Short Story: Traditions and Futures, International Symposium co-hosted by the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies, the Society for the Study of the American Short Story, the American Literature Association, and the European Network for Short Fiction Research (DFG-funded), 10–12 July 2023, JGU Mainz. Conference presentation.
- Schmidt, Klaus H.** "Smuggling Naturalism into Literary, Media, and Cultural Studies: Challenges and Strategies in Times of Perpetual Crisis." Teaching American Literary Naturalism in the 21st Century, University of Gävle, Sweden, 17–18 Oct. 2024. Symposium presentation.
- Touzos, Amina Antonia.** "Critical Online Reasoning in der Medizinischen Ausbildung: Narrative und hermeneutisch-rekonstruktive Analysezugänge zum Umgang von Medizinstudierenden mit Online-Quellen." Annual Conference of the Gesellschaft für Medizinische Ausbildung, 7–9 Aug. 2024, Fribourg, Switzerland. Conference presentation.
- . "A Game of Life and Death: Medical Simulation in War Video Games." Leibniz ScienceCampus Annual Conference on Playing War: Simulations, Games, Exercises and the Representation of Military Force and Violence, 27–29 Nov. 2024, Regensburg. Conference presentation.
- Weglinski, Lisa.** "Probing Sports and Technology at the National Senior Games: Jackson, the Blade Runner." Speculating Technologies, Speculating Age Workshop, 28–29 Mar. 2025, Mainz. Workshop Talk.
- . "Too Old to Run? – The Cultural Construction of Age and the United States National Senior Games." Science im Salon – Science Slam 2025, 18 Sept. 2025, Institut français, Mainz. Presentation.

- Winkler, Marlene.** "Black Feminism: (M)othering in Toni Morrison's *A Mercy*." EAPURS Conference, 18–19 September, online. Conference Talk.
- . "Im Zeichen des Widerstandes: Mutterschaft aus der Perspektive des US-Amerikanischen Schwarzen Feminismus." GenderU Intersektionale Perspektiven auf Gender und Widerstand, Studienprogramm Q+ Vorlesungsreihe, 10 November, Mainz. Lecture.
- . "Climate Justice and (Landscape) Trauma in *Don't Look Up*." Text, Terrain, Transformation Student Conference, 10–11 October, Mainz. Conference Talk.

List of Presentations at the Obama Institute

2024

January

Philipp Pabst (Universität Münster)

"*twen*. Zum Design von Literaturbeiträgen in einem Zeitgeistmagazin der frühen Bundesrepublik."

February

Eva Aguon Cruz (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

"Menhalom, Senhalom Famalao'an: Awakening our Women's Embodied Wisdom from Deep Within."

Samantha Marley Barnett (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

"Waves of Return: A Pacific Islander Approach to Ancestral Afterlives."

Yasmina Benachour (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

"Opposite Day."

Ajani Burell (Northern Marianas College)

"Yo'āmtē (Healer) of the Soul: The Restorative Writing of Julian Aguon."

Holger Droessler (Worcester Polytechnic Institute, MA)

"'And I Lost': Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner's 'History Project' and Remembering U.S. Nuclear Colonialism in the Marshall Islands."

Lennie Espinoza (University of Hawai'i at Hilo)

"Aloha 'Āina: Indigenous Epistemology in Contemporary Hawaiian Literature."

Andrew Gumataotao (Georg August University of Göttingen)

"Sound Knowledge in the Mariana Islands: Indigenous/Oceanic Methodologies in Local and Extra-Local Contexts."

Paula Hastings (University of Toronto)

"[It] practically changed the geography of the world': The Panama Canal, the Pacific World and Shifting Spatial Imaginaries in Canada."

Andrew Kincaid (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)

"Naming the Ocean in Witi Ihimaera's *Whale Rider*."

Angela Kölling (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

"Locating 'the Pacific Way' in Germany: A Decolonising Indigeneity?"

Marietta Kosma (University of Oxford)

"Performance of Gender in (Trans)pacific regions in Shailja Patel's *Migritude*."

Gabriela Kwiatek (Jagiellonian University)

"Indigenous Health Policy, Self-Determination and Transpacific Cooperation in British Columbia, Canada, and Aotearoa New Zealand."

Iris-Aya Laemmerhirt (TU Dortmund University)

"Oceanic Poetics: Kānaka Maoli Voices Across the Currents."

Matthew Lear (University of Edinburgh)

"(Re)presentations of Guāhan and Hawai'i in *From Unincorporated Territory*."

Alissa Lienhard (Leibniz University Hannover)

"Transpacific Spaces in Okja."

Sheng-mei Ma (Michigan State University)

"Taiwan Meets Its Unmaker: Circum-l(sle) and gHost Films."

Julia Machtenberg (Ruhr University Bochum)

"Vulnerability and Responsibility in Ocean Vuong's *Night Sky with Exit Wounds*."

Jihun Park (Yonsei University, Seoul) and **Soojeong Shin** (Seoul National University)

"The Partisan Lens of Terrorism: Political Orientation and Terrorist Targeting Patterns."

Alyssa 'Ānela Purcell (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

"Goddess Haumea & Queen Lili'uokalani: Shared embodiments of intellectual, protective, and regenerative mana."

Davis Rehuher, et al. (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

"Reinterpreting the Lessons from *The Fog of War*: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara in the Context of Militarism in the Micronesia Region."

Alexander Rüter (University of Cologne)

"Nikkei Circulations: Notes on a Transpacific Figure."

Anamalia Sue'su'e (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

"Community Membership among Samoans Raised in Hawai'i."

John Taukave (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

"Storytelling Performance."

Masayoshi Yamada (University of California, Los Angeles)

"But There Is a Color Line in Jazz: The Hot Club of Japan and the Making of Transpacific Antiracism Solidarity during the Cold War."

May

Jonathan Bell (University College London)

"Beyond Liberation or Assimilation: LGBTQ Rights, Health Care, and the Limits of Bodily Autonomy in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s."

Emilee Bews, Margaret MacKenzie, and Samantha Nepton (McGill University, Montréal)

"DecoloniZine: Building Community through Arts-based Projects."

Thomas Fuchs (Independent Scholar)

"The Historic Roots of Trump Fascism."

Michael Lackey (University of Minnesota)

"Moses Biofictions as Critiques of Nazism: Zora Neale Hurston and Thomas Mann."

Scott Pincikowski (Hood College)

"Assessing our Relationship with Nature through the Environmental Humanities: A Bioethics Approach to Sarah Orne Jewett's 'A White Heron' (1886)."

"Environmental Humanities 101: Solving the Problems of Climate Change with the Environmental Humanities."

"Disappearing Landscapes/Disappearing Cultures: What happens to Language and Culture when Keystone Landscapes Disappear?"

June

Katherine Benton-Cohen (Georgetown University)

"Inventing the Immigration Problem: The Dillingham Commission of 1907-1911 and the Origins of Modern Immigration Policy."

"Migrants, Minorities, and Consumption."

"Quiet Money: The Family Fortune that Transformed New York, the American Southwest, and the Modern Middle East."

Vanessa Evans (Appalachian State University)

"Reading Resurgence: Contemporary Indigenous Novels as Constellations of Coresistance."

"Imagining Otherwise: Indigenous Futurisms in Andrea L. Rogers' *Man Made Monsters*."

David Luis-Brown (Claremont Graduate University)

"Selective Anti-Imperialism, Settler Colonialism and the Lure of Racial Capitalist Progress in Spanish-Language Periodicals in Paris."

Danielle Spencer (Columbia University)

"New Directions in Narrative Medicine"

July

Thomas Austenfeld (Université de Fribourg)

"'World-losers elsewhere, conquerors here!': The Fourth of July in American Poetry."

Michael Basseler (Justus-Liebig-Universität Giessen)

"Is there a Postsocialist North American Short Story?"

Alfred Bendixen (Princeton University)

"New Voices Confronting the Silence: The Emergence of Feminist Traditions in the American Short Story."

Maegan Bishop (Georgia Southern University)

"Re-imagining the American Landscape: Visual Rhetoric and the Influence of Image on the 21st-Century American Short-Story Cycle."

Alessandra Boller (Universität Siegen)

"The Politics of Encounter: B/Order Crossings in Transnational (Irish) Short Fiction."

Andrew M. Butler (Canterbury Christchurch University)

"'The Flimsiest of Tissues': Pamela Zoline's 'The Holland of the Mind.'"

Olivia Carr Edenfield (Georgia Southern University)

"The Poetic Landscape of Breece D'J Pancake."

Ailsa Cox (Edge Hill University)

"Beyond the Collection."

Kirk Curnutt (Troy University)

"Prophecies of Extinction, Prospects for Evolution: Whither the Future of the Short Story?"

Elke D'hoker (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)

"Serializing the Short Story."

Laura Dietz (University College London)

"Digitization and Short Story Authorship: Authorial Careers on Emerging Platforms."

Monika Elbert (Montclair State University)

"Wealth, Handicaps, and Poverty: Women's Gothic Tales of Dis-Possession."

Verónica Frejo (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

"Short Stories as Videogames: A Transmedia Analysis."

Irene Gammel (Toronto Metropolitan University)

"World War I, New York Dada, and Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven."

"Go-To Lines: The Art of Reading the Political Memoir in America."

Gudrun M. Grabher (Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck)

"Every Patient has Their Unique Story: The Significance of the Short Story for Medical Humanities."

Ines Maria Gstrein (Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck)

"The Affordances of the Short Story Collection: Ali Smith's *Free Love* and Other Stories as a Case Study."

Jana Keck (Universität Stuttgart)

"Fact or Fiction? Computational Analysis of Short Stories in Nineteenth-Century German-American Newspapers."

Sarah Lohmann (Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich)

"'Like Children Dying in a Forest': The Science Fiction Short Story and the Morality of Machine Cognition in E.M. Forster's 'The Machine Stops' and Ray Bradbury's 'August 2026: There Will Come Soft Rains.'"

David Luis-Brown (Claremont Graduate University)

"*Dos Hemisferios*: Racial Capitalism and the Problem of Latinidad in Hispano-American Newspapers in Paris and New York City, 1852-1856."

Patricia MacCormack (Anglia Ruskin University)

"Weird Madness: Brief Encounters Against the Anthropocene."

Anna McFarlane (University of Leeds)

"Science Fiction and the Fix-Up."

Bernardo Manzonni Palmeirim (Universidade de Lisboa)

"Paying Attention in Lydia Davis and Short Forms."

James Nagel (University of Georgia)

"The American Short Story in Academia: A Personal Report."

Will Norman (University of Kent)

"Paul Linebarger, Cordwainer Smith and the Affordances of Mid-Century Science Fiction Tales."

Atiba Pertilla (German Historical Institute Washington)

"Red, White, and Blue — and Greenbacks: Money and American Identity since the Civil War."

Whit Frazier Peterson (Universität Stuttgart)

"The Sunken and the Ascending: Black Horror Short Fiction."

Gérald Préher (Université d'Artois)

"The Past in the Present, or the Enduring South in Elizabeth Spencer's *Starting Over* (2014)."

Erik Redling (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg)

"Modernist Politics of Race: Allegorical Readings of Zora Neale Hurston's Early Short Fiction."

Michelle Ryan (Université d'Angers)

"The Ethics of Short Forms in Rikki Ducornet's Late Career Writing."

Gary Westfahl (University of La Verne)

"Confronting the Alien in the Science Fiction Short Story."

Hertha Dawn Sweet Wong (University of California, Berkeley)

"The Future of the Indigenous Short Story; or Indigenous Short Story and Futurity."

November

Astrid Fellner (Universität des Saarlandes)

"Canada-US Borderlands: From Wallace Stegner to Thomas King"

Renae Watchman (McMaster University, Hamilton, ON, Canada)

"Indigenous Literary Arts in the German Studies Curriculum: Centering Otherwise."

"Hane'tonomy (Narrative Autonomy) in Contemporary Diné Film and Young Adult Literatures."

"Hane'tonomy: Restoring/Re-storying Diné Presence and Futurisms with Hózhó."

Katharina Weygold (Brown University)

"A Real Sense of Duty': U.S. Imperialism in Haiti and African American Women's Writing."

Zoë Wydra (alumna)

"Spirituality in Black Independent Magazines."

December

Barbara Korte (Universität Freiburg)

"Travel in Victorian Periodicals: Media Logic and Cultural Work"

Fritz Kusch (Universität Bremen)

"The Defenders. The Popularist Attempt to Uphold Protectionism in the United States, ca. 1880-1930."

Céline Mansanti (Amiens)

"Transnational Cultural Transfers and Periodicals: Perspectives and Challenges"

Madleen Podewski (Berlin/Erfurt)

"Die *NBI* (*Neue Berliner Illustrierte*) während der ‚Wende‘ oder: Wie erfasst man eine rasant beschleunigte Titeldynamik?"

Nora Ramtke (Bochum/Freiburg)

"From Preprint to Piracy: Heinrich Böll's *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* as a 1970s Press Affair"

Jörg Requate (Kassel)

"How Far Can We Push the Limits? The Satire Magazines *Pardon/Titanic* and *Hara-Kiri/Charlie Hebdo* and Their Handling of Social Taboo Topics"

Scott Zukowski (Universität Graz)

"Black Ink, White Space: Visualizing Black Citizenship in *Freedom's Journal*"

2025

January

Karsten Fitz (Universität Passau)

"Pop Art, Activism, and Indigenous Futurism: The Visual Art of Ryan Singer."

Peter Höyng (Emory University)

"Back to the Future: Reflektionen zu den Übertragungen von zwei antirassistischen Romanen der 1920er Jahre."

Christine Marks (CUNY LaGuardia Community College)

"Writing In Between: Relationality in Siri Hustvedt's and Zadie Smith's Works."

Alexandra Mehnert (JGU Mainz/Universität Leipzig)

"Far Right Zines and Gender Activities."

Jonas Müller (JGU Mainz)

"On Ecology, Literature, and Slow Disasters: Climate Anxiety and the American Novel"

Julia Rössler (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)

"Performing the Archive in Contemporary Testimonial Plays."

May

Yuan Shu (Texas Tech University)

"Cold War 2.0: Artificial Intelligence, the US-Centered Global Order, and Transnational American Studies."

"Westward Movement and Transpacific American Literature."

Danielle Spencer (Columbia University)

"From German Scientific Forestry to Healthcare: Seeing the Narrative Forest for the Trees"

June

Ajani Burrell (Northern Marianas College)

"Bringing Literature to the Mat: Talanoa as Decolonial Framework for Literary Analytical Praxis."

Nicole J. Camastra (The O'Neal School, Southern Pines, NC)

"Hemingway's Mexican Immigrants, the 'Sugar Beet Racket,' and 'The Gambler, the Nun, and the Radio'"

"Jazzed Up for the Party: *The Great Gatsby* at 100"

Jeannie Shinozuka (Washington State University)

"Model Minority Intelligence: From Feeble-minded Mongolians to Thinking Orientals, 1890-1930"

"Transpacific Biotic Exchanges: Japanese Insect and Plant Migration & Border Control"

Scott Zukowski (Universität Graz)

"Periodicals as Foundations of Black American Culture."

July

Jill Doerfler (University of Minnesota, Duluth)

"You can go dig him out of his grave": Anishinaabe Resistance to Racialization in the 1910s."

Susan Ingram & Markus Reisenleitner (York University)

"From Geeks to Tech Titans: Apple and the Making of Silicon Chic."

Amy King (Tuskegee University)

"Speculative Plantations: Reimagining Past, Present, and Futures through Gothic Horror."

Jeannie Shinozuka (Washington State University)

"Model Minority Intelligence"

November

Scott Hames (University of Stirling, Scotland, UK)

"Introducing Scottish Magazine Culture, from *Blackwood's* to *Radical Scotland*."

Layla Koch (University of Heidelberg)

"O that our Children': Childrearing Discourses, Early U.S. Periodicals, and *The Missionary Herald*, 1810s."

Drew Hayden Taylor (Canada)

"Reading from *Cold* (2025) and Q&A"

December

Teresa Fischler (University of Passau)

"'Laughter Is Good Medicine': Humor on Social Media as Practice of Native American Survivance."

Matt Hills (University of Bristol)

"'This is Very Much Not On-Message for DWM': The Commercial Fan Magazine Between Fandom and Brandom — *Doctor Who Magazine* in the Disney/'RTD2' Era."

Christianna Stavroudis (University of Bonn)

"Getting Their Word Out: Native Rhetorical Strategies in the School Press of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School."

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Research Professor

Hornung, Prof. Dr. Alfred

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