



Annual Report 2018

JG|U

Imprint

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Opening Remarks

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PHILOSOPHIE UND PHILOLOGIE

The Second Year of the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies

Alfred Hornung Speaker

After the official inauguration of the Obama Institute on February 8, 2017 and a first year of exciting activities at home and abroad, we have continued to pursue our academic and institutional goals to engage in research and teaching of Transnational American Studies at JGU Mainz and to coordinate joint programs with universities in Rhineland-Palatinate, the Atlantic Academy in Kaiserslautern as well as with international partners in Europe, North America, Asia and Australia. The cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary approaches of Transnational American Studies were showcased at a number of conferences and academic events organized in 2018. We started out in January with the second Narrative Medicine workshop, a cooperation with colleagues from American Studies and Medicine at Columbia University, which intends to create a dialogue between patients and doctors based on narratives. The workshop, which is modeled after the one conducted in the Medical School in New York, is administered by the Center for Continuing Education and is open for professionals and scholars with a background in medicine, health care or the humanities. A third workshop will follow in June of 2019. In March, members of the Obama Institute participated in an international conference in Atlanta organized by Elizabeth West, a member of our Advisory Board and a professor at our partner university Georgia State, on the topic of "The Post-Obama Ethos: The Transnational U.S. in the Aftermath of Hope." The final day of the conference took place in the Law School with presentations on legal issues and effects of Obamacare after his presidency.



The Obama fellowship program, which augments our competence in American Studies, continues to provide valuable input for research and teaching in areas less represented in Mainz and Germersheim. This year we enjoyed the expertise of five fellows from Great Britain, Sweden, Canada, and the United States and used the overlap of their presence in June for an intensive workshop investigating the common basis of Transnational American Studies. This event was immediately followed by a conference on "Cultural Performance in Transnational American Studies," organized

by Birgit Bauridl and Pia Wiegminck. The Fourth of July celebration featured Celeste-Marie Bernier and Gerd Hurm with talks on Frederick Douglass and on Documentary Fakes. Additionally, a wide range of research by students and young talents was displayed through poster presentations in the convivial atmosphere of a barbecue party—alas, there were no fireworks.

In the fall, a number of top-notch conferences in major research areas took place in Mainz: "New and Emerging Approaches to Early American Studies" (Oliver Scheiding), and "Global Faith and Worldly Power" (Axel Schäfer), followed by workshops on "Materialism and Critical Theory" (Tim Lanzendörfer, Clemens Spahr), and "Aging Cultures – Cultures of Aging" (Mita Banerjee). Gabriele Rippl from the University of Bern gave the annual Obama lecture, set on Thanksgiving Day, titled "Picture This! Transcultural American Literature in the Digital Age." On this occasion we also presented the Obama dissertation prize to Argelia Segovia-Liga (Missouri State University), for a Leiden University thesis on "The Rupture Generation': Nineteenth-Century Nahua Intellectuals in Mexico City, 1774-1882." Denijal Jegić's JGU Mainz dissertation on "Trans/Intifada: The Politics and Poetics of Intersectional Resistance" was runner-up. Presentations by the awardees also included the recipients of the Hans Galinsky prize for student papers in Early American Studies.

Members of the Obama Institute continue to be very successful in garnering support for scholarships and third-party funds, individually and collectively. They are very active in cross-disciplinary research projects. Financed by the German Research Foundation or the state of Rhineland-Palatinate, such projects include the Research Training Group "Life Sciences, Life Writing," which was successfully reviewed for the second period in March, the Research Group on "Un/Doing Differences," and new initiatives on "Transnational Periodical Cultures" and "Transpacific Relations." The publication organs of the German Association for American Studies, the journal *Amerikastudien / American Studies* and the book series *American Studies: A Monograph Series* are edited in the Obama Institute, and we continue to closely cooperate with the *Journal of Transnational American Studies* (Stanford).

This *Annual Report* documents the impressive output of all members of the Obama Institute in terms of research activities, publications, organizations of and presentations at conferences. It also lists some of the excellent achievements of our bachelor, master and doctoral students, who profit from our international network of relations, an extensive direct exchange program with 18 partner universities in North America as well as exchange relations with institutions in Europe, Asia and Australia. After years of planning, the Dual PhD Program with Georgia State University

was ratified in August. The Annual Summer School through the South of the United States is another highlight of our program. We encourage our students to participate in these joint efforts to promote Transnational American Studies and we invite new students to join our attractive program.

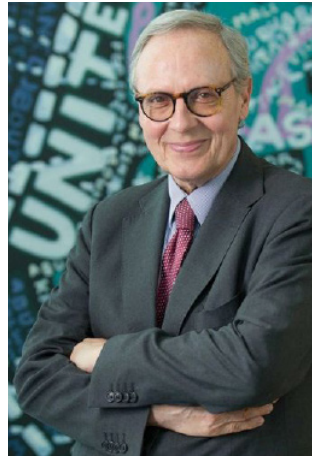
The Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies attracts national and international attention for its pursuit of the Obama spirit and its dedication to the past president's ideas. The results of the Midterm Elections, which we discussed with Sean Theriault's lecture sponsored by the Atlantic Academy in November, are hopeful signs for a vital democracy, a topic on our agenda in the coming years.

On behalf of the Executive Board I would like to express our gratitude to the members of our Advisory Board and the Affiliate members at the Johannes Gutenberg University for their support and cooperation. I would also like to thank the University and the State of Rhineland-Palatinate for their collegiate and financial support for our work. Thanks are due to all students and faculty members who empower the Obama Institute with their energy and commitment. Special thanks go to the editorial staff, Torsten Kathke and Christine Plicht, who compiled this *Annual Report* expertly. Last but not least, we owe special thanks to Anette Vollrath, who untiringly and proficiently handles all administrative tasks of the Obama Institute, recently complemented in this task by Christine Plicht.

A View from Abroad

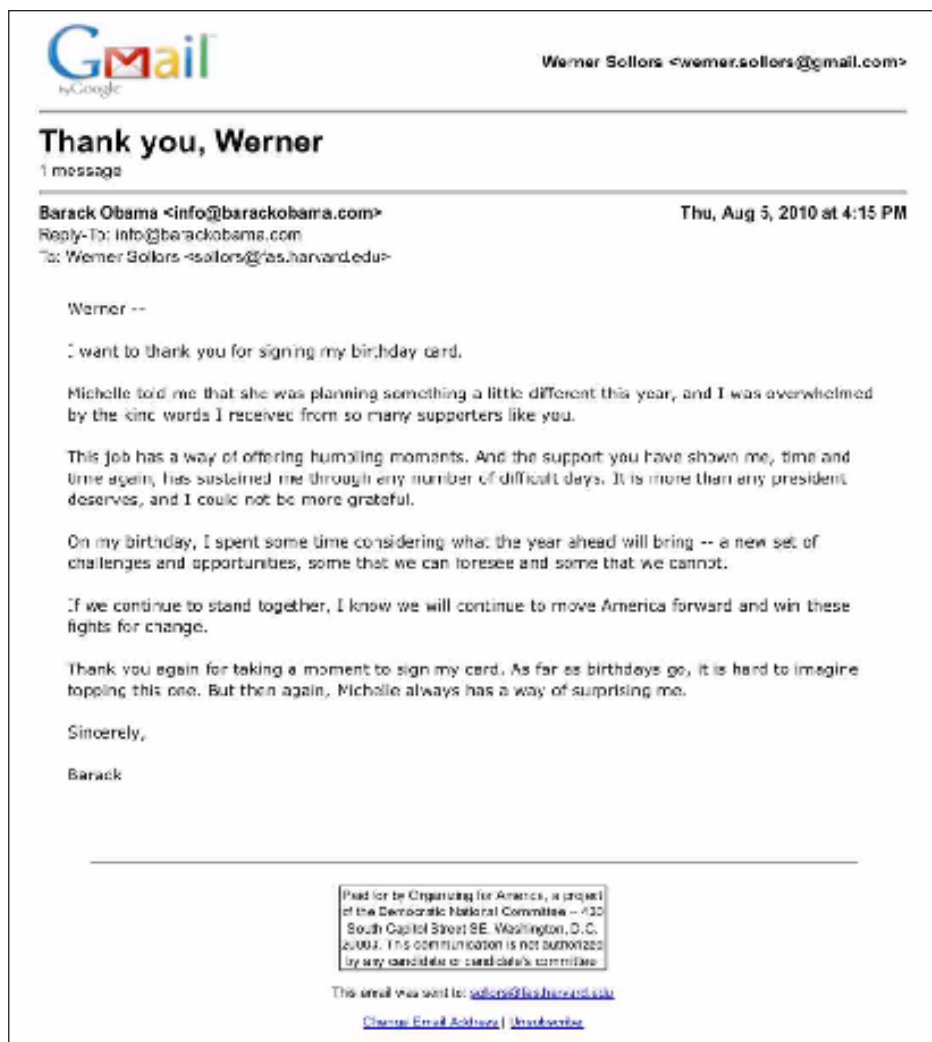
Werner Sollors (Harvard University) Advisory Board Member

As is not unusual in American presidential transitions, 2018 was a relatively quiet year for former President Obama. All the more so since his successor so dominated the headlines, tweets, and retweets that—by comparison—Barack Obama's approximately 5000 mentions in the *New York Times* for 2018 may seem paltry, indeed. In fact, there was some grumbling about Obama's apparent disappearance from view. "[Where is Barack Obama?](#)" *New York Magazine* wondered in June. And noting Obama's hesitation to weigh in much on the midterm elections, *Vanity Fair* echoed in October, "[Where in the World is Barack Obama?](#)"



However, it was [the September funeral of John McCain](#) with its evocations of past bipartisan politics that brought Obama back into the spotlight with his eloquent [eulogy](#) that provoked numerous viewers' comments about how much they missed Obama and "the days when we had a president who spoke with clarity, intelligence and substance, who inspired rather than belittled, and who desired us to be the best of ourselves and of America."

The presidential style change was dramatic enough that even my own e-mail inbox seems to have captured it. Gone are intermittent messages like the following:



In the Obama years such messages arrived infrequently, at holidays like Thanksgiving.

Nowadays "White House" messages arrive probably about a dozen times each month, often with reports of successes and other good news, sometimes also with lists of promises kept or tasks still remaining to be completed.



Werner Sollors <werner.sollors@gmail.com>

As 2018 closes, 6 big priorities at the White House

1 message

The White House <info@mail.whitehouse.gov>
Reply-To: The White House <info@mail.whitehouse.gov>
To: werner.sollors@gmail.com

Wed, Dec 19, 2018 at 3:11 AM



The White House • December 18, 2018

As 2018 closes, 6 big priorities at the White House

From day one, President Donald J. Trump pledged not to rest until he delivered on his promise to fix Washington. That commitment doesn't take a break for the holidays.

From border security and school safety to reinvigorating America's space program, here's an inside look at six big priorities the Administration is working on this week:

- **Securing our border:** Today, Press Secretary Sarah Sanders reiterated the message President Trump delivered to Democratic leaders last week: He will not back down until he can make sure that American citizens are protected. [Watch a clip from her interview with Fox News this morning.](#)
- **Building the Space Force:** President Trump took a crucial step toward creation of the Space Force by directing the Department of Defense to establish a Combatant Command, which will oversee all U.S. military activities in space. [See Vice President Mike Pence's full speech at Kennedy Space Center.](#)
- **Keeping our kids safe:** After the tragic shooting in Parkland, Florida, President Trump established the School Safety Commission to make recommendations on how to prevent violence in our schools. Today, the Commission released its final

If the [handshake between the current and the past President](#) at another funeral, that of former President George H.W. Bush, seemed to bridge, for a very brief moment, the chasm between two very different eras, then the viewers' comments told a different story, as they were highly polarized, full of anger, and not always quotable in polite company.

There was also another figure, however, who overshadowed Obama in American media in 2018. Scholars and students with a literary-cultural bent at the Obama Institute in Mainz will be happy to learn that it was the publication of that person's *book* that generated such a buzz that 725,000 reportedly bought it on the day it was published, more than 2 million readers a little later, and with its sixth printing the book is expected to reach a circulation of 3.4 million. This audience response moved that book ahead of such competitors as Bill O'Reilly's *Killing the SS* or Michael Diamond's *Beastie Boys Book* to the very top, to place number one, on the [New York Times hardcover nonfiction bestseller list](#) 2018. The winner I am talking about—as some of you undoubtedly know (or found out by clicking on the last hyperlink)—is [Michelle Obama's *Becoming*](#). As could be expected, [Barack Obama, and even his successor](#), also appear in this book.

The Obama Institute continues to flourish in its second year. I was happy to have a chance to visit in June and to participate in the conference on [Cultural Performance in Transnational American Studies](#) with [Denise Uyehara](#)'s very dramatic opening performance-lecture, "*Shooting Columbus* and Other Radical Vocalizations." Organized by Pia Wiegink and Birgit Bauridl, this concluding conference of a DFG-funded international and intergenerational network group brought together scholars from Germany, the United States, Scotland, Austria, and Spain. They examined topics ranging from [cultural citizenship and celebrity cosmopolitanism to orders of removal and performance interventions](#), concluding with a general discussion of the conference's overarching question of how the study of cultural performance might complement and possibly expand prevalent transnational American Studies discourse.

Retrieving the Extinguished: A Few Words and Some Poems from an Assimilated Jewish American Connecting to Her Jewish German Past through the Obama Institute

Renee Ruderman (Metropolitan State University, Denver)

In 2017 Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee invited me to co-teach a section of Jewish American Literature – Poetry with Dr. Claudia Görg. Prof. Banerjee and I met at the University of Siegen in 2009 where I taught a course on Willa Cather and Creative Writing. I am an Associate Professor of English at Metropolitan State University of Denver where I teach creative writing and literature, and where we have no courses on Jewish American Literature, although a colleague and I, reinforced by my working at the Obama Institute, are developing the curriculum for just such a course.



Prof. Banerjee invited me to give a poetry reading on June 29, 2017. There I read poems from a new collection influenced by my background and my teaching in Mainz and elsewhere in Germany. My immersion in Jewish German Literature and history are the result of my wanting to feel more Jewish. I was sent to Episcopalian church by my parents, who immigrated to New York from Germany in 1936, so my Jewish roots were somewhat submerged. However, thanks to Prof. Banerjee and Dr. Goerg, I have found more and more of my Jewish roots and identity, although not in the religious sense. In 2018 Dr. Georg took a colleague from my university and me to the ShUM cities Mainz, Worms, Speyer, as well as Bacharach. These cities, having preserved Jewish artifacts and architecture from before the tenth century, inspired me to write poetry for another collection titled "Pillow – Stones". I am forever grateful to the Obama Institute and my colleagues there for allowing me to make meaning from the legacy and pain of my past.

Mikveh

Speyer, Germany

They could be the stairs to hell, down, down
down the stone steps to the shallow water.
This is where the woman must cleanse her body,
every month, walk down, in robe, toward purity.
She touches the stones that line the walls,
the air passing her like sluggish moth wings.

She obliges this ritual, knowing
no one will disturb her in the candlelit chamber down
below. She hears the trickling pool where one wall
holds a prayer she will recite in the water.
She will give her nakedness over to purification.
Her hair, unlike Ophelia's, must sink with her body.

She settles in the groundwater, allowing her body
to blend into the cooling springs, feeling the twinge
of her husband's need. Something feels impure,
but she wants the solitary bathing; she presses down
her long hair, her face, into the tepid water
letting her fingers touch her body, in this most walled

off of places. To touch there and there, to break the wall
using the music of her body,
to swim in the holiness of water.
This moment yields a wild wingspread
with which she'll climb the stairs, avoiding down-
drafts, pulling the tangles of her hair, snuffing the pure

white candles in each sconce. She is purely
herself as she alights the passageway until the walls
open, and the arched doorway presents -- sundown.
She widens her eyes, while her body
like a gem reflects the fading light; the old wings,
she has carried, like rocks, drop into the water.

There is rhythm in her strides and a soft water
In her eyes, on her forehead, pulsing, purifying.
The air tastes of greenery. Now her arms swing
and her limbs sweep her from the limestone walls.
In the ritual bath she has reclaimed her body.
She's risen like Lazarus, but she can go down

again because she loves the water, plain walls.
She contains a purity, knows her body
requires no wings. She will pass that down.

Broken Glass: Fragments

"...the multitude of small torments" Viktor Frankl

I. 2018

When the bomb went off,
in Germany
it startled her

in her seat on the bus,
but it wasn't a bomb,
though it sounded like

a loosening of immense pressure,
and the floor becoming too hard
for what landed on it.

She felt her face, arms,
but her focus
was on the glass shards

sticking up
like shattered bones,
as the passengers stared

at her, paralyzed at the sight
of her glass bottle shattered
on the floor of the bus.

She bent like a beggar
picking up
the gleaming fragments.

The people getting on glanced
at the floor of the bus
sidestepping the slickness

on the floor,
as if seeing
the mess a child had made.

II. 1969

At her wedding celebration
the man smashes
the wine glass

wrapped in a towel
with his foot
for luck and long years.

She shudders.
What she learns: broken glass
is a warning.

III. 1938

Her mother heard shouts,
found a crowd
on the Judengasse,
their faces turned,
some laughing, some crying,
toward the synagogue, coughing flames.
The gabled roof collapses;
sheets of glass crackle, fall.
The crowd is backlit
in a postcard of soot,
as the ghost of the temple thrashes
against what breaks out.

IV. 1996

Nights are his ice cubes
popping in a glass.
She smells whiskey,
in a gnawing wind
that rattles the windows,
like something insistent to get out.
Leaving him, she's driving
behind a dump truck.
A stray spray
of gravel fires
at her windshield
She ducks, rises,
sees pitted glass, hairline fractures,
fissures in a past
she cannot repair.





The Obama Institute

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, and in Mainz in 1952. The choice of Mainz for the third chair of American Studies 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 70,000 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.

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. Martin Brückner (U of Delaware)

Prof. Dr. Rita Charon (Columbia U)

Prof. Dr. Shelley Fisher Fishkin (Stanford U)

Prof. Dr. Paul Giles (U of Sydney)

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

Prof. Dr. Gerd Hurm (U Trier)

Prof. Dr. Ursula Lehmkuhl (U Trier)

Prof. Dr. Greg Robinson (U du Québec)

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. Jürgen Wilzewski (TU Kaiserslautern)

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

Associate Members

Prof. Dr. Manfred Beutel (Psychosomatic Medicine)

Prof. Dr. Dieter Dörr (Law)

Prof. Dr. Heike Drotbohm (Anthropology)

Prof. Dr. Thomas Efferth (Pharmaceutical Biology)

Prof. Dr. Anton Escher (Cultural Geography)

Prof. Dr. Dagmar von Hoff (German)

Prof. Dr. Friedemann Kreuder (Theater Studies)

Prof. Dr. Matthias Krings (Anthropology)

Prof. Dr. Franz Rothlauf (Economics)

Prof. Dr. Michael Simon (Cultural Anthropology)

Executive Board

The Executive Board has the following tasks:

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- 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.



Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee

Mita Banerjee is professor for American Studies, specializing in nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature and culture, with a focus on Ethnic and Indigenous Studies. She is a co-founder of the Center of Comparative Native and Indigenous Studies (CCNIS) at JGU, and co-speaker of the research training group Life Sciences – Life Writing: Boundary Experiences of Human Life between Biomedical Explanation and Lived Experience funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

Banerjee is the author of, among others, *Race-ing the Century* (2005), and *Color Me White: Naturalism/ Naturalization in American Literature* (2013).



Prof. Dr. Jutta Ernst

As a professor of American Studies, Jutta Ernst is attached to JGU's Gernersheim 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 is general editor of *American Studies: A Monograph Series* on behalf of the GAAS. Recent publications are *Jack London: Abenteuer des Lebens* (2016) and *The Routledge Companion to Transnational American Studies* (2019).



Prof. Dr. Axel Schäfer

Axel Schäfer is professor of American History at the Obama Institute. His research centers on nineteenth and twentieth-century U.S. intellectual and cultural history with a focus on religion and politics, transatlantic social thought, and public policy.

He is the author of *American Progressives and German Social Reform, 1875–1920: Social Ethics, Moral Control, and the Regulatory State in a Transatlantic Context* (2000), *Countercultural Conservatives: American Evangelicalism from the Postwar Revival to the New Christian Right* (2011), and *Piety and Public Funding: Evangelicals and the State in Modern America* (2012).



Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheiding

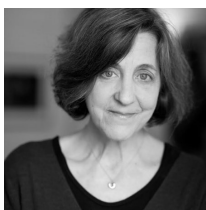
Oliver Scheiding is professor of American Literature and Early American Studies. His research focuses on periodical studies, short fiction studies, print culture and material culture studies. He currently serves as the editor-in-chief of *Amerikastudien/American Studies*, the quarterly of the German Association of American Studies. His most recent publications are *Worlding America: A Transnational Anthology of Short Narratives before 1800* (Stanford UP, 2015) and the volume *Religious Periodicals and Publishing in Transnational Contexts* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017). He is Principal Investigator of the DFG-funded research unit Un/Doing Differences (FOR 1939).

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. Martin Brückner
(University of Delaware)



Prof. Dr. Rita Charon
(Columbia University)



Prof. Dr. Shelley Fisher Fishkin
(Stanford University)



Prof. Dr. Paul Giles
(University of Sydney)



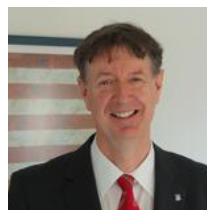
Prof. Dr. Craig Howes
(University of Hawai'i)



Prof. Dr. Gerd Hurn
(Universität Trier)



Prof. Dr. Ursula Lehmkuhl
(Universität Trier)



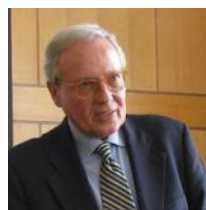
Prof. Dr. Jürgen Wilzewski
(TUniversität Kaiserslautern)



Prof. Dr. Greg Robinson
(Université du Québec)



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. Up to five fellowships are on offer each year. 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 2018

Celeste-Marie Bernier (University of Edinburgh)

Michael Boyden (Uppsala University)

Suzanne Ferriss (emeritus, Nova Southeastern University)

Markus Reisenleitner (York University)

Laura Stevens (University of Tulsa)

Previous Fellows

2017

Craig Howes (University of Hawai'i at Manoa)

Michaela Hoenicke Moore (University of Iowa)

Nina Morgan (Kennesaw State University)

2016

Patrick Erben (University of West Georgia)

Rebecca Harrison (University of West Georgia)

Sandy Isenstadt (University of Delaware)

Alan Lessoff (Illinois State University)

Charles Wilson (University of Mississippi)

2015

Greg Robinson (Université du Québec)

Martin Brückner (University of Delaware; Center for Material Studies)

Shauna Morgan Kirlaw (Howard University)

Fellow's Report

Celeste-Marie Bernier
University of Edinburgh

I am delighted to write a report on my wonderful time as a visiting fellow at the Obama Institute in June 2018. During my one-month visit, I had the pleasure and privilege of participating in inspirational conversations with all the wonderful faculty members and fellows all working in a superlative array and breath-taking multitude of cross-, multi- and inter- disciplinary fields within and across Transnational American Studies. I am deeply grateful not only for the opportunity to spend time with all the wonderful faculty members, including Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee, Prof. Dr. Axel Schäfer, Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheiding, Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung, Dr. Torsten Kathke, Dr. Nele Sawallisch, and Dr. Pia Wiegink—but also with all the inspirational 2018 fellows including Professors Michael Boyden, Suzanne Ferriss, Markus Reisenleitner and Laura Stevens. The Obama Institute is an inspirational space for fascinating scholarly dialogues, intellectual exchanges and dynamic debates.

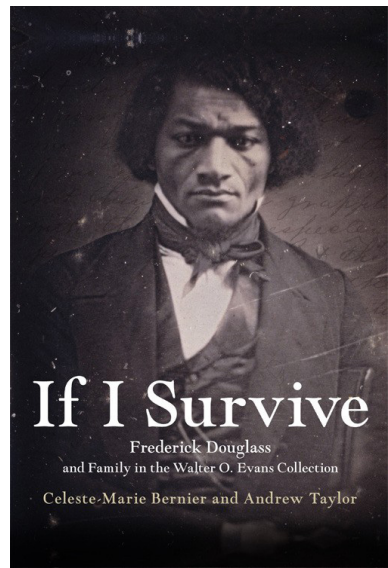


I was profoundly honoured to deliver a lecture as part of the 2018 4th of July Celebration, titled "Suffering, Struggle, Survival: The Activism, Artistry, and Authorship of Frederick Douglas and Family (1818–2018)". In this lecture marking the 200th anniversary of Frederick Douglass's birth, I drew on my over two decades of research to shed new light not only on Douglass as a freedom-fighter but on the lives and works of his wife, Anna Murray, and their daughters and sons, Rosetta, Lewis Henry, Frederick Jr., Charles Remond and Annie Douglass. As civil rights protesters, essayists, autobiographers, and orators in their own right, they each played a vital role in the 'struggles for the cause of liberty' of their mother and father. Recognising that the Frederick Douglass that is needed in a twenty-first century Black Lives Matter era is no infallible icon but a mortal individual, in this lecture I situated the lives and works of Douglass and his family within the social, political, historical and cultural contexts in which they lived and worked. Each unafraid to die for the cause, they dedicated their lives to the "emancipation of the slave" and to social justice by every means necessary.

During my fellowship, I delivered additional lectures on African American visual culture, titled "Power to the Powerless: Black Artists, Art Movements, and Art-Making Traditions", and on representations of US slavery in history and memory, titled "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death: Slavery, the Middle Passage, and Civil War." I also participated in seminar discussions for Axel Schäfer's undergraduate and postgraduate classes in transnational American Studies practices and methodologies. I was delighted to be given the wonderful privilege of participating in and giving a paper titled, "Storying in a State of Shock: Representing the Body, Memory and History in African Diasporic Art" at Pia Wiegink and Birgit M. Bauridl's closing conference of the DFG-funded Research Network, "Cultural Performance in Transnational American Studies."

During my one month fellowship at the Obama Institute, I worked on a number of book publications including continuing my on-going primary research for *Living Parchments*, the first literary biography of Frederick Douglass, titled *Living Parchments*, which I am writing for Yale University Press. I also had the opportunity to work on the final stages of *If I Survive: Frederick Douglass and Family in the Walter O. Evans Collection*, an over 800-page volume I authored with Andrew Taylor and published with Edinburgh University Press in 2018. I also continued my on-going research in support of my three-volume project, *Anna-Murray and Frederick Douglass Family Writings—Volume 1: Family Biography; Volume 2: Private Writings; Volume 3: Public Writings* (all contracted to

Edinburgh University Press and due for submission in December 2019). I was also delightedly grateful to have the wonderful opportunity of this fellowship as it made it possible for me to conclude the writing and finalise the notes for my new edition of Frederick Douglass's *My Bondage and My Freedom* (Oxford World's Classics, forthcoming 2019) and also to work on the proofs and write the index for *Stick to the Skin: African American and Black British Art (1965–2015)* (University of California Press, published February 2019).



Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to faculty and fellows at the Obama Institute for a once in a life time experience—a joy that keeps giving in collaborations and conversations that continue to inspire me on!



Obama Dissertation Prize

The Obama Institute awards an annual dissertation prize in the amount of € 1000 for outstanding Ph.D. work in the field of transnational American Studies. Dissertations completed at either a German or a foreign university, focused on 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, are eligible for submission.

Unpublished manuscripts of dissertations, defended in the last two years, written in German or English, are evaluated by an international panel to select the award winner. The award winner is announced in September of each year. The award ceremony takes place annually in November (Thanksgiving Day) in conjunction with the Karl Dietz Memorial and Obama Lecture. At this occasion the award recipient will be asked to give a presentation on their work.

Winner and Runner-up 2018

Argelia Segovia-Liga, Winner (Missouri State University; Ph.D. from Leiden University)
"‘The Rupture Generation’: Nineteenth-Century Nahua Intellectuals in Mexico City, 1774-1882"

Denijal Jegić, Runner-up (JGU Mainz)
"Trans/Intifada. The Politics and Poetics of Intersectional Resistance"

Winner's Report

Argelia Segovia-Liga
Missouri State University; Ph.D. from Leiden University

In this current time when divisiveness, isolationism and despair seem to permeate our daily lives, regardless of where in the world we live, it is vital to question and analyze the transnational connections, relationships and exchanges that influence our collective and individual welfare. This is precisely one of the main goals of the Obama Institute for Transnational Studies since its creation. The academic and social labor conducted by all the members of the Obama Institute, its scholars, staff and students alike, should receive special merit since it encourages the analysis, and development of transcultural understanding, in order to experience the global connections that shape our current

history. All of these characteristics make me especially honored to have been selected to receive the 2018 Obama Dissertation Prize.

The contextual meaning behind the "Obama Institute" could not be more appropriate for describing a scholarly organization conformed by a series of individuals whose research scope represents transnationalism at its highest level. I have been impressed by the number of topics and the intensive research conducted by the members of the Obama Institute. Besides this feature of their shared research and projects, I want also to mention the warmth and special attention that I received from the Obama Institute's members even prior to my arrival in Mainz. The Director of the Institute, Dr. Alfred Hornung, provided me with information about the history, the academic trajectory, and the future goals of this organization, which contributed to my expanded understanding of the important role and the social responsibility that institutions such as the Obama Institute play in our modern society.

After being in contact with the Obama Institute and its mission, I came to appreciate even more the content of my dissertation and its importance for understanding 19th-century globalization and its impact on contemporary Mexico. While studying transatlantic connections and their influence on global history, we often come to realize that certain sectors or aspects of our societies have been kept marginalized or overlooked by official history. This is the case of Indigenous Peoples around the globe, which is the central topic of my dissertation. The recognition of Indigenous intellectuals, in particular the case of 19th-century Nahua people from Mexico City and their development and struggle with the incipient nation state of Mexico, is the focus of my study. I have posited that this development of Nahua Indigenous intellectuality is a result of a *longue durée* process that initiated even before the fifteenth century.

Throughout my work, the topic's relevance focused on the recognition of Indigenous intellectual activities in Mexico City and the climate of constant discrimination that the Nahua people endured since the establishment of the Spanish colonial system in New Spain. However, and despite these difficulties, the intellectual phenomenon among Indigenous Peoples in Mexico City flourished throughout the 16th through the 19th centuries. The changing first decades of the 19th century created what I have chosen to call "a rupture generation" of Indigenous intellectuals. This cohort of intellectuals lived under the Spanish colonial regime and experienced the political transition that Mexico encountered during its first decades as an independent nation. The education that these intellectuals received, as well as their ability to speak diverse languages (both European and indigenous), demonstrates how these individuals experienced and interpreted their own transatlantic influences. It was during the changing 19th

century when a group of Nahua intellectuals, members of this "rupture generation," adapted complex European ideals, such as land ownership, individual and collective rights, the rights of access to education and direct political participation, combining them along with their Mesoamerican traditions in order to create their own discourse in defense against the many anti-Indigenous reforms based on political liberalism. Within an already globalized world, this group of Nahua intellectuals transformed international ideas, molding them in their favor, to defend their rights in the changing national system. Nevertheless, these Indigenous intellectuals from Mexico City did not remain isolated in their endeavors, but also sought contact with other Indigenous groups in the United States, creating an incipient trans-Indigenous relationship. Eventually both their efforts at survival and their contacts with other Indigenous groups suffered from the effects of international policies that sought to force Indigenous Peoples to abandon their historical heritage rooted deeply in their own concept of collectiveness.

The case of the members of this "rupture generation" demonstrates the versatility that transcultural knowledge can have according to how it is interpreted or applied by different social and ethnic groups throughout the world. "The Rupture Generation': Nahua Intellectuals in 19th Century Mexico" sought to comprehend how political ideas from all over the world can be flexibly interpreted and materialized into Indigenous discourses of resistance, survival, and dignity.

Previous Winners 2017

Joost Baarsen (TU Dortmund University / University of Amsterdam)

"American Dreams, European Nightmares: Anti-Europeanisms in the United States"

2016

Stephan Kuhl (Goethe Universität, Frankfurt)

"The Novels of Crude Psychology: Richard Wright, Fredric Wertham, and the Twofold Truth of Literary Practice."

2015

Holger Drössler (Bard College)

"Islands of Labor: Community, Conflict, and Resistance in Colonial Samoa, 1889-1919."

Curd Benjamin Knüpfer (Freie Universität Berlin)

"Right Wing Realities? News Media Fragmentation, Conservatism, and the Framing of U.S. Foreign Policy."

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 Lecture, now taking place on Thanksgiving.

Recipients 2018

Karolina Lambert (Thesis from Proseminar "Introduction to American Poetry")

"The Dash: Manifold Meanings of a Neglected Punctuation Mark Explored through Emily Dickinson's 'He fumbles at your Soul'"

Clara Hofmann (M.Ed. Masters Thesis)

"Publishing, Politics, and Religion in the Early Republic: The Case of Jedidiah Morse"

Prof. Dr. Gustav Blanke and Hilde Blanke Prize

Every year, the Prof. Dr. Gustav Blanke und Hilde Blanke-Stiftung awards prizes to promising junior scholars in American Studies at JGU's Germersheim campus. Named after Univ.-Prof. Dr. Gustav H. Blanke, who headed the American Studies department in Germersheim 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 (master 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 Germersheim, as well as the former mayor of the city of Germersheim.

Recipient 2018

Dr. Annika Rosbach

"Translating Race – Literarische Darstellungen und deutsche Übersetzungen des Afroamerikanischen"





Teaching at the Obama Institute in 2018



Teaching at the Obama Institute

The way we teach reflects the vibrancy and the interdisciplinary character of American Studies both on the Mainz campus and in Germersheim, where young translators and interpreters are trained. The Obama Institute offers a comprehensive survey of American literature, history, and culture, from the beginnings of European settlement (and before) to the present day. Our students take in the full sweep of American Studies: from the religious doctrines undergirding Puritan settlement to the transatlantic journeys of all kinds of literary and cultural artifacts; from the relations between settlers and indigenous peoples to the rise of the United States as a (nation) state. Our aim is to provide a solid historical ground on which to build our investigations of more contemporary issues. Our instructors strive to bring their own research into the classroom, whether at the level of Ph.D., second book, or professorial research projects.

This fundamental concern for teaching that is both historically grounded and contemporary in its aims is reflected not just in what, but also in how we teach. Classroom discussions work to link historical developments to contemporary issues in American literature, culture, and politics, and to address the full sweep of cultural artifacts. We are especially concerned with creating a critical dialogue between different genres and media, linking literary representations to film and TV series, autobiography, or graphic fiction. One of our main emphases is bringing new teaching approaches to American studies, complementing traditional term papers through creative practices such as narrative medicine, cultural performances, and collaborative research projects. Our aim is to involve our students in our current research projects. In their progression from Bachelor of Arts to Master of Arts and beyond, students of American Studies are prepared to take their research into their own hands. Our teaching philosophy reflects our desire to set up our students as independent, open-minded, and well-trained scholars of American Studies, ready to take their own academic work into the world.

We are currently developing new courses in the field of Transnational American Studies. These courses explore key methodological and theoretical issues in transnationalism. The aims of the courses are to explore a range of critical and theoretical paradigms in transnationalism, to examine the application of those paradigms to specific texts, and to enable students to be more self-reflexive about the methods and theories they use.

Selected Teaching Projects

Video Series “Key Topics in Transnational American Studies”

Since June 2017, Mita Banerjee, Jutta Ernst, Florian Freitag, Christine Plicht, and Pia Wiegink have been collaborating with Magdalena Roguska-Heims (ZQ), Anna Liza Daunert (ZQ), Adrian Weidmann (ZAP), Timo Dicke (ZAP), and Dirk Schulz (ZAP) to develop concepts and materials for blended learning units which will be made available to all instructors of American Studies at JGU Mainz. In 2018, the group finalized the concept for a video series that presents key issues in Transnational American Studies to students. In 8-15min. clips, faculty members give an introductory overview in their field of expertise. A study sheet with suggestions for further research accompanies each video so that the material – in parts or as a whole – can be incorporated into various kinds of course settings and can be used for different purposes (e.g. in-class activity and discussion, homework, independent studying, follow-up summary, etc.). So far, two sample videos as well as an intro sequence for the whole series have been produced and presented to OI faculty members. The video on “Slavery” has already enjoyed a successful test run in a Cultural Studies I class in order to accompany and frame the in-class material. 2019 will see the production of three more videos by other OI faculty members.



“Slavery”
Dr. Pia Wiegink
Screenshot



“Theme Parks”
Dr. Florian Freitag
Screenshot

Workshop “Narrative Medicine” (co-taught with faculty from Columbia University, New York)

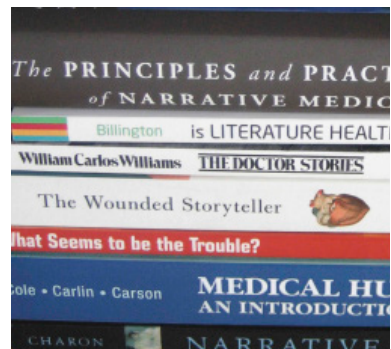
Together with the Center of Continuing Education at JGU Mainz (ZWW) and core faculty from Columbia University's “Narrative Medicine” program (Deepthiman Gowda, MD, MPH; Danielle Spencer, PhD; Maura Spiegel, PhD), the Obama Institute (Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung; Dr. Anita Wohlmann) organized a 3-day workshop on January 12–14, 2018. This intensive weekend workshop offered rigorous skill-building in narrative competence. Small group seminars offered first-hand experience in close-reading, reflective writing, and autobiographical exercises. The target audience were health care professionals and scholars interested in narrative medicine and the objectives of the workshop were defined as follows:

Participants will:

- develop narrative competence to nourish effective patient-clinician relationships
- learn narrative communication strategies for patient-centered and life-framed practice
- build habits of reflective practice that nurture clinical communities
- acquire pedagogic skills to teach methods of narrative medicine
- replace isolation with affiliation, cultivate enduring collegial alliances, and reveal meaning in clinical practice

“The close reading of literature opens a bottom-less resource for observing, thinking, and talking together about human interactions in the medical context at a level of depth and complexity that other worthy approaches (such as “professionalism” or communication skills training) cannot match. ... We have found that reading literary texts with a focus on relational dynamics awakens us to the social, structural, professional, and personal relationships in our working lives.”

from Rita Charon, Sayantani DasGupta, Nellie Hermann, Craig Irvine, Eric R. Marcus, Edgar Rivera Colón, Danielle Spencer, Maura Spiegel, *The Principles and Practices of Narrative Medicine* (Oxford University Press 2017)



NARRATIVE MEDICINE **JANUARY 12–14, 2018**

A 3-day workshop with core faculty from the
Program in Narrative Medicine
at Columbia University, New York City

Workshop "Academic Writing in English" (Schreibsommer 2018)

On July 13 and 19, 2018, Dr. Damien Schlarb hosted the workshop "Academic Writing in English" as part of a university-wide program that aims to support students and faculty in developing and enhancing their writing skills through a series of workshops, events, and individual coaching. The initiative as a whole is funded by JGU's Zentrum für Qualitätssicherung (ZQ) and their LOB project (Lehren – Organisieren – Beraten).

This particular workshop addressed academic writing as a process: the group discussed how to write to connect to others, how to attend to generic and disciplinary conventions, and how to give, receive and implement feedback. All students and university affiliates were welcome, regardless of their disciplinary background. However, writing was addressed from a humanities perspective, focusing on forms such as abstracts, personal statements, and argumentative research essays. The workshop was held in English and participants brought their current writing projects.

First, the group discussed globally the conventions and strategies associated with academic writing. Participants talked about managing time, generating valid research questions, formulating thesis statements, performing research, analyzing text (detecting overt/covert meanings, explicating, historicizing), composing prose (rhetoric, logic, avoiding verbal fallacies), positioning their argument in relation to that of others, receiving feedback, and the painful task of revising their own writing.

In phase two, the group broke into smaller groups and began practically implementing some of these strategies. Using their own work, they saw which of the previously discussed strategies worked and learned which tactics to apply when life happens and these strategies fail. In this phase, they talked about how to give and receive useful feedback, and how to write to connect to an audience.



Faculty Development Workshop “Applying the Science of Learning to Your Teaching”

Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (JGU) considers the support for young scientific talents to be one of its core responsibilities. When it comes to research and teaching, early career researchers are highly dedicated and contribute essentially to the reputation of their institution.

This workshop, hosted for the first time by Mita Banerjee (Obama Institute), Olga Troitschanskaia (Gutenberg Forschungskolleg Fellow, Business and Economics Education, JGU), and Jairo Sinova (Alexander von Humboldt Professor, Interdisciplinary Spintronics Research Group, JGU) on November 29-30, 2018, aims to bring together faculty and lecturers at JGU to learn and incorporate some of the most recent advances in pedagogy now being implemented globally. It focuses on evidence-based instructional practices that have been proven to work and increase dramatically the learning outcomes of students.

The workshop offers hands-on training for faculty and lecturers on how to best implement evidence-based pedagogies and to develop skills in individual career development and mentoring students. The instructor is Prof. Andrew Feig, a Cottrell Scholar and the initiator of CSC New Faculty Workshops. He has conducted numerous workshops of this type both in the US and Germany.

The workshop is aimed at all the academic disciplines in the university but is particularly designed to engage directly the humanities and social science disciplines. The first workshop of this kind in Germany was organized in Mainz in May 2017 and focused on science areas, merging similar workshops from the US.



Gutenberg Teaching Council – Innovative Teaching Project “The Semiotics of Adaptation: A Cross-Cultural Approach”

Ines Veauthier, lecturer at Gernersheim, is involved in an innovative teaching project supported by the Gutenberg Teaching Council, “The Semiotics of Adaptation: A Cross-Cultural Approach.” In cooperation with the Obama Institute’s partner institution Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada, and through learning-by-doing, students acquire the skills they need both in academic and professional contexts, e.g. communication in multilingual, culturally diverse groups as well as target-oriented time and self-management in complex global settings.

Bachelor of Arts in American Studies

The Bachelor's Program of American Studies offers a wide range of courses. In six semesters, students immerse themselves in the central fields of American literature, culture, history, language, and media.

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

GMK I: Language and Communication

GMK II: American Studies

GMK III: Cultural Studies

GMK IV: Cultural Studies and Professional Orientation

GMK V: Culture, Media, and Literature

AMK I: Advanced Language and Communication

AMK II: Regional and Transnational American Studies

AMK III: Early American Literature and Culture: 16th–19th Century

AMK IV: American Literature and Culture from 1900 to the Present

The introductory modules (GMK I–III) will familiarize students with the basic methodologies and subject matter 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 and historical documents, as well as cultural artifacts from all eras of American history. In advanced cultural studies classes (GMK IV–V), students will study topics related to historical and current developments in American society, politics, culture, and media. In the course of the first two years of their studies, students will also become familiar with relevant methodologies for doing American Studies.

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 B.A. thesis on a topic of their choice.

In the winter term of 2017/18 and the summer term of 2018, the Obama Institute graduated 33 Bachelors of American Studies as well as one Bachelor in the joint Mainz-Dijon American Studies program.

Master of Arts in American Studies

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 with areas of specialization in comparative indigenous studies, early American studies, and transnational life writing. It maintains long-established exchange programs and international cooperation with North American, European, and Chinese universities. The program also includes a special module on interdisciplinary studies allowing students to expand their research into cognate fields for a broad-based perspective on the Americas. The M.A. program especially emphasizes the need for students to experience the United States firsthand and is committed to offering students the possibility of studying at one of our partner universities in the United States, Canada, or China.

The M.A. program consists of several modules:

Modul 1: Methodology

Modul 2: Early American Studies

Modul 3: Cultural Studies

Modul 4: Modern American Literature and Media

Modul 5: Advanced Research and Professional Orientation

Modul 6: Advanced American Literature and Media Studies

Modul 7: Advanced Interdisciplinary Research

Modul 8: Advanced Research and Thesis Preparation

Based on students' previous B.A. experience, modules 1–6 focus on cultural and literary studies in research-oriented courses. Students discuss methods, theories, and techniques of academic research. 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 orientation sessions geared towards a career 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.

In the winter term of 2017/18 and the summer term of 2018, the Obama Institute graduated 20 Masters of American Studies as well as one Master in the joint Mainz-Dijon American Studies 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. 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, and others.

Structured Ph.D. Program "Life Sciences–Life Writing"

In addition to individual doctoral study, candidates can also attain their doctorates in structured Ph.D. programs resembling those in Anglo-American countries. A team of supervisors is responsible for supervising doctoral candidates. The program offers a curriculum of accompanying courses which are interdisciplinary in focus and promote the acquisition of "soft skills" and additional qualifications. The systematic and intensive supervision offered in our program "Life Sciences – Life Writing" allows candidates to complete their doctoral studies within three to four years.

Binational 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 fully funded 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)

In Memoriam: Professor Steven Marcus (1928-2018)

On April 25, 2018, Professor Steven Marcus, student, Professor, Dean and Vice President of Columbia University died in New York City. He was the first scholar whom the Faculty of Philosophy and Philology in Mainz awarded an honorary PhD degree in 2005 for his outstanding contributions to English and American Studies and for his affiliation with the Johannes Gutenberg University. Professor Alfred Hornung participated in the Memorial held in honor of Steven Marcus at Columbia University on 13 December 2018, his 90th birthday. This obituary is a tribute to his decisive role in the creation of the cooperation between our two universities and the foundation of innovative research platforms.

Since 1990, American Studies in Mainz has cooperated with the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University in the City of New York. Crucial for the establishment of this exchange for doctoral candidates was the role of the then Chair, Professor Steven Marcus, who believed in the value of intercultural education and pursued the idea of a common program with Prof. Alfred Hornung. Early on in his career, Prof. Marcus' sustained interest in German language intellectuals, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and Sigmund Freud, whose theories reached their climax while in exile in England, became the basis of his scholarly work on Charles Dickens, Victorian literature, Marxism, psychoanalysis and the medical humanities. None other than Michel Foucault recognized this confluence of astute literary criticism, political engagement and psychoanalytic insight in Steven Marcus's classic study *The Other Victorians: A Study of Sexuality and Pornography in Mid-Nineteenth Century England* (1966), which the French critic quoted in support of his theory on the first pages of his *History of Sexuality*. In recognition of his many achievements, Steven Marcus was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1974.

For more than 20 years doctoral candidates from Columbia and the Johannes Gutenberg University profited immensely from a stay abroad. These exchanges saw Columbia graduates offering their expertise to our American Studies students, Mainz graduates serving as research assistants and enjoying the cooperation with top scholars as well as the excellent library resources and the cultural delights of Manhattan. Many participants in this exchange program have been on the faculty of the Obama Institute, or have moved on and have attained important professorial positions in Europe or North America. Others work in international academic organizations, ranging as far as India and New Zealand.

To see literature and literary criticism as a form of social engagement in the service of the humanities and the social sciences, which Steven Marcus pursued early on in his association with *The Partisan Review*, eventually proliferated into his leading role in the foundation of the National Humanities Center in the Research Triangle Park of North Carolina. The creation of a forum of discussion for transdisciplinary cooperation also led to his recognition of the close proximity between literature and medicine and the publication of the co-edited volume on *Medicine and Western Civilization* (1995), which he taught as our guest professor at Mainz in 1997. The common ground of both literary and medical research also prepared the path for his doctoral candidates who, like Rita Charon, Maura Spiegel and Siri Hustvedt, now pursue his transdisciplinary ideas as scholars and writers. In the spirit of Steven Marcus, we were fortunate to extend the existing exchange in 2014 and to combine American Studies research with the Narrative Medicine program. Professor Rita Charon, a Harvard MD and a Columbia PhD with a dissertation on Henry James, set up this cooperation between the humanities and medicine cooperating with Maura Spiegel in American Studies and Siri Hustvedt, who both had written their doctoral thesis on Charles Dickens, directed by Steven Marcus. This Narrative Medicine Program felicitously coincided with the institution of the DFG-funded Research Training Group on "Life Sciences, Life Writing: Experiences at the Boundaries of Human Life between Biomedical Explanation and Lived Experience" in 2014, directed by Prof. Mita Banerjee and Prof. Norbert Paul (Medicine). We were happy to engage the expertise of Rita Charon, Maura Spiegel, and Siri Hustvedt in our new form of transdisciplinary collaboration. Prof. Charon is a member of the Advisory Board of the Obama Institute, and agreed to be an affiliate member of the Research Training Group, as did Siri Hustvedt, who in 2016 was awarded the second honorary PhD degree of English and American Studies at Mainz for her excellence as a writer and literary critic.

The Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies is very grateful to Steven Marcus for initiating and participating in this collaboration between Columbia University and the Johannes Gutenberg University, for setting an example for scholarly acumen and for promoting the careers of students and young talents. His humanistic legacy lives on in our work.

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 Fulbright Commission, within which our students are regularly placed. In addition, we also participate in the European ERASMUS scheme. Beyond these, 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 Santa Fé in New Mexico. The participation of up to five students is graciously sponsored by the State of Rhineland-Palatinate. For more information consult: <http://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 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 pursuing American Studies in Germany.

Direct Exchange Program

The Direct Exchange Program, established in 1956, is a unique opportunity for American Studies students at JGU 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:

Austin College, Sherman, Texas
Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine
Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario
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
Mississippi College, Clinton, Mississippi
Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, British Columbia
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, Ghent, 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

Summer School

The American Studies division launched a traveling summer school in 2013. Since then, a group of students and two faculty members have annually visited the southern states of Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, and Tennessee. Courses in cultural studies, language, and literature are taught on site. Starting in Little Rock, Arkansas, in mid-July and ending three weeks later in Washington, D.C., the American Studies Summer School has since turned into an annual project, focusing on The Civil Rights Movement, Southern Writers and Literature, and The History of Food and Music in the American South. The director and initiator of this project is Dr. John Richard Duke, Jr., who established this field trip in cooperation with the American Studies Chair Prof. Dr. Alfred Hornung, his project partner Dr. Melanie Hanslik, and the summer school's academic advisor Dr. Claudia Görg.

This summer school gives students an intensive research and learning opportunity in and about the American South. Students first prepare for visits to locations significant to the Civil Rights Movement with in-class lectures and discussions, and then they go to sights such as Little Rock Central High School and the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. Participants benefit from guest lectures, guided tours, musical performances, church services, and dinners and conversations with locals. The group travels to and through the following locations: Searcy, AR, which serves as a home base where participants can cure jet lag and get to know each other over the first week. From there it explores the state of Arkansas, for example Little Rock, the capital with its Presidential Library, the Capitol Building, and Little Rock Central High. The summer school spends a day at the lake and in the mountains so that the groups's stay in the "Natural State" includes some time in nature. The summer school goes to Blanchard Springs, where the group visits a cave, to Mountain View, "the capital of folk and bluegrass music," to Bentonville, the birthplace of Wal-Mart, and to Fayetteville, where the University of Arkansas is located. After exploring Arkansas, the group travels to Memphis, TN, and visits the National Civil Rights Museum, Beale Street, Sun Studio, and Graceland. After that, Oxford, MS, is on the itinerary, where the students get to stay with locals in their homes and visit the University of Mississippi. Then, they stop in Jackson, MS, for a visit to the Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center. For the weekend, the students and instructors dive into the cultures of New Orleans, LA, before they move on to Gulfport, MS, and finally to Montgomery, Selma, Tuskegee, and Birmingham, AL. In Nashville, TN, the group tours Fisk University and meets young musicians before taking a flight to Washington, D.C., which is the summer school's final destination.

Summer School 2018

In the summer of 2018, nineteen students joined the sixth American Studies Summer School. After a week of in-class studies, the on-site learning experience started with the journey through the American South. At the University of Mississippi, the students had the opportunity to meet a participant of the Civil Rights Movement, who gave them a first-hand account of the events in Oxford, MS, and shared the personal consequences he had to endure. For the first time, the summer school also included a trip to the newly opened Legacy Museum of African American History and the Lynching Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama. The outstanding commitment of Dr. Duke has turned this summer school into a true asset for the Obama Institute since it offers a unique learning experience to our students. Over the years, various bachelor theses have been inspired by the insights students gained through the summer school.



Teaching at Germersheim

Teaching at 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. American Studies at Germersheim thus teaches not only classes in which various American literary, legal, economic, and other texts are translated into German, but also classes that provide future translators and interpreters with the cultural and literary competencies they need in order to transfer texts—and the culturally specific ideas and concepts these texts draw on—into a different language and into a different cultural context.

This includes seminars and lectures on specific genres (Michael Lörch, "U.S. Proletarian Fiction"; Tatjana Neubauer, "Children's Literature"; Tatjana Neubauer, "American Crime Fiction"), literary and cultural periods (Jutta Ernst, "The U.S.A. in the 1960s"; Jutta Ernst, "Transnational Modernism"), and topics (Sabina Matter-Seibel, "Ecocriticism/ Ecotourism"). Due to our special focus on Canadian Studies, many classes take an explicitly comparative North American perspective (Florian Freitag, "North American Literatures and Cultures"; Sabina Matter-Seibel, "Thinking about Nature in North America"). Teaching collaborations with the Mainz campus have continued in 2018 with the development of the video series "Key Topics in Transnational American Studies," with more videos (also from faculty in Germersheim) to follow.

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

B.A. Sprache, Kultur, Translation (Language, Culture, Translation)

M.A. Translation

M.A. Konferenzdolmetschen (Conference Interpreting)

In 2018, the Germersheim faculty graduated 38 B.A. and 28 M.A. students.

Key Concepts in
American Cultural History

Second English and
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Kulturtheorien i

A Transnational Anthology of Short Narratives Before & After

WORLDING AMERICA

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Research at the Obama Institute in 2018

Research at the Obama Institute

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. The research training group **Life Writing/ Life Sciences** explores the narrative practices that underlie explanations and models derived from both empirical data and social experiences. 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. A recently founded interest group of students and faculty takes up the Hawaiian origin of Barack Obama for research on **Transpacific Relations** with a specific focus on Chinese American political and cultural interactions, such as the influence of Confucius on the foundation of the United States or the proliferation of theme parks in contemporary China.

In addition, Obama Institute scholars are part of two research clusters at the Johannes Gutenberg University. SoCuM (Social and Cultural Studies Mainz) facilitates the interdisciplinary cooperation between social sciences and culture studies via research groups, conferences, international guest lectures, and doctoral dissertation grants. HKW (Historische Kulturwissenschaften) connects empirical research with historical perspectives and supports new research cooperations across established disciplinary and methodological boundaries. Both research clusters are currently engaged in preparing applications for DFG-funded Collaborative Research Centres (*Sonderforschungsbereiche*, SFB). The Obama Institute also cooperates with the Medical School and American Studies at Columbia University, New York in Narrative Medicine programs and the creation of a Medical Humanities research platform.

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.

The Obama Institute applied for a research grant on the topic of "Disruption and Democracy in America: Challenges and Potentials of Transcultural and Transnational Formations" in December 2018.

Conferences

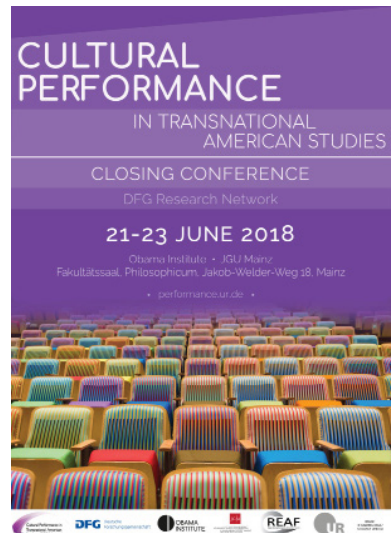
Cultural Performance in Transnational American Studies

June 21-23, 2018

Organized by Pia Wiegink (Obama Institute) and Birgit Bauridl (University of Regensburg)

The closing conference of the DFG-funded research network "Cultural Performance in Transnational American Studies" scrutinized the benefits and limitations of the integration of a Performance Studies approach into (transnational) American Studies. It investigated how, which, and with what outcome issues that in the wake of the transnational turn had become central to the American studies agenda can be addressed more adequately by the study of 'cultural performances.'

The conference featured two keynotes—a performance-lecture by Tucson-based performance artist Denise Uyehara and Prof. Emeritus Werner Sollors (Harvard)—and four thematic panels addressing diverse topics ranging from Mexican American sport practices and indigenous performance traditions, to cultural performances of the Black Atlantic and various forms of celebrity culture. Papers presented in these panels by scholars from the United States (Denise Uyehara, Tucson; Werner Sollors, Harvard; Ben Chappell, U of Kansas; Roger Nichols, U of Arizona; Daisy Ocampo, U of California, Riverside; Linda Sturtz, Macalester College) Canada (Derek Gingrich, York U) the UK (Celeste-Marie Bernier, U of Edinburgh), Spain (María del Mar Azcona, U of Zaragoza; Celestino Deleyto, U of Zaragoza), and Germany (Julia Faisst, Catholic U of Eichstaett-Ingolstadt; Katrin Horn, U of Bayreuth) zoomed in on the idea of culture as a corporeal, communal, and dynamic event (rather than a stable textual product) that positions the local particularities of cultural performance vis-à-vis the dynamics of global mobility. The conference activities culminated in a roundtable discussion and were followed by an internal network meeting of the research group.



Transatlantic Conversations: New and Emerging Approaches to Early American Studies

October 4-6, 2018

Organized by Oliver Scheiding

The conference, jointly organized by the Society of Early Americanists and the Obama Institute and sponsored by the German Research Foundation (DFG), brought together sixty early Americanist scholars from North America and Europe in a 2-day intensive conversation and collaboration about transatlantic perspectives on new developments in the field of early American studies. In eight workshops participants discussed emerging critical fields and engaged in interdisciplinary collaborations focusing on digital humanities and archival studies; intersections between book history, print and material culture; Transpacific and archipelagic studies; indigenous studies; environmental and medical humanities; history of science and aesthetics.



Global Faith and Worldly Power: Evangelical Encounters with American Empire

October 11-14, 2018

Organized by Axel Schäfer

The conference *Global Faith and Worldly Power: Evangelical Encounters with American Empire* brought together several leading scholars in the field of religious studies and international relations to discuss the interaction of American evangelicalism and U.S. foreign policy. International



minds hailing from various universities in the U.S., U.K., and Ireland delved into the complexities of how religious and political actors shape elements of business, culture, and the media within a transnational field. The multinational symposium was organized by Axel Schäfer (Obama Institute), with the assistance of Torsten Kathke (Obama Institute), and Natasha Anderson (Obama Institute).

The conference began with opening remarks by Alfred Hornung (Obama Institute), followed by a keynote address by Anthea Butler (University of Pennsylvania) on the prosperity gospel and Pentecostalism driving 21st-century evangelicalism in Lagos, Nigeria. The next morning, in session one on *Evangelicals and Decolonization*, Sarah Miller-Davenport (University of Sheffield) outlined how American evangelical missionaries came to collaborate with the U.S. government in areas such as the Philippines during decolonization. David Kirkpatrick (James Madison University) turned the focus to how the Latin American Evangelical Left became a vital counterforce against the managerial status quo imposed by U.S. evangelicalism. The Philippines came to the foreground again in Tom Smith's (University of Cambridge) presentation on how evangelical missionaries interacted with Filipino culture and rising nationalism. Daniel Geary (Trinity College Dublin) described transatlantic parallels between Irish Unionist preacher Ian Paisley and white supremacist American fundamentalists.

John Corrigan (Florida State University) started off the second session on *Global Evangelicalism and Global Capitalism* with a comparison of Donald Trump's foreign politics and evangelicals' practice of framing Catholics, Jews, and Communists as

opponents of capitalism during the Cold War. Conference members became better acquainted with the *Christian Herald* when Heather Curtis (Tufts University) examined how the expansion of American global influence intertwined with evangelicalism and humanitarian projects during the turn of the twentieth century. Darren Dochuk (University of Notre Dame) then traced the global reach of the prosperity gospel of wildcat oilmen, which shaped societies from East Texas in the 1930s to Africa during the Cold War. Darren Grem (University of Mississippi) delineated how Jimmy Carter worked to reconfigure the South as the locus of moral, redemptive evangelicalism removed from the dangers of inflation.

At the beginning of session three on *Evangelical Media, Outreach, and Communication Technology*, Heather Hendershot (MIT) offered a meticulous breakdown of the movie *Jesus* in terms of narrative form and distribution by Campus Crusade for Christ missionaries. Daniel Vaca (Brown University) probed how the strategies of niche market segmentation guided the evangelical media industry, with a special emphasis on Spanish-speaking evangelicals in North America. Afterwards, Anja-Maria Bassimir (University of Mainz) presented a thorough analysis of the development of *Christianity Today* as a self-pronounced global media ministry. John Maiden (Open University) offered a closer look at the self-portrayal of the World Conference on the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem in 1974 through the film *Jerusalem 2*. A roundtable chaired by Kendrick Oliver (University of Southampton) and featuring John Corrigan, Heather Curtis, Darren Dochuk, Melani McAlister and Philip Dow, discussed the multifaceted implications of *Evangelicals and Empire* and wrapped up the second day of the conference.

The third and final day of the conference was launched with Melani McAlister's (George Washington University) keynote address on Caesar Molebatsi as the center of a global, evangelical network against apartheid. For the fourth session titled *Global Missions and Holy Humanitarianism*, Lydia Boyd (University of North Carolina) investigated different definitions of charity relationships embedded in both financial resources and Christian compassion initiated by Ugandan Christian AIDS orphan choirs. Emily Conroy-Krutz (Michigan State University) clarified how the Boxer Uprising led to a reexamination of America's moral interests in foreign countries. The problematics of evangelical activists working against human trafficking in Southeast Asia came to light in the presentation of David Swartz and Lisa Weaver Swartz (Asbury University).

In the final session *Evangelical Religion and American Foreign Policy*, Jonathan Ebel (University of Illinois) drew connections between American weaponry in the Vietnam War and the War on Terror on the one hand and territorialities of the border and of the

body on the other. Gene Zubovich (University of Toronto) explored how the ecumenical Protestant support of globalism and human rights during the 1940s impacted the political positions of evangelicals. Lauren Turek (Trinity University) used the Contra War in Nicaragua as an example of missionary imperatives holding sway over the U.S. foreign policymaking process. Lastly, Lee Marsden (University of East Anglia) brought the focus back to the modern day with a look at the motivations of white conservative evangelicals supporting Trump in the 2016 election. The conference concluded with an engaging roundtable chaired by Axel Schäfer (University of Mainz), which saw Sarah Miller-Davenport and Lauren Turek, as well as Michaela Hoenicke Moore (University of Iowa), Kendrick Oliver (University of Southampton) and Uta Balbier (King's College London) discussing *Transnational Dimensions of American Evangelicalism and U.S. Foreign Policy*.

The organizers gratefully acknowledge the financial support provided by the Henry Luce Foundation, the Obama Institute, the Freunde und Förderer der Universität Mainz e.V., and the Zentrum für Interkulturelle Studien Mainz.

Materialism and Critical Theory (International Workshop)

November 8-9, 2018

Organized by Tim Lanzendörfer and Clemens Spahr

This small workshop, funded by the Förderlinie of Mainz University, brought together ten scholars in contemporary materialism from a number of disciplines—American Studies, Philosophy, English Literature, and Media Studies—to discuss the question of materialism's contemporary valences for and across the disciplines. Departing from the observation that recent revisionist models of cultural theory have insisted on disclaiming cultural studies' political power, the workshop sought to rethink the arguably overtly political theoretical stance that materialist philosophies inhabit in an interdisciplinary framework. With participants from the UK, Germany, and the Netherlands, the workshop spent two days discussing various recent emanations of materialist thinking as ways of approaching contemporary problems, and the work which interdisciplinary engagement could help perform. Drawing on a range of examples from contemporary science fiction to TV series, continental philosophy and contemporary literary studies, the workshop discussed what materialism can do today.

Aging Cultures – Cultures of Aging: Representing Age between Normative Expectations, Political Correctness and Cultural Psychology (Interdisciplinary Symposium)

November 22-23, 2018

Organized by Mita Banerjee and Julia Velten

The two-day interdisciplinary symposium "Aging Cultures – Cultures of Aging" was organized by Mita Banerjee and Julia Velten as part of the DFG-funded research project "The Fabrication of Centenarians: New Forms of Age-Differentiation in American Autobiographies." Deriving from Margaret Morganroth Gullett's well-known statement "we are aged by culture," this symposium pursued the question of what it means to age within specific communities of a given culture. What does it mean to speak, for instance, of concepts such as "black aging," "queer aging," or "female aging"? And what does all this mean in a transnational context? This workshop sought to link aging studies, on the one hand, to fields such as Black Studies, Queer Studies, Diaspora Studies, and Gender Studies, on the other.



Further, it asked whether culturalist notions of aging have jettisoned the biological, material dimension of aging altogether or whether there is, after all, a way in which "culture" and "biology" can be fruitfully linked. Moreover, recent research, both in the life sciences and in forms of life writing (such as the boom of centenarians' autobiographies) may have given rise to a celebration, perhaps even fetishization, of extreme longevity. To what extent has the emphasis on both longevity and "successful aging" tended to pit aging studies against, for instance, disability studies? What other narratives of old age need to be told, which may serve to sabotage mainstream representations of what it means to be old?

In his opening keynote address, Rüdiger Kunow, Professor of American Studies from the University of Potsdam, presented an overview of the field of aging studies, ultimately raising the question of what the inextricable link between biological and

cultural age implies for the future of the field. The second keynote, held by Scott King, Assistant Professor of Social Psychology at Shenandoah University, used the example of Sister Jean, the 99-year-old chaplain and supporter of the Loyola Ramblers basketball team, in order to shed light on phenomena of ageism in social media and the public discourse.

Additional presentations from the fields of Sociology, Disability Studies, and American Studies explored these questions further, arguing in the final roundtable discussion that the future of aging studies clearly continues to be interdisciplinary.

Selected Research Projects

Un/doing Differences (DFG Research Unit FOR 1939)

The Fabrication of Centenarians: New Forms of Age Differentiation in Autobiographies in the US

Mita Banerjee with Julia Velten
(BA 1974/8-1; Funding 2016–2019)

This project explores the cultural fabrication of a new age category by looking at centenarians as a case in point. Centenarians' autobiographies are strongly on the rise on the American book market. Our project looks at these and other life-writing documents as a medium of social differentiation and individual identity formation. Looking at a time-frame from the 1960s to the present day, we analyze selected centenarians' autobiographies with regard to biographical narratives as well as paratexts. Analyzing discursive strategies, we explore to what extent these autobiographical narratives redefine extreme old age not in terms of physical decay but individual achievement. Moving beyond the narrative level we also investigate the conditions under which these autobiographical narratives are being produced in the framework of an "age industry": How are the protagonists of these narratives being "recruited" and what roles do co-authors and publishing houses play? Moreover, our project explores the social differentiation of age as it converges or coincides with other differences such as gender, ethnicity, class, and religion. One of our focal points in this context is the intersection between various differences and their effects on the emergence of "centenarianess" as a category in a process which can be understood as a form of fabrication.



For further information on the activities of the collaborative research group see:
www.blogs.uni-mainz.de/undoingdifferences/

Un/doing Differences (DFG Research Unit FOR 1939)

Enterprising Evangelicalism: Distinction and Inclusion in Contemporary American Religious Periodicals

Oliver Scheiding with Anja-Maria Bassimir
(SCHE 1616-6/2; Funding 2013–2019)

The research project investigates the role religious periodicals play in producing affiliation to Evangelicalism in the U.S. It wants to find out how periodicals function in the context of different religious communities, how they are used to creating religious affiliations and distinctions, and how they help blurring religious boundaries and forge new alliances among believers. For this purpose, the research project analyzes periodicals as religious enterprises. In doing so, it studies the communicative infrastructure (print and digital formats), the magazine's staff (publishers, editors, writers, etc.), and the target audiences to find out how periodicals are instrumental for processes of religious differentiation and identification.



For further information on the activities of the collaborative research group see:
www.blogs.uni-mainz.de/undoingdifferences/

U.S. Settler Colonial Biopolitics and Indigenous Life Writing

René Dietrich

(DI 1881/2-3; Funding 11/2017–01/2019)

The research project seeks to explore how acts of life writing by North American Indigenous authors bring to the fore the biopolitical logic of racialization, subjugation, and regularization integral to settler colonialism and constitutive to the U.S. as a settler nation-state from its foundation to the present. The texts of life writing by Indigenous authors from William Apress to Deborah Miranda render transparent the settler colonial biopolitical logic of the U.S. and show how it constructs Indigenous bodies and lives as objects to be variously removed, discarded, contained, infantilized, fetishized, or pathologized. In their acts of life writing these Indigenous intellectuals offer a powerful means of intervention into the biopolitical logic of settler colonialism, as they expose the foundational element of elimination and disavowal in settler colonial biopolitics, refuse to be contained within the depoliticized category of "Indianness," and attain a position of agency from which to not only offer a severe critique of the politics of the settler state, but also to denaturalize settler colonial rule. Their writing amounts to an exhibition of a lived sovereignty that defies the limitations of the settler state, its biopolitical order, and its lived colonial logics. The project thus seeks to probe how North American Indigenous life writing contains a crucial activist impulse in the movement toward a politics of decolonizing life and life writing.



Pedagogical Writing and Social Practice in the Age of American Romanticism

Clemens Spahr

(SP 1366/5-1; Funding 1/2017-12/2019)

This project studies American pedagogical writings in the age of American Romanticism. It proceeds from a broader understanding of American Romanticism, which includes the various proto-Romantic pedagogues of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Discussing how these educational texts negotiated Romantic ideals in the context of institutionalized and habitualized practices, the project seeks to contribute to the field of the sociology of literature. The genres discussed in the monograph will include spelling dictionaries, programmatic and philosophical writings, and illustrated school records. These writings emerge in the context of particular educational experiments. These include Susanna Rowson's academies for women, Margaret Fuller's and Elizabeth Palmer Peabody's conversational circles, as well as Amos Bronson Alcott's Temple School and Lydia Maria Child's engagement for women's rights and abolitionism. The writings circulate in an established intellectual field, within which educational norms are negotiated with regard to habitualized norms and practices. At the same time, these writings also aim at a larger political reform project. From Rowson's spelling dictionary to Alcott's pedagogical writings to the writings produced in the context of the Brook Farm community, these writings always sketch alternative spaces of education that are supposed to change the field of education in a way that also affects social structures more generally. This connection between positioning in the intellectual field and social reform is most clearly evident in Frederick Douglass's literacy narratives, which continue this tradition by translating the idea of education into a political claim for freedom.



Key Concepts in Theme Park Studies (DFG Research Network)

Florian Freitag
with **Filippo Carlà-Uhink (U of Potsdam)** and
Jan-Erik Steinkrüger (U of Bonn)
(STE 2471/2-1; Funding: 04/2018-03/2020)

Since the opening of Disneyland (Anaheim, CA) in 1955 the theme park has become an industry, a cultural institution, and a medium of global economic relevance and of broad social impact. Research on theme parks has recognized their multi-level significance for some time already and has examined specific aspects of theme parks, their antecedents, and similar spaces from a large variety of disciplinary perspectives. At the same time, however, theme park scholars have rarely looked beyond the borders of their own disciplines and genuinely transdisciplinary discussions have not yet been established, let alone an independent field of research with its own theories and methods, scholarly associations, and publication organs. Moreover, specific aspects of theme parks, such as their temporality, have only just begun to be analyzed by scholars, while others, such as the depiction of theme parks in other media and in the arts, have not yet been discussed at all. The goal of the project is therefore to foster collaboration on theme parks across disciplinary borders. From 2018 to 2020, fifteen scholars from Germany, Switzerland, France, Spain, Portugal, the UK, and the U.S. and from American studies, history, geography, anthropology as well as tourism, performance, and museum studies will join forces to collaboratively write a transdisciplinary introduction to "Key Concepts in Theme Park Studies," geared at an international scholarly audience.



Cultural Performance in Transnational American Studies (DFG Research Network)

Pia Wiegink and Birgit Bauridl (U of Regensburg)
BA 3567/4-1, Funding: 1/2015-08/2018)

This network explores the potential of an integration of Performance Studies approaches into the field of (transnational) American Studies. It investigates how, which, and with what outcome issues that, in the wake of the transnational turn, have become central to the American Studies agenda can be addressed more adequately by the study of 'cultural performances.' Based on the idea of culture as a corporeal, communal, and dynamic event rather than a stable textual product, the individual projects arranged in three culturally and spatially specific clusters—the city, the nation, the globe—position the local particularities of cultural performance vis-à-vis the dynamics of global mobility. Firstly, they examine the role and impact of 'cultural performances' as particular acts of cultural expression (like daily rituals, festive occasions, or theatrical events) in transnational contact zones—sites in which cultures meet, grapple with each other, and inevitably negotiate questions of socio-political agency, representation, and power. Secondly, they develop and evaluate 'cultural performance' as a methodological approach for the study of transnational processes. In sum, the network scrutinizes the benefits and limitations of a deeper and more reflective integration of a Performance Studies approach into American Studies. By bringing together scholars of Performance and American Studies from the US, Europe, and Asia, it constitutes an exemplary site of transnational collaboration and establishes a dialogue across disciplinary boundaries.



Transnational Periodical Cultures (Interdisciplinary Research Unit)

Oliver Scheiding and Jutta Ernst

(Funded by the "Impulsfonds Forschungsinitiative Rheinland-Pfalz";
Funding 2017-2018)

In collaboration with Dagmar von Hoff (German and Media Studies) and M. Bjørn von Rimscha (Journalism Studies), the project investigates periodicals in their network-like constellations, drawing attention to cross-border dynamics which have long been ignored in periodical studies. With transnationalism serving as the overall lens, the project aims to assess, for instance, the role of translation and the use of multiple languages in a periodical market, which, since the eighteenth century, has profited from international exchange and hemispheric circulation. Instead of merely concentrating on the periodicals' content, a trend which has long dominated the field, the members of this research group adopt a wider perspective, considering magazines in their materiality, including size, paper, binding, typography, colors, etc., aspects which, in somewhat different form, are also pertinent for digitized versions of print magazines or online-only periodicals. In order to fully understand how periodicals function and what their cultural work is, they have to be studied in complex, historicized frames of reference which give various actors their due, including the producers, distributors, and readers of magazines. However, financial, copyright or censorship issues have also to be taken into account. Last but not least, the project aims at establishing the community-building potential of periodicals, thus contributing to important questions of social development and change.

Workshops (Fall/Winter 2018–2019)

Oct 17, 2018

"Märkte, Standardisierung und Adaption"

Nov 21, 2018

"Unternehmen und Akteure"

Dec 12, 2018

"Zeitschriften und Digitalisierung"

Jan 16, 2019

"Zeitschriften, Gestaltung und Design"

For working papers and further information see the group's weblog:

www.transnationalperiodicalcultures.net

Habilitation

Tim Lanzendörfer

Speculative Historism: Utopian Pasts and Futures in the Contemporary Novel

Speculative Historism investigates what it takes to be a central form of the contemporary novel, texts in which a speculative—fantastical, fantasy, science-fiction, or otherwise non-realist—conceit is combined with a historical dimension in order to obtain purchase in the contemporary on the utopian potentials of the past.

In reading a set of recent novels, from the high literary of Ken Kalfus's *The Equilateral*, Chris Bachelder's *U.S.!*, and Junot Díaz's *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* to popular fiction such as Ernest Cline's *Ready Player One* and Ben Winters's *Underground Airlines*, and across ethnic and gender lines, *Speculative Historism* suggests that the specific reactivation of history which these texts undertake must be understood as a literary registration of the desire to locate an outside position in the contemporary which nonetheless anchors a real possibility for better futures: a negotiation, that is, between the historical foundation and its past moments of possibility and the open vistas of speculative fictions.

Deriving its theoretical premises from the philosophies of Alain Badiou and Jacques Rancière, and drawing upon a wide range of reading practices from Fredric Jameson to Rita Felski, *Speculative Historism* connects Badiou's conception of the triad event-fidelity-truth to think through its texts' conception of history's role in the contemporary with Rancière's notion of the "sensible" as the root of all politics, reading this is a crucial part of the work of speculative fiction. From Jameson and Felski, among others, it draws reading positions, acknowledging the purchase of both symptomatic reading and the need to accept the direction towards hope even of texts that are, as it were, ideologically compromised.

Reading its texts through what it calls a utopian hermeneutics, *Speculative Historism* insists on both reading these texts' hopeful arguments and on reading their arguments



as hopeful. It suggests the need to call for literary criticism to recognize the need to read charitably as well as its continuing task to conceptualize. Thus, it acknowledges that even such light fare as *Ready Player One* should be taken seriously for its utopian aspirations, but insists on reading its texts in a larger symptomatic trajectory showing the development of speculative historicism. This trajectory, which structures the book, seeks to understand speculative historicism as the key form for understanding a variety of developments in the literary field writ large, from the generic turn in literary fiction to the greater attention paid to genre fiction as such to the valuative function of literary prizes and the role of the literary market.

Beginning with a literary novel and offering a rising action of sorts that climaxes in a reading of a fully generic novel in chapter 4, the study ends on Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad*: a middling novel of astounding critical success that suggests, ultimately, the power of speculative historicism to bring together a variety of reading positions and literary modes in an effort to create new, broader subject positions capable of challenging the contemporary, literary and political, contemporary status quo.

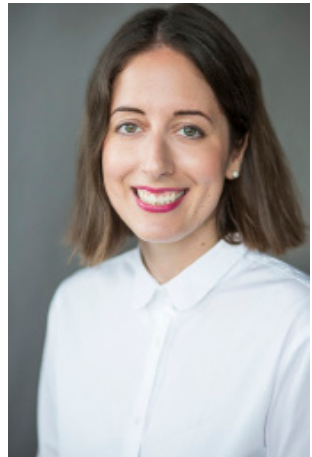
Selected Dissertations

Yasmin Djabarian

*The Exercise of Soft Power –
U.S. Self-Imaging in International Broadcasting to Iran*

Advised by Winfried Herget

While imagological works in the field of American Studies have traditionally focused on the construction of America by outsiders, this study takes a new approach by examining U.S. self-imaging efforts in the context of U.S. international broadcasting to Iran. Yasmin Djabarian traces the history of Voice of America's (VOA) Persian Service into VOA's flagship service and illustrates its conflict-prone organizational framework and *modus operandi* characterized by VOA's federal status, Iran's priority for U.S. foreign policy, and the lack of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries.



Since the Persian Service has not been comprehensively analyzed before, this study relies mainly on primary sources, such as government documents, qualitative interviews, and VOA programming. The analysis of the legal and service-specific framework shows that the contradictory mission of the VOA Charter—mandating VOA to serve both as a media organization and a foreign policy tool—creates various conflicts and provides institutional loopholes for political pressure.

In line with Joseph Nye's soft power theory, VOA Persian is found to function as a public diplomacy tool, aiming to shape the preferences of its viewers by projecting an attractive U.S. image and appealing American narrative. As the programming analysis and the case study of *Simaye Amrica* show, the Persian Service pursues a twofold image cultivation strategy: its news and political shows aim to shape Iranian perceptions of the U.S. government by use of a *commitment frame* and *recognition frame*, depicting the United States as a global team player as well as friend and admirer of the Iranian people and culture. The arts and cultural shows set out to

shape viewer perceptions of ordinary Americans by showcasing the multifacetedness of American society and its lived values in an unobtrusive manner.

An examination of the controversial public discourse on VOA Persian shows that it is mainly shaped by two camps that either accuse VOA of neglecting its journalistic mission and serving as a propaganda tool, or of advancing the interests of the Iranian regime through a lack of advocacy. Based on the programming analysis' findings concerning the overly positive, multidimensional depiction of the United States and American society, the widespread criticism that VOA Persian faces from members of Congress and other outsider groups who claim that VOA Persian acts as the "Voice of the Mullahs" appears to be unjustified. Rather, VOA Persian's exclusive focus on presenting the United States in a favorable light and its apparent disregard for U.S.-critical coverage bears the risk of failing to produce soft power because of being perceived as a mere propaganda tool.

Christian Eilers

Paul Auster's Autobiographical Works: Stages in a Writer's Career

Advised by Alfred Hornung

Paul Auster is considered one of the most important contemporary American authors. In addition to his fictions marked by personal references, Auster has also written several entirely autobiographical works that are hardly represented within the canon of research. These autobiographical works are not marginal phenomena in Auster's oeuvre. Rather, they represent the elementary stages in Auster's writing career and, as images of these phases, grant different perspectives on his biography: (1) *White Spaces* (1980) and the two-part *The Invention of Solitude* (1982) mark Auster's birth as a prose writer in a phase of crisis and loss. (2) *Hand to Mouth: A Chronicle of Early Failure* (1997) is written at a time when Auster has established himself as a successful writer and in a phase of artistic change. (3) *Winter Journal* (2012) is characterized by Auster's awareness of physical finiteness.



Based on these works, this study examines the reasons for Auster's respective turn to the autobiographical genre as well as the complex manifestations of his autobiographical leitmotifs, all of which are rooted in *Invention*—the loneliness of the artist, the duality of the locked room, the meaning of failure and language, the absent father figure, and the critical perspective on established truths. Following a text-immanent approach, which is oriented towards the author and his biography depicted in his works, this study opposes a theoretical approach that can be found, for example, in the interpretation of Auster's works in the context of deconstructivist and poststructuralist theories. The examination of the works provides important insights into the biographical factors shaping Auster's motifs and his critical literary perspective on the world, a perspective in which failure has a value. In particular, the analysis of *Invention* and *Hand to Mouth* reveals the role of Auster's father Sam as a formative antagonistic factor in relation to Auster's uncompromising canon of values, his fundamental questioning of established normality, and his empathetic perspective on the 'fallen characters' in society.

A comparison of the four autobiographical works reveals a clear development in relation to Auster's generated questions and the mode of his quest for knowledge. Over a period of three decades, Auster transforms his autobiographical perspective from an all-encompassing skepticism leading to relativism and a well-founded, (self-) critical perspective that allows coherent answers.

The dissertation is in print and will appear from Universitätsverlag Winter in 2019.

Anirban Halder

Slow Engagements:

Patient's Perspective in Narratives of Chronic Illness

Advised by Mita Banerjee

This dissertation examines four chronic illnesses in narratives of personal experience with these illnesses and how they are represented in different forms of cultural production, i.e., novel, documentary, video film, and memoir. I argue that life writing's attention to experience of illnesses like PTSD, thalassemia, HIV, and endometriosis speaks to a "social chronicity", which is a significant space of investigation for interdisciplinary work. The focus on the chronic is an effective mode to engage with illnesses and attendant transformations that are experienced over a long period of time and often on a collective scale among marginalized groups. Thus, the chronicity of an illness experience and their narratives unfold in relation to particular histories that are embodied, social, and transnational. It is important that these histories are addressed in order to understand porous definitions of a "disease" and various contexts in which notions of "health" are cultivated. Borrowing from concepts in health humanities, medicine, and trauma and memory studies, I examine literary descriptions, visual images (vis-à-vis a philosophy of construction of the motion picture camera, and figurative language) to suggest these patients' perspectives work towards performing an ethical sabotage of grounded understandings of health and care work. I call this process in narratives "slow engagements."



Caroline Heller

Appropriating Thomas Jefferson, 1929-45: “We Are All Jeffersonians Now”

Advised by Winfried Herget

Appropriating Thomas Jefferson counters the prevailing view that Franklin D. Roosevelt hegemonically exalted Jefferson, the historical figure, to iconic dominance in the 1930s. While this reading is based on Roosevelt’s ubiquitous, hope-giving presence during the Great Depression, it ignores the diversity of those appropriating Jefferson to make sense of and find answers to this socio-economic crisis and modern industrial capitalism. My analysis of the Jefferson discourse across the ideological spectrum between 1929 and 1945 reveals that the creation of the Jefferson icon—in various forms of representations—generated counterhegemonic appropriations because of its discursive nature. By fusing theories on rhetoric, iconicity, and memory studies, my study illustrates that the appropriators transformed and augmented the historical figure by grafting their interpretation and values onto him, thereby making the Jefferson icon fit their needs. These competing versions of Jefferson expressed a new sense of national values not only through their commonalities but also through the flexibility of interpretative and representational differences.



Beginning with the Southern Agrarians' *I'll Take My Stand* (1930) and ending with Roosevelt's last undelivered Jefferson Day speech (1945), I explore how an individual's or a group's ideology, rhetorical situation, and aesthetics or genre conventions influenced the portrayal of Jefferson. Even within well-defined groups, different varieties of the Jefferson icon evolved. I read the Agrarians' inverted, and at times obscure, Jefferson references as counterhegemonic appropriations that reappear with alterations in the discourse up to 1945. This study argues that even the erection of the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. and the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis discursively and physically created varieties of the Jefferson icon as they reflect the needs and aesthetic preferences of their builders. Furthermore, I demonstrate the interconnections between hegemonic and counterhegemonic appropriations by discussing the establishment of Jefferson's birthday as a national

holiday and the Jefferson bicentennial of 1943 with the so far disregarded Library of Congress Symposium and the concurrent *New Masses* Jefferson special issue. The rhetorical aspect of iconicity becomes paramount in the politically-motivated Jefferson Day panegyrics in the *Congressional Record*, which have so far been neglected as a distinct genre. Within those speeches and debates four overarching but flexible Jefferson attributions were ascribed to him: humanitarian, states' rights advocate and strict constructionist, communist/socialist, and practical idealist. I argue that these attributions became negotiated in Roosevelt's last undelivered Jefferson Day speech which, therefore, has to be read as expressing a diverse nation's Jeffersonian response to a democratic post-war world.

Denijal Jegić

Trans/Intifada.

The Politics and Poetics of Intersectional Resistance

Advised by Alfred Hornung

This dissertation is concerned with political, cultural, and literary aspects of intersectional and transnational resistance. Understanding the Palestinian popular uprising against colonialism as *intifada*, i.e., a process of "shaking off," the dissertation explores the transcendence of the *intifada* from its particular geo-political moment towards a comprehensive subaltern method of affirming existence and performing resistance. Drawing on intersectionality, which originates from Black feminism, the dissertation explores how the recognition of transnational connections between both the oppression of population groups and the construction of hegemonic power leads to formulation of an alternative future based on a desire for equal and just humanity and results in revolutionary gestures of resistance that can be conceptualized as a *Trans/Intifada*.



A Black-American-Palestinian linkage is analyzed within the frameworks of interdisciplinary and transnational American Studies. A historiographical analysis shows that the Palestinian Nakba represents a contemporary colonial epoch, which

is evident in the methods of political and military oppression developed by Israel. A survey of U.S.-Israeli cooperation reveals that unconditional support for Israel stems from the glorification of Zionism as an analogy to North American settler-colonialism, and from the central role of Palestine for the evangelical movement. Transnational Black-Palestinian solidarity has been visible in the twentieth century in Third World, Non-Aligned, Pan-African, Pan-Arab, and Black nationalist spaces, as well as in the radical currents of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. The contemporary coincidence of Israeli and U.S. violence against minorities led to a rise in reciprocal solidarity. Black activists identified Palestinians, African Americans, non-white Jews, and Africans in Israel, as Third World populations suffering under colonialism and imperialism. Literary texts in the form of essays, written and spoken poetry, and rap, are examined in this dissertation as resistance literature. Spoken poetry has traditionally served as a method of expressing personal narratives in both African and Arab contexts. Hip hop in particular, which originates in Brooklyn and is based on African diasporic traditions, allows for the articulation of popular resistance. The dissertation analyzes the works of Suheir Hammad, a Jordanian-born and Brooklyn-based poet identified as Palestinian and Black; June Jordan, an African-American poet with Caribbean roots; and DAM, a rap group of Palestinian citizens of Israel, as poetic interventions into hegemonic geo-political constructions. Through their cultural products in English, Arabic, and Hebrew, these artists destabilize categorizations by pointing out the confusion of local and global miseries.

The dissertation is in print and will appear from Universitätsverlag Winter in 2019.

Markus Weik

American Patriotism and Corporate Identity in Automobile Advertising: "What's Good for General Motors Is Good for the Country and Vice Versa?"

Advised by Winfried Herget

The triumphal march of the automobile and its connection with American culture have often been acknowledged in scholarship. By contrast, the culture-specific, value-oriented advertising strategies of the most important U.S. carmaker—General Motors (GM)—has, in its home market, received less attention, especially in American Studies. This study focuses on the connection between GM products and America, and the fundamental values represented by politics, business, and society. The author examines which textual and visual strategies GM uses in its image advertising to establish and maintain its patriotic American image. He argues that GM's advertising campaigns follow a patriotic leitmotif and are consistently in line with American core values, often generating new patriotic ideas.



Thomas Weik

The Popular Anti-Icon in American Sports

Advised by Winfried Herget

Amidst the flood of studies on cultural icons as ordering elements of societies and role models, sports icons have generally been neglected in scholarship despite their significance in the United States. Even less attention has been paid to the emergence of popular "anti-icons" who undermine the original sports-hero ideology and its claim of the interdependence of athletic success and moral normativity.

The Popular Anti-Icon in American Sports examines the phenomenon of this particular type of icon in one of the biggest economic and cultural industries in the United States – sports – and thus contributes to the current research on icons in America. Based on the case studies of Joe Namath (football), Dennis Rodman (basketball) and Barry Bonds (baseball), the dissertation illustrates how this phenomenon has become visible from the 1960s onwards because of profound changes within the media and sports, as these fields became increasingly intertwined. Autobiographies, biographies, covers of sports magazines, print media articles, print and TV commercials, and TV shows from popular culture like *The Simpsons*, serve as the main sources for this study. These sources show how in order to show how image creation by the athletes themselves, and/or by the media had a significant influence on the emergence of popular anti-icons in American sports. By means of the visual images of the athletes in these various media outlets, the study elaborately portrays how they violated cultural norms and codes with their outer appearance, outrageous attitudes and non-conforming behavior but also initiated cultural changes with these transgressions.



For this reason, Joe Namath and Dennis Rodman, in particular, subverted the sports-hero ideology and still became successful on the field but also popular off the field—especially in commercializing their anti-iconic images. Up to today, these athletes are entrenched in the national consciousness even though they retired from their active career decade(s) ago, proving their iconic status and why they have been selected as the matter of analysis for this study.

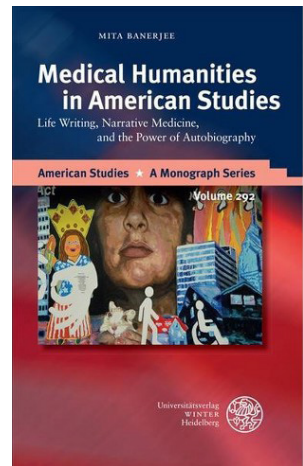
Selected Book Publications

Mita Banerjee

*Medical Humanities in American Studies:
Life Writing, Narrative Medicine, and the Power of
Autobiography*

Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter

This book asks a seemingly simple question: How has the creation of new fields such as medical humanities and narrative medicine changed the humanities themselves, and American Studies more specifically? Turning to the genre of life writing, this study sets out to chart spaces in which a dialogue between the humanities and the life sciences can emerge. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, life writing narratives such as Tito Mukhopadhyay's 'Beyond the Silence', Temple Grandin's 'Thinking in Pictures', or Michael J. Fox's 'Lucky Man' show that self-description has often become inseparable from biomedical terminology. Linking life writing narratives to discussions in bioethics and exploring the links between autobiography and brain research, this book sets out to wonder whether the divide between the "two cultures" of the humanities and the life sciences may not itself have become obsolete.



Jutta Ernst

Amerikanische Modernismen: Schreibweisen, Konzepte und zeitgenössische Periodika als Vermittlungsinstanzen Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann

Critics have long emphasized the mutability of critical categories used in literary and cultural history. Few scholars, however, have sought to trace the emergence and consolidation of competing concepts and to identify the actors and institutions involved in these transcultural dynamics. This is what the present study attempts to do. Focusing on *Poetry* (1912-) and *The Little Review* (1914-1929), it reevaluates American modernist aesthetics and shows how a large variety of stylistic forms and concepts—including H.D.'s Hellenistic Imagism, Vachel Lindsay's "Higher Vaudeville," T.S. Eliot's Logopoeia, and Else von Freytag-Loringhoven's rhapsodies—were eventually reduced to those of high modernism. Uncovering the role of contemporary magazines as cultural mediators, *Amerikanische Modernismen* contributes to the fields of both transatlantic modernism and interdisciplinary periodical studies.



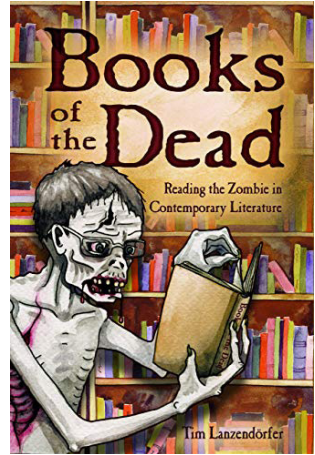
Tim Lanzendörfer

Books of the Dead:

Reading the Zombie in Contemporary Literature

Jackson: University Press of Mississippi

The figure of the zombie has undergone a remarkable—and often remarked—resurgence in the 21st century. Its various cultural emanations have included, but are certainly not limited too, such well-publicized films as *Shaun of the Dead* and *World War Z*, the TV series *The Walking Dead* and its spin-off, hundreds of low-budget movies, and a near constant stream of references to the creature in popular and academic science and scholarship contexts, where the zombie comes to be a metaphor from things as far from one another as liberal arts college programs to neoliberalism. In light of this extensive engagement with the creature, it may be all the more surprising that *Books of the Dead* stands as the first book-length study of the zombie in contemporary literature.



Books of the Dead takes as its subject this understudied aspect of the contemporary zombie: its presence in and as literature, in texts as widely divergent in literary cachet as Pulitzer Prize winner Colson Whitehead's *Zone One* and the mashup fiction *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*. In five chapters, *Books of the Dead* engages the zombie's surprisingly disparate manifestation in fiction. Beginning with Max Brooks's *World War Z*, the novel which formed the distant basis of the later blockbuster movie, it goes on to read a number of key texts in the zombie genre against their shared cultural moment and against a backdrop of critical theory that frames each chapter's engagement. It reads Bob Fingerman's novel *Pariah* with theories of community in order to understand how the zombie apocalypse frames our contemporary search for a closer engagement with each other. It speaks about Robert Kirkman's comic series *The Walking Dead* as a complicated struggle with the difficulty of the notion of everyday life under postmodern conditions of existence. It understands Seth Grahame-Smith's *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, and its prequel and sequel, as meaningful beyond dismissive references to the text as cheap mashups, and as themselves reframing the value and meaning of Jane Austen and her original novel in the contemporary. It looks to a number of novels, from M.R. Carey's *The Girl with All the Gifts* to Madeleine Roux's *Allison Hewitt is Trapped* and *Sadie Walker is Stranded* as concerned with questions of contemporary gender

relations and postfeminism. It also reads Colson Whitehead's *Zone One* and Junot Diaz's short story "Monstro" as both engaged with reframing the question of race in the wake of a zombie apocalypse.

Books of the Dead offers two major theses that tie together these texts. The first is that the zombie is undervalued when it is reduced to being read as a metaphor, and especially when such reduction is attempted over too many texts. The zombie, it argues, is a radically overdetermined literary figure, and to reduce its figuration to a single reading, or indeed even a number of readings, is unhelpful. Indeed, it suggests that in all of the cases it discusses, the concrete meaning of the zombie as a central marker of the texts' genre is beside the point. *Books of the Dead* argues that the zombie emerges in literature as a figure of possibility; and what is more, it does so, formally, by virtue of the demands it places on any narrative that contains it. The zombie, virtually by nature of its generic constitution, is tied to the idea of the end of the (contemporary) world, and thus poses the crucial question of what comes after. Over the wide variety of its appearances, it does not provide answers, or ways out, but it does propose the possibility of radical change, of ultimate ends, and of the necessity of going on. But it, itself, does not provide answers: it is not, itself, the answer. Rather, the zombie throws into relief the human figures in the texts it appears in, and challenges them and their readers to understand how radical change might or might not be possible. Understanding the zombie as a figure of possibility raises the spectre of falling short in exploring the full range of options open in the wake of a radical reshaping of societal relations, to be sure: *Books of the Dead* thus understands *World War Z* to fall short on its own terms in attempting to imagine a future beyond the collapse of civilization. But whatever happens in the narratives of zombie fiction, the zombie emerges as a generic marker of possibility, a reminder that a different future—horrible or hopeful—is possible.

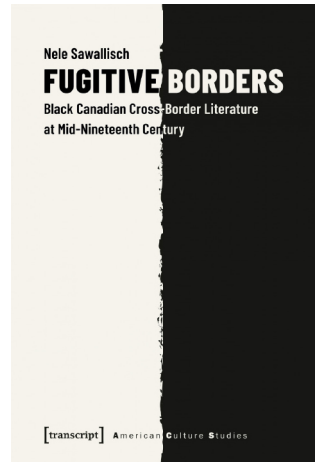
The book's second major thesis is that zombie fiction is a crucial genre for the contemporary moment, in which the interplay between popular and literary fiction, the interaction between differently-valORIZED forms of engagement can be seen to break down, and which reminds us that, if carefully read and understood as itself of value, popular fiction is after the same issues as ostensibly more cerebral literary fiction. The zombie figure, here more than in its often misguided metaphorical readings, emerges as a democratizing trope: *Books of the Dead* concludes that whatever the contemporary definition of literariness is, it must include zombie fiction, lest we lose whatever is left in literariness of artistic autonomy and critical, political, and social engagement.

Nele Sawallisch

Fugitive Borders: Black Canadian Cross-Border Literature at Mid-Nineteenth Century

Bielefeld: transcript Verlag

Fugitive Borders explores a new archive of 19th-century autobiographical writing by black authors in North America. For that purpose, Nele Sawallisch examines four different texts written by formerly enslaved men in the 1850s that emerged in or around the historical region of Canada West (now known as Ontario) and that defy the genre conventions of the classic slave narrative. Instead, these texts demonstrate originality in expressing complex, often ambivalent attitudes towards the so-called Canadian Promised Land and contribute to a form of textual community-building across national borders. In the context of emerging national discourses before Canada's Confederation in 1867, they offer alternatives to the hegemonic narrative of the white settler nation.



René Dietrich, ed.

Special Issue of *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 42.2 (2018)

Los Angeles: UCLA American Indian Studies Center Publications

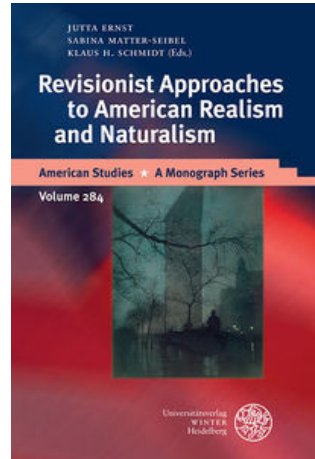
This special issue of the *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* offers a discussion of settler colonial biopolitics as it targets Indigenous life across a range of transnationally related, yet distinct, sites of colonial settlement. Moving across these sites, it examines how settler colonial regimes at different locations and at different positions within an economically hierarchized globality employ forms of biopolitics in historically specific ways to their own ends. At the same time, this special issue explores Indigenous life in its manifold manifestations as a site of resurgence, decolonial resistance, and enduring continuity that exceeds any attempt at biopolitical control. The contributions to this special issue thus engage scholarly conversations in critical Indigenous and settler colonial studies that connect a biopolitical logic of racialization, regularization, and naturalization to a geopolitical logic of dispossession and removal as inherent to the eliminatory logics of settler colonialism.



Jutta Ernst, Sabina Matter-Seibel, and Klaus H. Schmidt, eds.

Revisionist Approaches to American Realism and Naturalism
Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter

The present volume responds to the paradoxical situation that, in recent decades, U.S. realism and naturalism have been treated as a "stepchild of American literary history" (Fluck), but have also generated an enormous body of innovative scholarship. In keeping with the collection's title, the contributors both react and add to the revisionist endeavor of this new and exciting material. Modes of inquiry include meta-analyses, readings of little-known texts, revaluations of canonical authors, alternative takes on naturalism's relationship to genre, and transdisciplinary perspectives. Subjects covered range from a radical critique of such revisionism; William Dean Howells's and Mark Twain's aesthetics of the commonplace; Gothic naturalism in Mary E. Wilkins Freeman; management discourse and the spirits of capitalism in the oeuvre of Jack London; settler colonialism in Frank Norris and Theodore Dreiser; the impact of middlebrow tastes on the contemporary artist novel; naturalism in Robert Frost's poetry; food studies and Richard Wright's autobiographical writings; the cognitive sciences and the real in Henry James; debates about authenticity and Edward J. Steichen's contributions to F.S.A. photography; to a survey of current and future forms of reception and a periodical studies approach to Jack London's South Seas travelogues.



Jutta Ernst and Oliver Scheiding, eds.

New Book Series

Studies in Periodical Cultures (SPC)

Leiden/Boston: Brill

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. Research into periodicals is of high interest to many because of the medium's pervasiveness and its enmeshment with the formation of cultural identities. This book series considers periodicals as important artifacts, seeking to assess their role for processes of cultural transfer and translation. SPC looks at how periodicals evolve in and through networks of people, material infrastructures, media markets, and changing technologies. Likewise, the community-building potential of periodicals will be considered. SPC wants to determine what function periodicals have as sites of affection, but also as aesthetic and material sources for the arts and literature.

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.



For more information see:

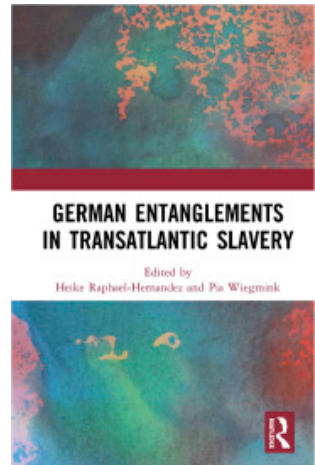
<https://brill.com/page/spc/forthcoming-series-studies-in-periodical-cultures>

**Pia Wiegink
and Heike Raphael-Hernandez, eds.**
German Entanglements in Transatlantic Slavery
London: Routledge

Germany has long entertained the notion that the transatlantic slave trade and New World slavery involved only *other* European players. Countering this premise, this collection re-charts various routes of German participation in, profiteering from, and resistance to transatlantic slavery and its cultural, political, and intellectual reverberations. Exploring how German financiers, missionaries, and immigrant writers made profit from, morally responded to, and fictionalized their encounters with New World slavery, the contributors demonstrate that these various German entanglements with New World slavery revise preconceived ideas that erase German involvements from the history of slavery and the Black Atlantic.

Moreover, the collection brings together these German perspectives on slavery with an investigation of German colonial endeavors in Africa, thereby seeking to interrogate historical processes (or fantasies) of empire-building, colonialism, and slavery which, according to public memory, seem to have taken place in isolation from each other. The collection demonstrates that they should be regarded as part and parcel of a narrative that ingrained colonialism and slavery in the German cultural memory and identity to a much larger extent than has been illustrated and admitted so far in general discourses in contemporary Germany.

This book was originally published as a special issue of *Atlantic Studies*.



List of Other Publications

- Banerjee, Mita. "Life Writing." *Handbook Autobiography/Autofiction*. Ed. Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf. Boston: De Gruyter, 2018. 336-41.
- . "Postcolonialism." *Handbook Autobiography/Autofiction*. Ed. Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf. Boston: De Gruyter, 2018. 129-34.
- . "Mark Twain: Autobiography of Mark Twain (1870-1910)." *Handbook Autobiography/Autofiction*. Ed. Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf. Boston: De Gruyter, 2018. 1658-70.
- . "Race and Citizenship." *Handbook of the American Novel of the Nineteenth Century*. Ed. Christine Gerhardt. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018. 74-90.
- . "Blue Hawai'i? Adam Horowitz's Film *Nuclear Savage*." *Border Stories: Narratives of Peace, Conflict and Communication in the 20th and 21st Centuries*. Ed. Beate Greisel, Tanja Konrad, Senta A. Sanders, and Heike Schwarz. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2018. 103-25.
- . "Die Irrungen und Wirrungen der Mainzer Fastnacht oder: Wie ich ein Kakaopflänzchen wurde." *Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaft* 2 (2018): 214-18.
- . "Biopiracy in India: Seed Diversity and the Scramble for Knowledge." *Phytomedicine* (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.phymed.2018.10.017>.
- . Review of *Mapping South Asia through Contemporary Theater: Essays on the Theatres of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka*, ed. Ashis Sengupta (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). *Journal of Contemporary Drama in English* 6 (2018): 414.
- , Manfred E. Beutel, Katja Böhme, and Rüdiger Zwerenz. "Psychodynamic Online Treatment Following Supportive Expressive Therapy (SET): Therapeutic Rationale, Interventions and Treatment Process." *Zeitschrift für Psychosomatische Medizin und Psychotherapie* 2 (2018): 186-97.
- , Oliver Meyer, Margarete Imhof, and Do Coyle. "Positive Learning and Pluriliteracies." *Positive Learning in the Age of Information: A Blessing or a Curse?* Ed. Olga Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia, Gabriel Wittum, and Andreas Dengel. Wiesbaden: Springer, 2018. 235-66.
- Bassimir, Anja-Maria. "Definition—Macht—Evangelikal: Standortbestimmung zum gegenwärtigen US-amerikanischen Evangelikalismus." *Amerikastudien/American Studies* 63.3 (2018): 389-422.
- Dietrich, René. "Introduction: Settler Colonial Biopolitics and Indigenous Lifeways." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 42.2 (2018): 1-10.
- . "Feeding Ourselves with Stories and the Gift of Having a Body: A Conversation with Deborah Miranda." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 42.2 (2018): 103-18.

- Ernst, Jutta. "'Poetics of the Potent': Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*, Edgar Allan Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*, and Modes of Transcreation." *Gained Ground: Perspectives on Canadian and Comparative North American Studies*. Ed. Eva Gruber and Caroline Rosenthal. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2018. 57-75.
- . "'What Is Africa to Me?': Blackness and Transgression in Contemporary African Canadian Poetry." *Transgressions/Transformations: Literature and Beyond*. Ed. Brigitte Johanna Glaser and Wolfgang Zach. Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 2018. 71-81.
- Ernst, Jutta, Sabina Matter-Seibel, and Klaus H. Schmidt. "Introduction." *Revisionist Approaches to American Realism and Naturalism*. Ed. Jutta Ernst, Sabina Matter-Seibel, and Klaus H. Schmidt. Heidelberg: Winter, 2018. vii-xxi.
- , eds. *Revisionist Approaches to American Realism and Naturalism*. Ed. Jutta Ernst, Sabina Matter-Seibel, and Klaus H. Schmidt. Heidelberg: Winter, 2018.
- Freitag, Florian. "'Who Really Lives There?': (Meta-)Tourism and the Canada Pavilion at Epcot." *Gained Ground: Perspectives on Canadian and Comparative North American Studies*. Ed. Eva Gruber and Caroline Rosenthal. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2018. 161-78.
- Freitag, Florian, and Filippo Carlà-Uhink. "(Not So) Dangerous Journeys: The Ancient Mediterranean and Ancient Mythological Sea Travelers in European Theme Park Attractions." *Thalassokratographie: Rezeption und Transformation antiker Seeherrschaft*. Ed. Hans G. Kopp and Christian Wendt. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018. 283-300.
- Hornung, Alfred. "Intercultural, Transcultural, Transnational America and the Obama Family." *Perspektiven der Interkulturalität: Forschungsfelder eines umstrittenen Begriffs*. Ed. Anton Escher and Heike C. Spickermann. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2018. 235-51.
- . "Diversity and Life Writing in the Transnational Classroom." *Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education and Societal Contexts: International and Interdisciplinary Approaches*. Ed. SunHee Kim Gertz, Lauren Cyr, and Betsy Huang. New York: Palgrave, 2018. 211-34.
- . "Autobiographie als amerikanisches Medium: Ernst Kreneks interkulturelles Leben." *Ernst Krenek - nicht nur Komponist*. Ed. Gernot Gruber, Matthias Schmidt, and Claudia Maurer Zenck. Schliengen: edition argus, 2018. 251-63.
- . "Le pacte Philippe." *Cher Philippe: A Festschrift for Philippe Lejeune on the Occasion of his 80th Birthday. Essays on a Life, Life Writing and Autobiographical Theory*. Ed. T.G. Ashplant, Clare Brant, and Iona Luca. Amsterdam: Panchaud, 2018. 25-31.
- Kim, Sabine, and Nina Morgan, eds. *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 9.1 (2018).
- , and Nina Morgan. "Transnational American Studies as Transdisciplinary Collaboration." *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 9.1 (2018): 3-8.

- Lanzendörfer, Tim. Review *Pluralist Desires: American Historical Fiction after the Cold War*, by Philipp Löffler. *Amerikastudien/American Studies* 63.1 (2018): 119.
- Obenland, Frank. "Resistance and Revolution in the Haiti Plays of Langston Hughes and C.L.R. James." *Theatre Annual: A Journal of Theater and Performance of the Americas* (2018): 21-42. <https://theatreannual.atds.org/>.
- . "Racial Stereotyping and Performing Blackness: Branden Jacobs-Jenkins's *Neighbors* as Post-Black Play." *Disrespected Neighbo(u)rs: Cultural Stereotypes in Literature and Film*. Ed. Caroline Rosenthal et al. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2018. 41-61.
- Schäfer, Axel R. "Evangelicals and Empire: White Conservative Protestants in U.S. Cold War Politics and Society." *North American Christian Community and the Cold War*. Ed. Paul Mojzes. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2018.
- Scheiding, Oliver. "Charles Brockden Brown, *Wieland* (1798)." *Handbook of the American Novel of the Nineteenth Century*. Ed. Christine Gerhardt. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018. 157-73.
- Schlarb, Damien. "Sentimental Contracts: The Affective Narrative Structure of Puritan Covenant Theology in Jonathan Winthrop's A Model of Christian Charity." *Doing Cultural History: Insights, Innovations, Impulses*. Ed. Judith Mengler and Kristina Müller-Bongard. Bielefeld: Transcript, 2018. 71-84.
- Schmidt, Klaus H. Review of *Theodore Dreiser Recalled*, ed. Donald Pizer (Clemson: Clemson UP, 2017). *Studies in American Naturalism* 13.1 (2018): 95-102.
- Veauthier, Ines, "Past, Present, and Future: Memory and Belonging in Chicano Literature." *Tradition and (R)evolution: Reframing Latina/o Identities in Contemporary U.S. Culture*. Ed. Carmen M. Méndez-García. Madrid: Instituto Benjamin Franklin, 2018. 69-77.
- Wiegink, Pia. "Antislavery Discourses in Nineteenth-Century German American Women's Fiction." *German Entanglements in Transatlantic Slavery*. Ed. Heike Raphael-Hernandez and Pia Wiegink. London: Routledge, 2018. 58-78.
- , and Heike Raphael-Hernandez. "German Entanglements in Transatlantic Slavery: An Introduction." *German Entanglements in Transatlantic Slavery*. Ed. Heike Raphael-Hernandez and Pia Wiegink. London: Routledge, 2018. 1-17.

List of Presentations Given by Members

- Banerjee, Mita. "Cultural Idyll or Freak Show? Centenarians' Autobiographies between Life Sciences and Life Writing" (Kolloquium Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, May 2018).
- . "Blogging, Life Writing, and the 'Refugee Crisis': 'GermanLifeStyle' (GLS) as Alternative Cultural Signification" (Workshop Exploring Migrant Narratives, JGU Mainz, July 2018).
- . "Literature, Simulation, and the Path towards Deeper Learning" (International Scientific Conference *Modern Didactics*, National Research University, Higher School of Economics, Moscow, November 2018).
- Bassimir, Anja-Maria. "*Christianity Today* and Its Self-Portrayal as a Global Media Ministry" (Konferenz "Global Faith and Worldly Power: Evangelical Encounters with American Empire," JGU Mainz, Oct. 2018).
- Dietrich, René. "Missionization on Display: Deborah Miranda's Bad Indians and The San Gabriel Mission." Guest lecture at Kennesaw State University, November 2018.
- . "Place-Based Relationality beyond Settler Geopolitics of Property: Mni Wiconi and Indigenous Normativities of Political Life." Workshop "Settler Colonialism at the Bar: An Interdisciplinary Workshop on Law, Race, and Colonial History," Centre for Global Challenges, Utrecht University, October 2018.
- . "Assimilation as Debilitation/Rehabilitation: Ableist Settler Publics, Incapacitated Sovereignty, and Bodily Refusal." Annual Meeting of the German Association for American Studies, Berlin, May 2018.
- . "'Pando/Pando': Transnationalizing Settlement and Decolonial Crossing." Annual Meeting of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association, Los Angeles, May 2018.
- Ernst, Jutta. "From Chicago to Paris: The Frenchification of *The Little Review*." International Conference *Transcending Boundaries: Migrations, Dislocations, and Literary Transformations*, Ljubljana, July 2018.
- . "Mobilizing Periodical Studies: From the Archive to Relational Dynamics." International Conference "*Minor* Mobilities in North American Literature and Culture," Wien, May 2018.
- Freitag, Florian. "Theme Park Imitations." Guest Lecture. University of Oxford, November 2018.
- . "Stille, Sound und Musik im Themenpark." International Conference. "Stille, Sound, Musik: Akustische Dimensionen von Immersion." Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, November 2018.

- . "Performance in Theme Parks: Global Smiles." Annual Conference of the Society for Cultural History. Columbia University, New York, September 2018.
 - . "Hurricane Katrina on the Opera Stage." International Conference. "New Orleans in Medial Imaginations." Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, February 2018.
 - . "Performance Studies and Opera." Guest Lecture. University of Heidelberg, January 2018.
 - . "Cultural Memory and Popular Culture." Lecture Series. "Key Concepts of the Study of Culture." University of Heidelberg, January 2018.
- Gehrmann, Ruth. "Of Monsters and Transplantation: Renegotiating Frankensteinian Motifs in Young Adult Fiction" (Konferenz: "200 Years of the Fantastic: Celebrating *Frankenstein* and Mary Shelley." The International Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts, Orlando, Florida, March 2018).
- Heydt, Nina. "The Disposability of the Body and Resistance in *Orange is the New Black*." International Conference Precarious Representations, Freiburg Institute of Advanced Studies, Jan. 13, 2018.
- . "Jungfrau, Ehefrau, Mutter—und weiß? U.S.- amerikanische Frauenbilder im Wandel der Zeit." Food for Thought Lunch Lecture Series, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Nov. 6, 2018.
- Hornung, Alfred. "Diversity and Life Writing" (Gastvortrag, Technische Universität München, Jan. 2018).
- . "China's Pursuit of Obama's Legacy" (International Interdisciplinary Symposium "The Post-Obama Ethos: The Transnational U.S. in the Aftermath of Hope," Georgia State University, March 2018).
 - . "Confucius and America: The Moral Constitution of Stagecraft" (Gastvortrag, Peking University, June 2018).
 - . "Chinese Ideas and American Politics: Sino-American Relations in the 18th Century as a Model for the 21st" (Annual Conference of Center for American Studies on "Language, Humanities and Technology: Sino-American Relations under the *Belt and Road Initiative*," Southwest Jiatong University, Chengdu, Sichuan, July 2018).
 - . "Auto/Biographical Reports on How the Other Half Lives" (IABA-Konferenz "Secret Lives: Hide, Reveal, Belong," Universidade Federal de São João del-Rei, Minas Gerais, Brasilien, July 2018).
 - . "The Belt and Road Initiative and Cultural Communication", "Ecology and Life Writing: Transcultural and Transnational Perspective" (Chang-an Lectures: The Series on Literary & , Cultural Theory, Shaanxi Normal University, Xian, July 2018).
 - . "Migration and Transculturation" (Workshop "Migrant Cultural Heritage," National Maritime Museum Sydney, Aug. 2018).
 - . "The Politics of Border and Hospitality" (Workshop "Border Crossings," Edith Cowan University, Perth).

- . "Diversity and Life Writing in the Transnational Classroom: Maxine Hong Kingston," "Chinese Ideas and American Politics," "The Belt and Road Initiative and Cultural Communication," "Ecology and Life Writing: Transcultural and Transnational Perspective" (Lectures on American Chinese Affinities, Institute of World Literature, Peking University, Oct. 2018).
- . "Confucius and Benjamin Franklin: Chinese Ideas in the Foundation of the United States" (Guest Lecture, Confucius Institute, Kennesaw State University and Confucius Institute, Georgia State University, Atlanta, Nov. 2018).
- . "The Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies" (International Committee Talkshop 1: Transnational RESEARCH—From Emergency to Emerging Projects, Annual Convention of ASA, Atlanta, Nov. 2018).
- . "In Memoriam Steven Marcus" (Memorial, Columbia University, New York, Dec. 2018).
- Kathke, Torsten. "Vigilante World: Construction of Legality in the American Southwest, 1870-1920" (Conference "Reinventing the Social: Movements and Narratives of Resistance, Dissension, and Reconciliation in the Americas," University of Coimbra, Portugal, March 2018).
- . "The Soft Side of the Future: The History of the Future Present in U.S. Popular Non-Fiction Books from 1970 to 1989" (Conference "Imagining the History of the Future: Unsettling Science Stories," University of York, March 2018).
- . "Amazon in Print: The Bertelsmann Book Club as Purveyor of Media and Consumer Goods" (Conference "The Production of Information Technologies, Media Markets, and Labour in the Twentieth Century," Museum der Arbeit, Hamburg, April 2018).
- Kim, Sabine. "Property, Propriety, & Protest: Parks as Spaces of Contested Memory," Georgia State University, Atlanta, March 22-23, 2018.
- . "Tiere in Bewegung / Tiere in Stillstand," Hidden Zoo Projekt, Hochschule Mainz, 25 Jan. 2018
- . Roundtable on the Future of Transnational American Studies, American Studies Association Annual Meeting, November 8-11, 2018, Atlanta, GA.
- . "Sound and Debt: Dub Poetry and/as Remittance in the Black Canadian Atlantic." Sound Collectives, Eichstätt, December 2018.
- . "Vodou, Social Media, and the Performance of Global Community," International Federation of Theatre Research, Belgrade, July 10-15, 2018.
- Lanzendörfer, Tim. "Papers Making People, People Making Papers? Populism and the Press in the Early Republic." *The Making and Unmaking of Identities and Connections in Early America and the Atlantic World, 1650-1850*. European Early American Studies Association Biennial Conference, London, December 14-16, 2018.

- . "Reading for Genre: Form, Politics, and Literary Criticism." *The Genres of Genre*. SANAS Biennial Conference, Lausanne, November 2-3, 2018.
- . "Reading Zombies, Or: Why the Walking Dead Are Literature." University of Bern, November 1, 2018.
- . "Weird Spaces: Exploring Strange Ecologies in Pacific Northwest Stories' Podcast *Tanis* and Jeff Vandermeer's Southern Reach Trilogy." *The American Weird: Ecologies & Geographies*, University of Göttingen, April 12-14, 2018.
- . "Reading in the Age of Trump: Historicizing Contemporary Literary Studies in Dark(er) Times." *The Post-Obama Ethos: The Transnational U.S. in the Aftermath of Hope*, Georgia State University, Atlanta, March 22-23, 2018.
- . "Novelistic Aesthetics and the Podcast." *The Podcast: Forms, Functions, Futures*, University of Mainz, February 8-9, 2018.
- Lörch, Michael. "Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik: Role and Function of an Academic Journal in a Socialist Society." International Conference ALA, San Francisco, May 2018.
- . "Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik (ZAA): Rolle und Funktion einer wissenschaftlichen Fachzeitschrift in einer sozialistischen Gesellschaft." International Conference *Grenzüberschreibungen: Übersetzer und Übersetzen in der SBZ und DDR (1945-1990)*, Gernersheim, June 2018.
- Sawallisch, Nele. "'Pioneer', 'Activist', 'Icon': Remembering Viola Desmond and Her (Hi) Story of Black Civil Rights in Canada." *GKS Jahrestagung 2018*, Grainau. Vortrag im Nachwuchspanel, Feb. 16.-18, 2018.
- . "Families and the U.S.-Canadian Border Zone in the Nineteenth Century." *MESEA 2018*, Graz, May 30-June 2, 2018.
- . "JB & FD & CW: Geographical Meditations on John Brown and Frederick Douglass." *Frederick Douglass across and against Times, Places, and Disciplines*, Paris, October 11-13, 2018.
- Schäfer, Axel R. "Categorizing Humans in American Immigration and Social Policies: A Critique of Transnational Perspectives," Conference "From Tahrir Square to Zuccotti Park: The Arab Spring and the De-Centering of American Studies", Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Qatar, 8-11 January 2018.
- . "Evangelicals, Religious Politics, and U.S. Globalism," European and British Association for American Studies Annual Conference, London, 5-8 April 2018.
- Scheiding, Oliver. "Ethnology and Empire: Languages, Literature, and the Making of the North American Borderlands" (Annual Conference of the Modern Language Association, New York, Jan. 2018).
- . "Native American Colonial Mediascapes: Mapmaking and Periodicals" (Universität Basel, March 2018).
- . "The Colonial Period" (Universität Bern, March 2018).

- . "Academic Logistics in the Post Obama Era: A Perspective from Europe" (Georgia State University, Atlanta, March 2018).
- . "The American Short Story in Today's E-Age" (Annual Conference of the American Literature Association, San Francisco, March 2018).
- . "Letters and Self-Presentation in the Atlantic World Chair". (Early European American Studies Conference London, "The Making and Unmaking of Identities and Connections in Early America and the Atlantic World, 1650-1850." December 2018).
- Schlarb, Damien. „Der Mehrwert des Desiderats liegt in den Detailverstreungen": Impressionen aus dem Schreiballtag eines Akademikers. Schreibsommer 2018. 9 July 2018.
- . "Religious Publishing and the Intellectual Climate of New York City as a Space of Literary Production." C19: The Annual Conference of Nineteenth-Century Americanists. Albuquerque, NM. 23 March 2018. Session P55: Religious Climates and the Formation of U.S. Literary History
- . "Breaking It Is Part of the Fun: Glitches as Part of Gameplay, Narrative, and Interface Design in Video Games." *Playing the Field*, Munich, 29 April 2018.
- Spahr, Clemens. "Gary Shteyngart and the Logic of Quantification." Tagung "Laboring Bodies and the Quantified Self." Universität Mannheim, October 2018.
- . "The Transcendentalist as Public Intellectual: Institutions, Professionalism, and Reform in the Age of American Romanticism." Tagung "Transcendentalist Intersections." Ruprecht- Karls-Universität Heidelberg, July 2018.
- . "Langston Hughes at the Waldorf Astoria: The Harlem Renaissance and the Problem of Marxism." Symposium "Karl Marx and the American Dream." Universität Trier, June 2018.
- . "Romantic Revolutions: Cosmopolitan Radicalism in Margaret Fuller's Dispatches from Europe." 29th Annual Conference of the American Literature, San Francisco, May 2018.
- Veauthier, Ines. "A Shared Vision: Reflections of *Latinidad* in Literature." International Conference *Towards New Interpretations of 'Latinidad' in the 21st Century*, Salamanca, Spain, 28-30 May 2018.
- . "More than Meets the Eye: Ambiguity and Cultural Competence in Translation Studies." *III Congreso Internacional Ciencia y Traducción*, Córdoba, Spain, 11-13 April 2018.
- Velten, Julia. "Illusions of Mobility: Reading George Dawson's *Life is So Good!* Against the Grain." 45th Austrian Association for American Studies Conference: American Im/Mobilities. Wien, 16-18 November 2018.
- . "The Fabrication of George Dawson: Life Writing, (Im)mobility, and Extreme Old Age." Aging Cultures-Cultures of Aging Symposium. Mainz, 22.-23.11.2018.

- Wiegink, Pia. "Travelling Beyond the Slave Narrative: Mobility and Belonging in Antebellum African American Women's Life Writing" *Unhinging the National Framework: Perspectives on Transnational Life-Writing*, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, December 7, 2018.
- . "Mobility, Belonging, and Antislavery Critique in Antebellum African American Women's Travel Accounts", *State of Emergence*, American Studies Association, Atlanta, Georgia, Nov. 8-11, 2018.
- . "Domestic Publicity in Antebellum African American Women's Life Writing" *Counter/Publics*, Jahrestagung der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Amerikastudien, Freie Universität Berlin, May 24-27, 2018.

List of Presentations at the Obama Institute

JANUARY

Deepu Gowda (Columbia U)

"Finding Oneself in the Scene: Narrative Medicine and Self-care"

Chang Liu (U Heidelberg)

"On the Afterlife of American Musical Waste"

Danielle Spencer (Author)

"Drifting out of Infinity"

Maura Spiegel (Columbia U)

"Thickening A Thin Story with Film in the Narrative Medicine Classroom"

Danielle Spencer (Columbia U)

"Narrative Medicine: History, Context, and Development"

Anita Wohlmann (U of Southern Denmark)

"Feasting on Metaphors: The Role of Comparisons in Clinical Practice"

APRIL

Mark Noonan (New York City College of Technology)

"At John Holt's Tomb: In Search of Lost Space in the City of Print."

"Brooklyn Tides: On the Fall and Rise of a Global Borough"

"Re-Mapping the Canon: Early American Newspaper Printers and Their Transnational Routes"

MAY

Thomas Hrach (U of Memphis)

Discussion on Film Screening *I am Not Your Negro*, by Raoul Peck

Sean Lovitt (U of Delaware)

"A Break from Nation Time: Anarchist Utopias in the Black Arts Movement"

Matthew Pethers (U of Nottingham)

"Suspense/Desire/Repetition: Serial Poetics and the Early American Novel"

Philipp Schweighauser (U of Basel)

"Beautiful Deceptions: Aesthetics, Politics, and the Early American Novel"

James W. Herman (U.S. Consul General, Frankfurt)

"The Future of Transatlantic Relations: A Town Hall Meeting"

JUNE

Celeste-Marie Bernier (U of Edinburgh)

"'Power to the Powerless': Black Artists, Art Movements, and Art-Making Traditions"

Ben Chappell (U of Kansas)

Keynotes on "Cultural Performance in Transnational American Studies"

Sally Chivers (Trent U)

"Some 'Age-Friendly' Advice?: Ableism, Austerity, and New Stories of 'Active Aging'"

Alan Lessoff (Illinois State U)

"What Does the Transnational Perspective Change About U.S. History?"

Philipp Löffler (U Heidelberg)

"Emerson, Longfellow, and New England Literary Culture."

Marcus Reisenleitner (York U)

"California's Counterculture Turns 180 Degrees South: Obsessively Documenting Drop-Outs While Saving the Planet"

"Lineages of Digital Discourse: Silicon Beach and its Counter-Cultural Origins"

Werner Sollors (Harvard U)

"*The Family of Man* Exhibition: Looking at the Photographs Now and Remembering a Visit in the 1950s"

Laura Stevens (U Tulsa)

"Kanienkehaka: the Mohawk People, Christian Missions, and Native Survivance"

Denise Uyehara (Performance Artist)

"*Shooting Columbus* and Other Radical Vocalizations: Artist Talk and Performance"

JULY

Celeste-Marie Bernier (U of Edinburgh)

"Suffering, Struggle, Survival: The Activism, Artistry, and Authorship of Frederick Douglass and Family (1818-2018)"

Gerd Hurm (Trier U)

"On Documentary 'Fakes': Edward Steichen and Key Issues in 20th Century American Photographic Discourse"

OCTOBER

Jean Chalaby (City U, London)

"The TV Format Trade: Bringing the Local and the Global Together"

Diana Cooper-Richet (U de Versaille Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines)

"Transnational Circulation of Editorial Models: How the Archetype of The Review of Literary Criticism Travelled from Scotland to France and on to Brazil in the First Decades of the 19th Century"

Sven Dierks (HMKW, Frankfurt)

"Perlen im Nierganz? Können Zeitschriftenkonzepte heute noch erfolgreich sein?"

Justyna Fruzinska (U of Lodz)

"Identity and Masculinity in Ernest Hemingway's *Garden of Eden*"

"James Baldwin's 'Going to Meet the Man' and Toni Morrison's 'Recitatif': Two 20th-Century Approaches to Blackness"

"Late Nineteenth-Century Women's Literature: Charlotte Perkins Gilman's 'The Yellow Wallpaper' and Edith Wharton's 'The Other Two'"

"Ralph Waldo Emerson: The Father of Transcendentalism"

Pamela Nöllke-Przybylski (Catholic U Eichstätt-Ingolstadt)

"The Tradability of Print Formats"

Maurizio Valsania (U of Turin)

"Trans-Atlantic Bodies: American Nationalism and the Politics of Corporeality"

Andreas Vogel (WIP, Cologne)

"Lizenzen als Geschäftsstrategien von Zeitschriftenverlagen in Deutschland"

Wang Ying (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing)

"The Self-Written Epitaph: Chinese Autobiographical Writing"

NOVEMBER

Dagmar von Hoff (JGU Mainz)

"Die französische Militäradministration als *Akteur*? Alfred Döblins Zeitschrift *Das Goldene Tor*"

Gustav Frank (LMU Munich)

"Unternehmende Zeitschriften: Akteure—Agentilität—(aufgeklärter) Animismus"

Scott King (Shenandoah U, Winchester)

"March Madness, Mascots, and the Milkshake Ducks: A Social Psychological Perspective on the Rise (and Fall?) of Sister Jean"

Rüdiger Kunow (U of Potsdam)

"Age as a Cultural Norm and Form"

Mark Minnes/Natascha Rempel (Leibniz U Hannover)

"Transatlantische Theorienetzwerke: Die kubanische Zeitschrift *Diaspora(s)*"

Justus Pötzsch (JGU Mainz)

"Technological Immortality: Overcoming Aging and Death as a Symptom of Our Time"

Björn von Rimscha/Johanna Möller (JGU Mainz)

"20 Minuten von tamedia: Wie ein risikoaverser National Champion ins Ausland geht"

Gabriele Rippl (U of Bern)

"Picture This! Transcultural American Literature in the Digital Age"

Sean Theriault (U of Texas)

"The 2018 Elections in the United States: Causes and Consequences"

Anita Wohlmann (U of Southern Denmark)

"Serial Narration, Chronic Disease, and Aging"

DECEMBER

Oliver Emrich (JGU Mainz)

"Experimental Research in Business and Media"

Vanessa Evans (York U, Canada)

"Leaving the Land Before Time: The Planetary Presence of Indigenous World Literatures"

Silvia Hansen-Schirra (JGU Mainz): "Digital Processing of Popular Scientific Magazines"

Johan Jarlbrink (Umeå U, Sweden)

"Reading Newspaper and Following Files in the Digital Archive"

Marianne Von Remoortel/Julie Birkholz (Ghent U)

"Mapping Reprinting Practices: A Network Analysis of Items Sourced from *Der Bazar* and Affiliated Journals, 1860-1870"

Jutta Zimmermann (Christian-Albrechts-U, Kiel)

"Slavery Reconsidered: Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad* and Other Recent Representations"