

Making It Home – Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Recognition and Displacement in America

Fifth International Graduate Conference | May 11 – 12, 2012



Photograph: “Abandoned Motel Office/Mims, Florida 2009”

Liz Murphy Thomas is an artist, photographer and educator. She holds a BFA in Creative Photography from the University of Florida and an MFA in Photography and Digital Imaging from the Maryland Institute College of Art. Her artwork investigates issues of identity, memory and the associations we give to our possessions. Liz's research interests include utilizing social media in art pedagogy, documenting the developing medium of digital imaging and conceptual histories of tourist sites and the broader sociological underpinnings of tourism.

The photograph “Abandoned Motel Office/Mims, Florida 2009” is a part of the series *The Land of Sunshine*, a project she prefaces with this introduction:

The Florida I grew up with - Marineland, Coral Castle, Weeki Wachee, mom-and-pop motels - is fast disappearing, replaced with more and more theme parks and big box chain hotels. Before the interstates laced across the state, US1 was the main access to Florida and many of these older attractions (or what remains of them) lie along this highway. The Land of Sunshine is my photographic series that sets out to document these disappearing monuments before all trace of them is gone.

So much of living in a place designed for the sole purpose of selling itself to visitors is the sacrifice of nostalgia. These cute mom-and-pops motels and the boardwalk, which hold fond memories for many in the region, just look run down and “old” to the tourists. For this reason, little stays the way it is; there is constant remodeling, a never-ending expansion, and a steady development. This happens to the point that much of Florida’s history is lost, forgotten, and covered up by the sky-rise, beach-view condos that seem to multiply daily.

For more information please visit her website: <http://lizmurphythomas.info/>

Fifth International Graduate Conference

Making It Home

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Recognition and Displacement in
America

Program and Abstracts

May 11-12, 2012
John F. Kennedy Institute
Graduate School of North American Studies
Freie Universität Berlin

The Graduate School of North American Studies' Fifth International Graduate Conference will examine North America's understanding of Home as both a national and domestic space of identification. In their presentations, participating scholars will illuminate the social, economic, political and cultural conditions transforming the concept of Home. In the course of the conference, public lectures will be held by historian Susan J. Matt, urban sociologist Peter Marcuse and anthropologist James Clifford. The opening lecture will be held by the Free University's cultural studies professor Laura Bieger.

Home has traditionally been associated with ideas of belonging, community, domesticity, and safety. When social change occurs, these concepts must be re-evaluated. Making It Home implies returning to, adapting to, and creating ways of being at home in America. The conference will consider Home as a metaphor from various disciplinary perspectives. Scholars from the social sciences and humanities will examine Home as a trope connoting such diffuse themes as diaspora and belonging, the impact of the housing crisis and natural catastrophes, and literary representations of homelessness.

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Friday, May 11, 2012

8:30-9:00	<i>Registration/Coffee</i>
9:00-10:30	<i>Opening Remarks</i> Members of the Conference Committee; Director of the Graduate School of North American Studies Prof. Dr. Ulla Haselstein <i>Opening Lecture</i> Laura Bieger - No Place Like Home. Belonging's Yearning for Narrative [Room 340]
10:30-11:00	<i>Breakfast Reception</i>
11:00-12:30	<i>Panel 1:</i> Hybrid Homes: Conflict and Complication in Diasporic Communities [Room 340] <i>Panel 2:</i> Politics of the American Home: Citizenship, Equity, and Global Responsibility [Room 319]
12:30-14:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>
14:00-15:30	<i>Panel 3:</i> Alienated Homes: Border, Frontier and Identity [Room 319] <i>Panel 4:</i> Framing Catastrophes: Media Perspectives on Trauma, Crisis, and War [Room 340]
15:30-16:00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
16:00-17:30	<i>Panel 5:</i> Building New Homes: Transformation and Redefinition of Immigrant Communities [Room 340] <i>Panel 6:</i> Discovering Places of Belonging: Losing and Finding Identity along the Way [Room 319]
17:30-18:00	<i>Refreshments</i>
18:00-19:30	<i>Keynote I</i> James Clifford - "Always Coming Home"—On Postcolonial (Im)Possibility in California [Room 340]
19:30	<i>Reception</i>

Saturday, May 12, 2012

9:00-9:30	<i>Registration/Coffee</i>
9:30-11:00	<i>Keynote II</i> Susan Matt - How Americans Learned to Leave Home [Room 340]
11:00-11:30	<i>Breakfast Reception</i>
11:30-13:00	<i>Panel 7:</i> Space and Story: The Imaginary Mapping of the Self [Room 340] <i>Panel 8:</i> (Re)Construction Sites: 19th Century Processes of Mobility and Settlement [Room 319]
13:00-14:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>
14:00-16:00	<i>Panel 9:</i> Who Owns This Place? Narratives of Homelessness and Re-emplacement [Room 340]
16:00-16:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>
16:30-18:00	<i>Keynote III</i> Peter Marcuse - The Myth and Reality of Home "Ownership" [Room 340]
18:00	<i>Closing Remarks</i> Members of the Conference Committee <i>Reception</i>

OPENING LECTURE

Laura Bieger is Junior Professor at the Department of Culture, John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies, Freie Universität Berlin. Her teaching and research interests include: theories of narrativity and aesthetic experience; visibility, textuality and spatiality; American art and architecture of the 19th and 20th century; land- and cityscapes in American literature and culture. She is the author of *Ästhetik der Immersion: Raum-Erleben zwischen Welt und Bild. Las Vegas, Washington und die White City* (2007) which looks at urban spaces that architecturally stage the perceptual conjunction of world and image and turn it into an object of aesthetic experience. While this research was mainly interested in the epistemological function of the aesthetic experience at stake, her current research, *Is Anybody Home? Belonging's Yearning for Narrative*, engages with the ontological dimension of imaginative culture; its constitutive relation to social being rather than its capacity of cognitive conditioning. Conceiving narrative as a primary force of countering the disruptive effects of modernity and the novel as its most influential literary institution, this research develops a narrative theory based on the human need to belong and applies it in exemplary reading of American novels from the late 18th to the 21st century. She is also co-editor of three volumes: a collection of essays by Winfried Fluck entitled *Romance with America? Essays on Culture, Literature, and American Studies* (2009), *Mode: Ein kulturwissenschaftlicher Grundriss* (2012), and *The Imaginary and its Worlds: American Studies after the Transnational Turn* (forthcoming 2012).

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

James Clifford is Professor Emeritus in the History of Consciousness Department, an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program founded in the early years of the University of California, Santa Cruz. During the 1980s, Clifford, along with Hayden White, Donna Haraway, and other prominent faculty, made the program an internationally recognized center for innovative critical scholarship. Clifford was also founding director of the UCSC Center for Cultural Studies. He was trained in social and cultural history at Harvard University, where he wrote on 20th century French ethnology, colonialism, and Melanesian cultural change. He is best known for his historical and literary critiques of anthropological representation, travel writing, and museum practices. Clifford co-edited (with George Marcus) the controversial intervention, *Writing Culture, the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (1986). He is currently completing *Returns*, a book about indigenous cultural politics that will be the third in a trilogy. The widely influential first volume, *The Predicament of Culture* (1988) juxtaposed essays on 20th century ethnography, literature, and art. The second, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late 20th Century* (1997) explored the dialectics of dwelling and traveling in post-modernity. The three books are inventive combinations of analytic scholarship, meditative essays, and poetic experimentation. Clifford continues to work on issues related to indigeneity, globalization, museum studies, visual and performance studies, cultural studies, and cross-cultural translation. He is currently a Guest Professor at the Graduate School for North American Studies, Free University Berlin.

Susan J. Matt is Presidential Distinguished Professor of History and Chair of the History Department at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah. A native of Chicago, she received her B.A. with honors from the University of Chicago, and her M.A. and Ph.D. from Cornell University. She is author of *Homesickness: An American History* (Oxford University Press, 2011) and *Keeping Up with the Joneses: Envy in American Consumer Society, 1890-1930* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003). With Peter Stearns, she is co-editor of a new book series on the history of the emotions, published by the University of Illinois Press. She and her husband, Dr. Luke Fernandez, are currently writing a book on the way that technology has transformed inner life in America, from the telegraph to Twitter.

Peter Marcuse, a planner and lawyer, is Professor Emeritus of Urban Planning at Columbia University in New York City. Born in Berlin, Germany, he lived and practiced civil rights and labor law in Waterbury, Connecticut. He then returned to UC Berkeley for a Ph.D. in Planning, taught at UCLA, and was President of the City Planning Commission. Later, while teaching at Columbia, he served on Community Board 9 Manhattan, chairing its housing committee. His fields of research include city planning, housing, homelessness, the use of public space, the right to the city, social justice in the city, globalization, urban history, and the relation between cultural activities and urban development, and, most recently, solutions to the mortgage foreclosure crisis. He has taught in both West and East Germany, Australia, the Union of South Africa, China, Canada, Austria, Taiwan, and Brazil, and has published widely. His books are, with Ronald van Kempen, *Globalizing Cities: A New Spatial Order?* (Blackwell, 1999), *Of States and Cities: The Partitioning of Urban Space* (Oxford University Press 2002), and *Searching for the Just City*, with multiple co-editors (Routledge 2009). His newest publication is *Cities for People, not for Profit*, co-edited with Neil Brenner and Margit Mayer (Routledge 2011).

His blog, pmarcuse.wordpress.com, includes a number of discussions of the Occupy and Right to the City Movements in the United States.

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1) Hybrid Homes: Conflict and Complication in Diasporic Communities

Panel Chair:

Laura Bieger; Professor, John F. Kennedy Institute, Department of Culture

Yulia Kozyrakis

"The bird and the fish can fall in love. But where they gonna build their nest?" Between Black and White: Race and Belonging in *The Time of Our Singing* by Richard Powers.

For individuals of mixed racial origin feeling at home amidst the culture that categorizes them strictly in terms of black and white has not been an easy task. This specific quest for finding one's place in 20th century America's racialized society is the main theme of the novel *The Time of Our Singing* by Richard Powers. Depicting a story of a mixed-race family the novel turns to music as an alternative, universal way of self-expression. Raising their children in the decade when their marriage was still considered to be a crime in roughly half of the country's States, the protagonists' parents live a dream of providing a race-free home for their children, preparing them for a life beyond race.

As I will show in my paper, in order to defy racial categorization the novel uses music as a point of reference and as an instrument the protagonists use for their racial self-fashioning. Feelings of home and belonging are tightly interwoven with the music all family members listen to and make. However, the home idyll does not last for long. Gradually music starts losing its previously unquestioned status as a universal medium of expression. In the turbulent events of the 1960s the individual's musical taste evolves into primarily being interpreted as a political statement. The analysis of the novel will make clear that the aesthetic realm, subjected to the debates about white/black music ownership, fails to provide a reliable locus of self-identification.

Biography

Yulia Kozyrakis earned her M.A. in English and American Literature and Culture at the University of Hannover in 2006. Her final thesis was titled *Filming Race. Constructions of Race, Whiteness, and the South in Hollywood Films*. There she examined and deconstructed the images of race communicated through a number of Hollywood films and analyzed the techniques of viewer identification. Retaining the emphasis on constructions of race, in her dissertation she deals with contemporary US fiction and its reengagement with the figure of the racial passer. The thesis, on which she started working at the Graduate School of North American Studies in Berlin in 2008, is titled *Post-Racial Realities. Passing Narratives in Contemporary U.S. Fiction*.

Maren Freudenberg

Concepts of Home in Chinese Canadian Literature: Identity and Belonging in Larissa Lai's *When Fox is A Thousand*

Larissa Lai is a Vancouver-based, Chinese Canadian author whose first novel *When Fox is A Thousand* was published in 1995. I interviewed her in October 2007 while researching for my M.A. thesis, in which I analyzed *When Fox is A Thousand* and several other novels by Chinese Canadian authors.

Fox explores concepts of identity, belonging and hybridity in a minority-within-a-minority, namely Chinese Canadian queer young women. Racialized by white society for their Chinese background, and marginalized by both the mainstream and Vancouver's Chinese Canadian community for their sexual orientation, these women utterly lack a place to call home which offers friendship, kindness and safety from physical and psychological abuse.

In the course of the novel Lai constructs alternative spaces of belonging for oppressed members of ethnic and sexual minorities. She introduces a "diaspora of the queer" which spans time and space, uniting marginalized individuals from various eras and places by creating a common "home". The space this diaspora carves out for itself transcends history and geography as static, linear concepts. It offers hybrid definitions of identity which draw from multiple sources, including a constructed, eclectic, "fake" history of Chinese Canadian queer women. Acceptance, belonging and, ultimately, a sense of home is established in negation of dominant social discourse on gender, race and sexuality.

Fox critically assesses notions of "nation", "ethnicity", "history", "self/other", finally casting them aside as concepts of social dominance and discrimination. Ultimately, Lay strives towards a post-multicultural approach to transcending limitations and hegemonic norms of identity and belonging.

Biography

Maren Freudenberg holds an M.A. degree in English Literature and Linguistics, Political Science and Cultural Anthropology from the University of Trier. At 28, after working as a political and media consultant in a Berlin-based communications agency, as a project associate in the Federal Foreign Office's Training for International Diplomats unit and as a journalist e.g. for *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, she has decided to return to academia as a career and is currently working not only in the administration of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin's Institute of Asian and African Studies but also on a Ph.D. project in literary studies and sociology on religious narratives and church renewal in American Protestantism. Her interest in concepts of home/homelessness, belonging/displacement and inclusion/exclusion stems from moving back and forth between the United States, Germany, and various countries in Asia as places to call home. She pursued this topic in her M.A. thesis on Chinese Canadian identity.

Mahmoud Arghavan

Making a Home Overseas or Over the Seas

Belonging to a diaspora makes the notion of home for displaced people more than a mere place of birth. Besides involuntary socio-cultural, political and legal consequences of displacement, diaspora people's lives are largely affected by their perceptions of the home. Nostalgia of the homeland combined with a mythical image of an ideal old country is prevalent among the first generation expatriates. The second generation in diaspora, however views belonging and home differently. The new generation's image of the ancestral homeland is mainly mediated by their parents' reminiscences or media representations. Those with hybrid identities who live in-between two worlds consider themselves as if belonging to both the current country of residence and their country of origin. Nevertheless there are some who deny the importance of the ancestral homeland.

In my paper, I will trace the above mentioned trends in making a home overseas by an interpretation of the works in Iranian-American literature. Azadeh Moaveni's account of her search for home is narrated in *Lipstick Jihad, A Memoir of Growing Up Iranian in America and American in Iran*. The short stories and poems collected by Persis Karim in the two anthologies *-Let Me Tell You Where I've Been: New Writing by Women of the Iranian Diaspora* and *A World Between: Poems, Short Stories, and*

Essays by Iranian-Americans - will provide other perspectives on displacement, belongings and the contested place of home in the Iranian-American literature.

Biography

Since October 2009, I have been writing a dissertation on 'Iranian American Literature: from Collective Memory to Cultural Identity' under supervision of Prof. Winfried Fluck and Prof. Ulla Haselstein.

2) Politics of the American Home: Citizenship, Equity, and Global Responsibility

Panel Chair:

Lora Anne Viola; Professor, John F. Kennedy Institute, Department of Political Science

Ashley Rose Bryan

From Equity to Community: Exploring the Hidden Side of American Residential Immobility

Homeownership holds social, political, and historical significance for Americans. Their dream, the American Dream to own a home, is one that has both financial and psychological effects: it helps build individual prosperity and economic mobility through home equity, while simultaneously providing the security of shelter and feeling of being home. Since the post-war housing boom in the 1950s, the American Dream has been promoted, distributed, and protected through local and national policy. Until recently, the American homeowner participated in a housing industry that absorbed one-fifth of the American economy, and therefore the ability to build equity was the primary motivator for homeownership. However, the recent collapse of the mortgage finance industry, followed by one of the most significant recessions in contemporary American history, has left American homeowners in a unique position. Presently, the American homeowner is experiencing residential immobility, a forced condition of permanence. This paper will posit that residential permanence, although economically unfavorable, offers American homeowners the unique opportunity to investigate contextual and social ties to their communities. Referencing the work of Avery Guest and David McMillan, theories of the Mediate Community and Sense of Community theory will be brought to bear on the American homeowner. Conceptually reversing the discussion of residential immobility into an increased degree of permanence not only offers a unique perspective on the American homeowner's current challenges, but also provides valuable criticism of the US housing system as it struggles to rebuild.

Biography

Ashley Rose Bryan is pursuing her Master of Science in Architecture degree in the College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning (DAAP) at the University of Cincinnati. She holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from The Pennsylvania State University, where she completed an undergraduate thesis critiquing the role of residential architecture in vulnerable communities. Her current academic interests involve the relationship between housing, mobility, and identity construction in both the United States and Post-Socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Her working Masters thesis

holds the title: *Identifying with Permanence: A Study on Residential Permanence and Place-Based Identity Construction in Post-Socialist Slovenia*.

Alexandra Bettencourt & Noel Foster

Back to the Basics: charting the evolution of an Obama Democratization Doctrine based in an American Identity?

The first four years of the Obama Administration has seen Washington torn between its rejection of democratic proselytism typified by the Bush administration, and the challenge of responding to a promised fifth wave of democracy, like the Iranian Green Revolution and the Arab Spring. An administration that had renounced armed support for democratization soon found itself engaged in military operations against Moammar Qaddafi, through an ambiguous reading of the 1973 War Powers Act. The tensions between the political necessity of supporting foreign democratization attempts, while avoiding imperial overstretch and alienating allies have shaped American policy-making.

This article will chart the emergence of an Obama Democratization Doctrine, founded in liberal realism and grounded in an interactive triad of democratic identity, national interests, and a likelihood of success. Democracy promotion will be examined both as an element of 'smart power', a foreign policy objective, as well as an underpinning to the 'soft power' component of 'smart power.' Examination of Iran, Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Burma will demonstrate the evolution of this aspect of the Obama Doctrine. Lastly, we will argue that such a democracy promotion policy is the unavoidable element of American Foreign Policy, based on an 'American identity' rooted in liberal values and a self-image as home to democratic principles and aspirations. Thus, the reaffirmation of commitment to promoting democracy challenges deep fears of American decline and self-alienation in the midst of domestic crisis.

Biography for Alexandra Bettencourt:

Alexandra Bettencourt received her B.A. from Boston University in Political Science with a specialized track in International Relations in 2009, and an M.A. in EU International Relations and Diplomacy from the College of Europe in Bruges in 2010. She is currently completing an internship at US Senator John F. Kerry's office in Boston, Massachusetts. Her interests are Transatlantic Relations and US Foreign Policy.

Biography for Noel Foster:

Noel Foster received a B.A. in Political Science and an M.A. in Sociology from Stanford University in 2008. He also holds an M.A. in EU international relations and diplomacy from the College of Europe in Bruges in 2010. From 2008 to 2009 he worked on a graduate fellowship from Stanford's Haas Center for Public Service with a Mauritanian NGO dedicated to fostering democracy and the rule of law in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, amidst a coup d'etat and subsequent rule by military junta. In 2011 he published a book on efforts at democratization in that country, *Mauritania: The Struggle for Democracy*. Foster currently serves as a second lieutenant with the United States Air Force.

Simone Diender

Experts Making it Home: Scholarship on the Private Citizen in Mid-Twentieth Century America

From the 1940s through the 1960s, a Total Cold War touched both the national and the domestic space of identification that was the American home. In their relations with their bosses, their daily rituals of worship, and the ways in which they raised their children, American private citizens made small but significant political statements about capitalism, democratic government, and Americanness. My dissertation describes how mid-20th century social scientists analyzed and articulated citizens' informal obligations in and around their homes.

Popular publications of scholars such as political scientist Charles Merriam, sociologist Talcott Parsons, and anthropologist Margaret Mead "made" the American home. They analyzed American normative civic behavior, or the rules of daily conduct which were not encoded in laws but rather in social pressure and volunteerism. In the process, they prescribed what good American citizenship meant.

From Merriam's early work on the behavior of 'non-voters' (1924) to Parsons' theories of the individual's voluntary action and solidarity (*The Structure of Social Action*, 1937) and Mead's essays on *Culture and Commitment* (1970), academics carefully assessed the boundaries of private spheres in which people performed their roles as responsible members of a greater, national community. Their efforts represented a larger scholarly trend of investigating personality and behavior in order to understand American political relations. My paper, based on dissertation research, will discuss the definition of commitment and "good citizenship" which the disparate works of Merriam, Parsons, and Mead had in common.¹

Biography

Simone Diender is a graduate student in American History at Brandeis University. She lived in Cambridge, Massachusetts for four years and recently moved back to her hometown of Amsterdam, where she lectures in Media History and Theory at the University of Applied Sciences. Simone's dissertation concerns the obligations of private citizenship, as they were formulated in American scholarly communities between the 1920s and 1960s. She has presented parts of her research at the 2011 Social Science History Association meeting in Boston, the 2012 Heidelberg Spring Academy, and the 2012 European Social Science History Conference in Glasgow. Having spent so much time away from home, she is eager to meet other European scholars in American Studies and learn about the latest trends in the field.

¹ Charles Edward Merriam, *Non-Voting, Causes and Methods of Control* (Chicago, Ill: The University of Chicago Press, 1924); Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action: a Study in Social Theory with Special Reference to a Group of Recent European Writers* (New York: Free Press, 1937); Margaret Mead, *Culture and Commitment: a Study of the Generation Gap* (New York: Natural History Press, 1970).

3) Alienated Homes: Border, Frontier and Identity

Panel Chair:

Martin Klepper; Professor; Humboldt University, Department of English and American Studies

Antoni Gorny

Bringing the War Home: Doing Vietnam in the Ghetto

For African-Americans, the Vietnam War was just another illustration of the failure of the Civil Rights revolution. Their frustration found a representation in several “blaxploitation” films of the early 1970s, like *Slaughter* (1972, dir. Jack Starrett) or *Gordon’s War* (1973, dir. Ossie Davis). In these films, it blended with the standard exploitation narratives. Did the films merely contain the frustration of the urban blacks, or did they allow the people to rethink their own position within society?

Biography

Antoni Gorny (University of Gdansk) graduated from the University of Warsaw's American Studies Center with a thesis on the autobiographies of five African-American and Jewish-American jazz musicians. He is currently working on a dissertation on the black action cinema of the 1970s. Outside of his scholarly exploits, he works as a translator. He has translated works by Slavoj Žižek, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Terry Eagleton into Polish.

Dietmar Meinel

“Space. The final frontier.” Returning Home to the Frontier in Pixar’s *WALL-E* (2008)

The 2008 Pixar animation film *WALL-E* depicts a dystopian future in which all of humanity has left Earth as the planet had become uninhabitable due to the waste, garbage, and toxin produced by modern societies. After 700 hundred years of living on a spaceship, humanity has all but forgotten about their origin and de-evolved into being physically and intellectually dependent on their computers and machines. Meanwhile and unbeknown to humanity, Earth is struggling to recover from destruction as only one cleaning robot is left functioning on Earth: WALL-E. The existence of Earth and its environmental destruction is unveiled to humanity only after WALL-E accidentally journeys to the human spaceship. The captain’s realization “Out there is our home ... and it's in trouble” triggers humanity’s return to Earth and its liberation from the yoke of technology. After their arrival, humans build a society that is neither dependent on technology and consumerism nor destructive to the environment. Being stripped off its past, the final credits show humanity finding a new identity of environmental consciousness through the logic of the Frontier Thesis. Although *WALL-E* presents the whole planet as home, this vision is rooted in 19th century American exceptionalism. In my presentation I will therefore discuss the usage of the frontier narrative and imagery to analyze the film’s vision of saving and rebuilding Earth. I also highlight the limitations of a view that imagines a global home for all humans in the 21st century by recurring to a marginalizing 19th century vision.

Biography

I received my M.A. in North American Studies, Sociology, and German Literature from the Freie Universität Berlin in 2009. I have been a doctoral candidate at the Graduate School of the John F. Kennedy Institute at Freie Universität Berlin since 2010.

Nina Schnieder

Making oneself at Home at America's (Screen) Frontier: Recognition of Women and Chinese-Americans in Maggie Greenwald's Feminist Western *The Ballad of Little Jo*

In the early 1990s Hollywood took another attempt to renew the Western film and enrich the genre with aspects, characters and perspectives previously uncommon to the screen frontier, especially in the leading role of the cowboy. Among the "newer" depictions of cowboys were senior citizens, African-Americans, and women. Despite the assumption that "in herself the woman has not the slightest meaning [in the Western]" (Butt Boetticher), and prophecies of "the end of the genre" (Pam Cook) if women were cast for the leading role which have led to read the Hollywood Western film as "male fairytales" (Georg Seesslen), the films tie in with previous attempts to establish women also as protagonists in THE American film genre and according them a home at America's screen frontier. Maggie Greenwald's *The Ballad of Little Jo* approaches the issue of women at America's or rather Hollywood's frontier by relying on the true life story of Josephine Monaghan who, thrown out of her home on the East Coast, made it out West in order to find an independent and self-determined life for herself and her Chinese lover Tinman Wong.

My paper seeks to show how the feminist Western *The Ballad of Little Jo* recognizes these two unlikely characters especially by their journey of creating themselves a home in Montana during the gold rush thereby opening new perspectives of looking at the historical as well as Hollywood's (fictitious) depiction of America's frontier. By Little Jo's cross-dressing and Tinman's feminization, the film, on the one hand, apparently remains within the demands of the (white) male-centered genre and myth. On the other hand, Greenwald's film debunks the performance of the white male cowboy as visual masquerade that in concert with the main characters' gender bending enables the female and Chinese protagonist an opportunity of finally creating themselves a home in America's West.

Biography

Nina Schnieder is a Ph.D. student at the Department of American Studies at Potsdam University. She studied American Studies, Modern History and Sociology/Women's Studies at Potsdam University and Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen. With her final thesis on *The Representation of Female Cowboys in 1990s' Hollywood Westerns* she achieved her M.A. degree in 2009. Currently, she is working on her Ph.D. project about *The Aging Hero in American Action-Adventure Film*.

4) Framing Catastrophes: Media Perspectives on Trauma, Crisis, and War

Panel Chair:

Harald Wenzel; Professor, John F. Kennedy Institute, Department of Sociology

Frank Mehring

“The Impact of Catastrophe”: Understanding the Trauma of Displacement from the Perspective of Media

Displacement, as the head of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center Kate Halff argues, is “one of the great human tragedies of our time.” The media coverage of (conflict and non-conflict) catastrophes causing displacement and humanitarian responses is extensive. If we agree that concepts of belonging need to be understood as practices of narrativization, displacement has to be looked at from a similar perspective. My paper will contribute to the ongoing discussion regarding narratives of displacement and homelessness by turning to recent developments in media studies. How do audio-visual narratives of displacement influence our perception of displacements and their traumatic dimension? Can we re-conceptualize narratives of displacement by critically analyzing the modes of understanding from the perspective of media in the sense of W.J.T. Mitchell? I will first turn to the theoretical concepts, which the psychologist David Boder introduced in his trail-blazing article “The Impact of Catastrophe.” Boder combined an analysis of content with the function of trauma based on audio recordings of displaced persons immediately after the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps in 1946 and survivors of the Kansas flood in 1951. His comparative approach to patterns of traumatization in man-made catastrophes in a hostile environment and nature-made catastrophes in a friendly and intact environment will provide a basis to investigate the traumatic effects of the terror attacks on 9/11 and hurricane Katrina in audio-visual oral histories.

Biography

Frank Mehring, professor at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies at the Free University of Berlin, teaches 20th century visual culture, theories of popular culture, ethnic modernism, and processes of cultural translation in a transatlantic context. Professor Mehring is the author of *Sphere Melodies*, published in 2003, which examines the intermediary work of the avant-garde artists Charles Ives and John Cage. In 2004, he also published a biography on the German-American freedom fighter *Charles Follen* (2004) and edited his writings (*Between Nativists and Foreigners*, appearing in 2007). He has recently finished his post-doctoral project, *The Democratic Gap*, exploring dissent of German Immigrants in pursuit of the promise of American democracy [forthcoming 2012]. With Winfried Fluck and Stefan L. Brandt he edited *Transcultural Spaces: Challenges of Urbanity, Ecology, and the Environment in the New Millennium*, which appeared in 2010. In addition to organizing the first international symposium on the painter/designer Winold Reiss (December 1-3, 2011), he is preparing a critical edition of Reiss's Mexico diary entitled *Detours to Harlem*. Frank Mehring was awarded a Fulbright American Studies Fellowship to the Department of English and American Literature and Language at Harvard University (2004-5). In 2008 and 2009, he was a fellow at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C. He recently received the EAAS Rob Kroes Award for the best book manuscript in American Studies (*The Democratic Gap*).

Eva Kiefer

Framing 9/11. Media Rallying during Terrorist Attacks

The media was quick in taking up a war on terrorism frame initiated by the Bush administration after 9/11. The frame increased a rally around the flag effect in the population, political elites, as well as the media itself. My approach is twofold. First, prospect theory will be used to describe the differences and similarities of a depiction and interpretation of terrorism in the media before and after 9/11. In a second step, the example of 9/11 will be used to explain how and when rally effects decrease again in the population and the media after a major crisis. The war on terrorism frame entailed two narratives: America's role as a victim and the US military response to the attacks. In the media, the war on terrorism was a rather monopolistic discourse shaped by the government. With the beginning of the war in Afghanistan, the war against terror frame was widened by explaining the justification to go to war with the Taliban in Afghanistan not only with revenge, but with humanistic and democratization reasons. By thus opening the frame, the first step was made for a pluralistic discourse to manifest itself again, thus decreasing the rally effect in the media. I argue that the media played a catalyst role, increasing the threat perceived by the public by putting up the frame of the war on terrorism, thereby allowing for a securitization of the media news and discussions on and about 9/11.

Biography

Eva-Maria Kiefer gained her Magister degree in American studies, psychology and political science from Bonn University. In 2007, she spent a year at the University of Pennsylvania on a scholarship of the German Academic Exchange Service. In November 2009, she wrote her Magister thesis about the "imperial" Bush presidency. In October 2010, Eva joined the HCA as a Ph.D. student and receives a scholarship from the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. In September 2011, Eva took part in a conference at Heidelberg University about 9/11. She contributed a text on terrorism and the media to a book that will be published next year.

Curd Knüpfer

Winning American Living Rooms: Fragmented News Media and Public Views of War

In modern democratic societies, one of the media's assumed roles is to inform and unify the public on national issues. As today's American media become more fragmented and inclusive, this role seems to be gradually dissolving. Accordingly, recent publications on the American news media have tried to assess how new technologies and media structures are affecting politics and what impact bias and partisan news might have on public communication. These works have contributed to our understanding of the effects of partisan selective exposure (Stroud 2011), a loss in public trust towards the media (Ladd 2012), and how public perception of national policies has changed (Baum & Groeling 2010).

Drawing on these findings, this paper will address some of the potential impacts of news media fragmentation on public views of war. The central question behind this will be how relatively recent changes in the structure of American news media might account for new discursive patterns and new forms of inclusion and exclusion. While media fragmentation opens public discourse on US foreign policy to new perspectives and voices, it also fosters confusion and uncertainty, weakening the public sphere and the media's role as a 'gatekeeper of truth'. As public deliberation becomes more difficult, due to a decline of shared perceptions of reality, moments of consensus, bi-partisanship, and national unity will become more significant. I will argue that this could lead to new discursive structures from

which mutually reinforcing sources of information might benefit. Symbiotic relationships between government sources, interest groups, and parts of the news media could lead to discursive advantages for some and might facilitate a hawkish and militaristic priming of the American public. Drawing on brief qualitative analyses of recent observations, I will attempt to exemplify and pinpoint instances of exclusion and inclusion in an era of news media fragmentation.

Biography

Curd Knüpfer is a first year Ph.D. candidate at the Free University of Berlin's Graduate School for North American Studies. He received his Magister degree at the University of Bonn, where his subjects were North American studies, political science and history. His thesis on the neoconservative movement and US foreign policy after the Cold War was published in 2010. He is currently engaged in research for his dissertation on the role of conservative media and political polarization in regard to US foreign policy.

5) Building New Homes: Transformation and Redefinition of Immigrant Communities

Panel Chair:

Margit Mayer; Professor, John F. Kennedy Institute, Department of Political Science

Joyce A. Berkman

Still German? One Family's Experience as 1930s Refugees to the United States

During the 1930s those kin of German Jewish-born Edith Stein (Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross) who had not been murdered and had successfully fled to the United States struggled to redefine "home" and "national identity." Edith Stein, who died in Auschwitz, in addition to her canonization, is widely heralded as the second German woman to earn a doctorate in Philosophy, a major interwar philosopher who exerted decisive influence on the founder of Phenomenology Edmund Husserl, and a Carmelite theologian. Stein's refugee kin spanned a range of religions, social classes and occupations. The female and male refugees faced different challenges in emigrating. They adopted myriad modes of adjustment to their new land. Depending upon their experience in Germany, some of Stein's kin felt as Stein's sister, Erna Stein Biberstein, declared, "I once possessed a homeland, sweet and fair...It was a dream."

In my study of the loss, displacement and trauma of Stein family refugees and their mixed success in recreating home, I focus particularly on the fate of German facets of Stein kin identity. My research, based upon extensive oral histories of Stein family members as well as on their personal writings and on general scholarship of German refugees from the Third Reich in the United States, supports and challenges many of the conclusions that dominate current scholarship on German refugees in the United States from 1933 to 1960 and raises new questions about emigration experience.

Biography

Professor of History and Adjunct Professor Women's Studies at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst, Joyce Avrech Berkman (B.A. History, UCLA and M.A. and Ph.D. History, Yale) focuses her research and teaching on the lives of women in the United States, England and

Germany and on the theory and methods of the interpretation of first person documents. Besides her publication last year of articles treating scholarly and public controversies over Margaret Sanger and on the historiography of the reproductive rights movement in the United States, she is the editor of *Contemplating Edith Stein* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), which also includes several of her essays. Her various scholarly studies of Stein, like her previous articles and critical study on Olive Schreiner, *The Healing Imagination of Olive Schreiner: Beyond South African Colonialism* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1980) combine disciplines of history, literature, philosophy, anthropology and women, gender and sexuality studies. She is currently researching German refugees to the United States during the Nazi Era through the lens of Edith Stein kin. She has received her University's Distinguished Teaching Award and University's Distinguished Outreach in Research Award, the latter for her wide-ranging work in Public History and in theater and history collaborations.

Noriko Matsumoto

Ethnicity and Immigrant Assimilation: East Asians in a New York Suburb

This paper offers an analysis of recent immigration in the United States and the formation of an immigrant “home” in a New York suburb. The Asian influx into the traditionally white suburb of Fort Lee, New Jersey, began in the 1970s, against the backdrop of a globalizing economy. Successive waves of Japanese, Korean, and Chinese immigrants into Fort Lee since that time have been largely comprised of middle-class professionals. The traditional model of immigrant assimilation held that immigrants with little resources would typically settle in “enclaves” in urban areas. These offered a familiar environment and temporary setting from which immigrants would eventually depart: the assumption being that immigrants made a home by becoming “American.” Recent non-European immigrants, especially Asians of high socioeconomic status, problematize this traditional model. Ethnic identity and cultural values specific to the group have remained significant. It has been claimed that a relatively affluent class background obviates the need for assimilation—the latter traditionally based on the drive toward socioeconomic success. Findings from the present research demonstrate aspects of the complexity associated with contemporary processes of assimilation and ethnic retention. These processes are considered concurrent and *relational*. While the enactment and assertion of ethnic specificity may reinforce a sense of separation from the host, immigrant practices at the same time provide a channel through which assimilation occurs. Self-doubt regarding entitlement as “Americans” and, on the other hand, ethnic pride among Asians, are decisive factors determining a sense of social belonging. The paper argues that present research suggests the need for a dialectical understanding of the formerly white “havens” of the American suburb—currently under transformation as a multiethnic space.

Biography

Noriko Matsumoto teaches at the City College of New York and Iona College. She received the doctorate in Sociology from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York in February 2012. Her doctoral thesis concerns ethnic suburbia in the US and its implications for immigrant assimilation and ethnic relations. She has participated in international research projects coordinated by Princeton and Harvard Universities and has conducted research on social conditions in postindustrial Japan. Her research specializations are international migration, race and ethnicity, and the sociology of culture. Her reviews and articles have been published in the *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies*, the *Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration* (2012) and *The Next Generation: Immigrant Youth in a Comparative Perspective* (2011).

Maegan Hendow

Opportunity and Belonging in the Iraqi-American Community

This paper outlines the main characteristics of and forces affecting the Iraqi community in the United States, which has developed in a unique way based on both the background of first generation Iraqi migrants and the opportunity structures available to the various waves of Iraqi immigrants to the US.

On the one hand, the community has self-segregated based on the socioeconomic, religious, gendered and ethnic differences that were in place in Iraq. This can be seen not only in geographic terms in the major communities of Detroit and San Diego, but also in the abundance of ethnic- and confessional-based Diaspora organizations. On the other hand, opportunities available in the US, a reflection of citizenship and an immigration regime that favors highly skilled migrants and those migrants with family ties already established in the US, has supported this development.

These divisions based on class, religion, gender and ethnicity have shaped the power relations within the Iraqi-American community as well as between the Iraqi-American community and their host country, with certain hierarchies created or reinforced due to the immigration regime and the immigration statuses of the migrants. Moreover, this has affected how the Iraqi-American community interacts with Iraq, demonstrated in its overwhelming support of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, the subsequent mix of criticism and support in the following years, and the participation of a number of Iraqi-Americans in development projects in Iraq following the fall of the Ba'ath regime.

Biography

Maegan has a B.A. in Global Studies and French from the University of California, Santa Barbara, including a year of study abroad at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques of Lyon. In 2010, she also received a joint Masters in Global Studies from the University of Leipzig and the University of Vienna, her thesis having focused on Iraqi diaspora and temporary return migration to Iraq. During her studies, Maegan worked with several intergovernmental organizations on migration issues, and is currently a researcher with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development in Vienna. Her work has involved research on South-South migration, gender and migration, fundamental rights of migrants and integration issues in Europe.

6) Discovering Places of Belonging: Losing and Finding Identity along the Way

Panel Chair:

Andrew Gross; Ph.D., John F. Kennedy Institute, Department of Literature

Florian Freitag

Before and after the Deluge: Conceptions of "Home" in Recent New Orleans Novels

Marking a watershed in the history of "The City That Care Forgot," 2005's Hurricane Katrina also transformed literary conceptions of New Orleans as "home." This paper illustrates this change through a contrastive reading of two New Orleans novels, one pre-and one post-Katrina, that both inscribe the city into narratives of displacement and homelessness. In Marnie Woodrow's *Spelling Mississippi* (2002), New Orleans functions as a temporary home for Cleo and Madeline, who have both left their respective childhood homes in Toronto and St. Louis in order to reshape their lives,

which are equally dominated by (memories of) their mothers and insecurities about their sexual orientation. Tracing the two women's accidental meetings in different parts of New Orleans, the novel depicts the slow grip of the city that simultaneously takes hold of them and releases them from their pasts. At the same time, *Spelling Mississippi* can also be read as a text in search for a discursive home, as Woodrow's playful allusions to Chopin's *The Awakening* inscribe the novel into the literary history of New Orleans. With its detailed descriptions of New Orleans cuisine and Jazz reminiscent of local color fiction, Rosalyn Story's *Wading Home* (2010) similarly reaches back to 19th century literary depictions of the city. Focusing on world-famous trumpeter and New Orleans expatriate Julian Fortier's return to the city after Katrina, however, Story also depicts these assets of New Orleans culture as powerful means that allow Julian to reconnect with his hometown and past even after the place itself is "gone."

Biography

Florian Freitag studied English and French at the University of Konstanz as well as at Yale University. He received his Ph.D. in 2011 from the University of Konstanz with a thesis on "The Farm Novel in North America: Siting the Nation in American, English-Canadian, and French-Canadian Farm Novels, 1845-1945." He is currently an Assistant Professor at the Department of Translation Studies, Linguistics, and Cultural Studies at the University of Mainz. Freitag has published several articles on North American regional literatures and recently co-edited a special issue of the *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik* entitled "Crossroads: Canadian Cultural Intersections." Freitag's main fields of research are 19th century American literature, francophone North American literatures, and American popular culture, especially theme parks. His post-doctoral thesis will examine concepts of "frenchness" in literary and cultural representations of New Orleans from the 19th to the 21st century.

Laura Blandino

Longing for home. Displacement, invention, adaptation and nostalgia in Joseph Stella's (1877-1946) and Lyonel Feininger's (1871-1956) paintings

The notion of home has become central in contemporary artistic debate; many critics, such as Wanda Corn (1999), Celeste Connor (2001), Pellegrino D'Acierno, and Thomas Ferraro (1999) have examined in their studies how the question of belonging has influenced the production of different artists. These scholars focus in particular on the study of the early phase of modernism, reconsidering the artistic and intellectual efforts for the promotion of national culture. In the 1910s and the 1920s many European painters came to the United States and many American artists visited Europe; the works of these artists reflect their transnational experience and express a peculiar sense of displacement and alienation toward their home country.

This same feeling characterizes the works of Joseph Stella, who was born in Italy and moved to the United States in 1896, and Lyonel Feininger, who was born in America and emigrated to Germany in 1887; despite their transnational lives, both artists are relevant in order to understand issues of American identity and their paintings can be interpreted according to the notions exposed in contemporary criticism. In this paper, I intend to look at these paintings and at their broader historical and cultural foreground, analyzing how both Stella and Feininger acutely perceived and tried to represent the problem of identity; the portrait of America that emerges from their works constitutes an attempt at creating a new artistic language, a new style, a new culture generated from the combination of different traditions, a vision both nostalgic and extremely modern.

Biography

Laura Blandino graduated from the University of Torino where she studied art history; her majors are contemporary art, art criticism and history of architecture. She also completed a M.A. program in American Studies at the University of Torino where she majored in American literature theory and criticism. In October 2011 she graduated from her Ph.D. School, defending a thesis that surveyed the career of the Italian American painter Joseph Stella (1877-1946) and its relationship with the development of modernism in the United States. Laura Blandino currently works as a freelance translator, exhibition curator, museum guide and has conducted seminars dealing with American art at the University of Torino.

Oana Cogeanu

Making It Back Home: Richard Wright's *Black Power* and Maya Angelou's *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*

This article offers a comparative reading of two African-American narratives of travel "back to Africa" that, in spite of their identical itineraries, seem to bear little resemblance: Richard Wright's *Black Power* (1954) and Maya Angelou's *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes* (1986). The article aims at identifying the rhetoric underlying the travelogues' respective representations of home. Thus, starting from the definitions of home emerging throughout the two narratives and based on detailed textual-cultural analyses of the travelers' experiences in the African-American diaspora and encounters with Africans, this article highlights Maya Angelou's rhetoric of deferral and Richard Wright's rhetoric of distance and further argues that both travelers eventually propose a (trans)national home out of Africa.

Biography

Dr. Oana Cogeanu is currently a junior lecturer at the English Department of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania. She completed a Bachelor's degree in English in 2005 with a dissertation on African-American women writers, was awarded a Master's degree in Cultural Studies in 2007 with a dissertation on representations of Africa in African-American writing, and successfully defended a Ph.D. dissertation on African-American travel literature in 2010. She is currently preparing a postdoctoral study on the travel literature of American ethnic groups. Her research interests are American literature in general and African-American literature in particular, travel writing, literary theory, and cultural studies.

7) Space and Story: The Imaginary Mapping of the Self

Panel Chair:

Florian Sedlmeier; Professor, John F. Kennedy Institute, Department of Literature

Kai Horstmannshoff

Terminal Passage: Self and Site in Poe's "Man of the Crowd" and Martha Rosler's *In the Place of the Public*

In my talk I will take a look at Edgar A. Poe's short story "The Man of the Crowd". I will explain how in Poe's story identity and the site in which it is formed are interrelated. Referencing the work of photographer Martha Rosler I will show how the relation of site and self proves to be increasingly

problematic in modernity. Drawing on Deleuze's concept of territorialization, I intend to complicate the relation of home, mobility, and identity.

Biography

Kai Horstmannshoff is a doctoral candidate in North American Studies at the John F. Kennedy Institute, Free University Berlin. He studied North American Studies, Intellectual History and Art History at Free University Berlin, University of California Berkeley, and Oxford University. He is working on questions of subjectivity and perception in the context of artistic space, specifically architecture and sculpture. He is alumnus of the Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes and of the Fulbright program.

Michael Confais

Nostalgia or Turning Exile into Home in Paul Auster's *In the Country of Last Things*

In the Country of Last Things portrays an extreme form of displacement from home: the autodiegetic narrator Anna Blume describes her struggle for survival in a “negative” city, a nightmarish world she has to face in order to search for her disappeared brother. Loss is ever-present in various forms — homelessness, theft, loss of truth, of humanity, of hope. In this dystopic reality, Anna's voice illustrates the way storytelling can regenerate the memory of what used to be most valuable at home.

I would like to show how Anna's physical displacements in the alien city manifest both the loss and the retrieval of her former familiar landmarks. Exile thus becomes a means of recreating a form of *nostalgia* (from Greek: “a return home”). I would then like to use Michel de Certeau's theory on the “rhetoric of walking” to analyze how walking and writing obey to the same both metaphysical and literal logic. I would like to reveal that Anna's movements through the unnamed city also reflect the author's metatextual quest for language, and how they precisely contribute to anchor Auster's words in the concrete reality of the city. Physical displacement and language are here always closely related. In *The Storyteller*, Walter Benjamin bemoans the lost capacity of a narrator to transmit an experience. However, in *In the Country of Last Things*, Paul Auster paradoxically succeeds in making storytelling a means of returning home, or of coming back to the sense of wonder that originally made America.

Biography

Michael Confais is a second-year Ph.D. student in American literature at the Université Toulouse 2 - Le Mirail, working on the art of loss in Paul Auster's fiction. After attending school in Passau, Germany, from age five to age eighteen (he is half-German, half-French), he obtained his baccalaureate in Toulouse, France. He then studied *Anglistik* and *Romanistik* for one year in Freiburg, and one in Heidelberg, before doing his first M.A. year in Galway, Ireland, as an Erasmus student. Afterwards, he passed the *agrégation* in English (a competitive national exam for teachers in France) and acquired a Master's Degree with honors in Toulouse.

Britta Bein

Home as Personal Fiction in Siri Hustvedt's Writing

Home is the place where identity is formed. In his latest work *Living Autobiographically: How We Create Identity in Narrative* (2008), autobiography researcher Paul John Eakin claims that we essentially define identity through narration. Narration requires chronology, and apart from fantasies about the future, life stories are mainly told in retrospect. Thus, the material of self-narration is memory. In a similar vein, the contemporary US-American author Siri Hustvedt considers home to be made up of memory. In her words, "[t]hese mental spaces map our inner lives more fully than any 'real' map" (Hustvedt, "Yonder" 2). This implies the idea of memory as fictional to some degree, which becomes apparent in the neurobiological finding that we never retrieve an original experience, but only the last recalled—and thus altered—version of it. In consequence, if home is made of memory, it is a fictional place created by the self-narration of its dweller. This becomes particularly clear in Hustvedt's novels, in which she makes deliberate use of her own home places, this way providing '*alter domi*' for her declared alter egos. Drawing on two of her novels as examples, this presentation will illustrate the way in which home is created through fictional narration.

Biography

Britta Bein is currently a Ph.D. student at the Institute of English and American Studies at the Philipps-University Marburg, where she is also an assistant lecturer. She began her dissertation project dealing with "The 'Unknowable' in the Writing of Siri Hustvedt: Coping with the Illness of Absence" (working title) in 2011. Her research focus on gender and identity already began in her participation in an interdisciplinary B.A. program at the Leibniz University Hanover and was continued in gaining the degree of the German state exam (1. Staatsexamen) in Marburg.

8) (Re)Construction Sites: 19th Century Processes of Mobility and Settlement

Panel Chair:

Gudrun Löhner; Professor, John F. Kennedy Institute, Department of History

Anton Hieke

The Trans-Regional Mobility and Identity of the Jews of Georgia, 1860-1880

Some 25,000 Jews lived in the American South during the Civil War, three thousand fought for the Confederacy. Yet, a large portion of Southern Jews left the region for the North and West immediately after the war. At the same time the South's opportunities attracted Jewish Northern businessmen, often Union veterans. To what degree was 'trans-regional mobility' normative and how did it affect regional identity as Jewish Southerners or Northerners in the South? Using Georgia as a case study, this presentation evaluates to what degree Jewish migrants acculturated to Georgian society in a time associated with social and political upheaval, i.e. Reconstruction.

Biography

Anton Hieke is a doctoral candidate at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany, and affiliated with the Center for United States Studies in Wittenberg. His research focuses on the German Jewish immigrants of Reconstruction Georgia and the Carolinas. His publications include “‘Aus Nordcarolina:’ The Jewish American South in German Jewish Periodicals of the Nineteenth Century.” *European Journal for Jewish Studies* 5:2 (2011): 241-272; and “Jews at the Cape Fear Coast: A Portrait of Jewish Wilmington, NC, 1860-1880,” *Southern Jewish History* 13 (2010): 1-43.

Julius Wilm

Spaces of regulation: America’s first free-land frontiers

In popular perception, the American frontier during the 19th century was a space of almost boundless freedom. Here settlers could escape the grasp of Europe’s ancient feudal institutions with their privileges as well as the social inequalities of the Industrial Revolution. However, when Congress first made land available for free, the intention was not to leave the shape of life to the settlers. Congress sought to regulate the frontier and its inhabitants in order to make them useful for the common good of white America. Land grants were to instill in the settlers a sense of patriotism and willingness to make sacrifices for the nation. By allowing settlers to acquire permanent land titles, the federal government encouraged them to make use of nature for permanent and commercial agriculture, producing surpluses in the future that could be sold on the national and international markets. The intended economic development would in turn broaden the tax base of the US government and put healthy military recruits at its disposal. Land grants in disputed territories would also make settlers useful in driving away indigenous tribes.

The paper details the regulatory thrust that Congress pursued towards the frontier in the first two federal bills authorizing free land to settlers under the Armed Occupation Act in the Florida Territory from 1842 and the Donation Land Act in the Oregon Territory beginning in 1850. The paper discusses mechanisms of implementation and limits to the regulation envisioned by Congress.

Biography

Julius Wilm is currently preparing a Ph.D. project on white settlements in Florida and Oregon Territory during the 1840s and 1850s. He completed his bachelor’s degree in History and International Development Studies at Roskilde University in Denmark and his master’s degree in North American Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin. While his present research interest centers on the expansion of white settlements in the American West during the 19th century, he has also published research on the history of international atheist organizations during the interwar period.

Rachel Sailor

Local Photography as a Settlement Strategy in the Nineteenth-Century American West

A deeply significant and widely overlooked agent that helped turn the 19th century West from a daunting and unknown entity into a home for generations of American immigrants was the ubiquitous “frontier photographer.” These ostensibly commercial entrepreneurs, who served local communities both large and small across the vast region, collectively provided a visual record of a larger place-making phenomenon. They provided symbolic sites for the creation of communal identity

in both their galleries and in the photographs themselves. Photographs enabled settlers to adjust to their new circumstances by visually and conceptually transforming the landscape into something familiar. They could see themselves and their neighbors in the landscape, a reflexive activity which allowed them to conceptually shape the new spaces according to their own cultural imaginings. Western photographs often portrayed place, for example, in ways that confirmed visual expectations and illustrated desire—all the while denying the already present cultural landscape of native peoples. Photography demonstrates both an attempt to belong *and* a means of displacement.

The use of landscape photography to augment understanding of “belonging” was ever-present despite the vastly different kinds of places that photographers helped settle in the 19th century West. As a strategy for self-definition, frontier photographs of local communities are periodically re-visited and utilized today in much the same way as they were originally. Ultimately, I argue that 19th century western photographs were a local settlement tool that still have an impact on those places now, and that taken as a whole, have shaped modern concepts of the West.

Biography

Rachel Sailor earned her B.A. in Art History from Oregon State University, her M.A. from the University of Oregon, and her Ph.D. from the University of Iowa in 2007. She has published a number of articles and book reviews on the history of photography in the American West, including “Thomas Easterly’s Big Mound Daguerreotypes: A Narrative of Community” *Amerikastudien/American Studies*, issue 49.2 (2004); “Performing the Pioneer: The Kolbs, The Grand Canyon and Photographic Self Representation in the 1910s,” *The New Mexico Historical Review*, Volume 84, No. 2, Spring 2009; and “Overlooked and Forgotten: a Depression Era Mural in Tyler, Texas,” in the *Journal of the American Studies Association of Texas*. She is also currently working on a manuscript for publication: *Local Landscape Photography of the Nineteenth-Century West and its Legacy*. She has taught at the University of Iowa, Drake University, and the University of Texas at Tyler. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of Wyoming (at 2195 meters). She teaches courses in American art and photography, 19th and 20th century European art, and a variety of courses on contemporary art.

9) Who Owns This Place? Narratives of Homelessness and Re-emplacement

Panel Chair:

Ulla Haselstein; Professor, John F. Kennedy Institute, Department of Literature

Marita Gilbert

“Who home is did not get lost”: Black women on the Saints and the re-making of home in post-Katrina New Orleans

Five years after Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans’ professional football franchise won its first Super Bowl championship, writing an important chapter of the city’s recovery. The media presented its case clearly—contending that the Super Bowl success of the New Orleans Saints is symbolic of the post-Katrina recovery of “home” in the city of New Orleans. Yet in so doing, one very important witness is absent from the witness list and remains unquestioned: the black woman.

While sport offers a unique framework for understanding the politics of home, homelessness/displacement, and recovery in post-Katrina New Orleans, black women—positioned at the margins—embody the interstices of “home” within this discourse of home recovery. Theirs is the space on the periphery, the taken for granted area between the boundaries of race, gender, and belonging in the *new* New Orleans. Black women found themselves at the center of visual and textual media narratives documenting the suffering of Hurricane Katrina yet their testimony is largely missing from similar narratives capturing this moment of recovery. Using a black feminist epistemological approach, this paper not only *includes* black women’s narratives, it centers black women’s excluded testimony to explore the meaning of the Saints to the recovery of home. Narrative analysis reframes the Saints as a contributor to the cultural rites of celebratory memorialization. The team is a vital element in the cultural recovery of New Orleans—but they cannot stand in for “who home is.”

Biography

Marita Gilbert is a Doctoral Candidate in Kinesiology at Michigan State University. Her research employs visual studies to understand African Americans’ engagement of sport and physical activity, interrogating media constructions of black women, in particular, via their (non)presence in visual and dialogic narratives. Ms. Gilbert’s dissertation project consults narratives of black women on the ground to explore the meaning of the Saints’ Super Bowl success to the post-Katrina recovery of New Orleans. Ms. Gilbert is not only a native of New Orleans, Louisiana (USA)—she proclaims that she will forever be “proud to call it home.”

Dorothea Löbbermann

At Home in the City: Homelessness and Place in Contemporary American Fiction

“No one was more at home in L.A. than this [homeless] man.”

When in the 1980s, activists launched the term “homelessness” in order to attract the public’s attention for a growing number of people living on US American streets, they turned the spotlight not only on the housing crisis, but also on the ideological power of the concept of home. Taking my cue from the quotation above of Karen Tei Yamashita’s 1997 novel *Tropic of Orange*, I propose to analyze images of the relationship of home and homelessness as they have been produced in North American novels since the 1990s. While envisioning homelessness, I argue, the texts under consideration all negotiate concepts of urban space and of place in general. If, as Doreen Massey holds, “it has in principle always been difficult [...] to distinguish the inside of a place from the outside,” if “it is precisely the outside within which helps to construct the specificity of place,” then the mutual construction of home and homelessness echoes the characteristics of place. Indeed, it is the underlying interest in the concept of place in contemporary literature that has led to the figurations of homelessness that I want to examine in my contribution, such as the (clichéd) paradox in the motto above, or the images of homeless heterotopias in *The Caveman’s Valentine* (George Dawes Green) and *This Side of Brightness* (Column McCann), places that are imagined as homeless homes.

Biography

Dorothea Löbbermann, Ph.D. (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), has previously worked with Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung and Technische Universität, Berlin. For her current research on Figurations of Homelessness, she spent seven months as a Fulbright scholar at the Graduate Center, CUNY. Her book publications are *Memories of Harlem: Fiktionale (Re)Konstruktionen eines Mythos der zwanziger Jahre* (2002), *Other Modernisms in an Age of*

Globalization, co-edited with D. Kadir (2002), and *Cinematographies: Visual Discourses and Textual Strategies in 1990s New York City*, co-edited with G. H. Lenz and K. H. Magister (2006).

Dustin Breitenwischer

“Whether Anybody Was Home Meant Everything to a House”. Family, Networks, and the Idyllic Chronotope in Jonathan Franzen’s *The Corrections*

Jonathan Franzen’s 2001 novel *The Corrections* juxtaposes the neoliberal paradigm of global networking with the vanishing romance of the idyllic American home. The novel stages the story of the Lambert family as an interconnection of individual and social crises to foreground the decay of the family home within the realm of an uncontrollably growing marketplace. Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of the idyllic chronotope I will show that the idyll in *The Corrections* is a micro-world whose self-sufficiency is increasingly challenged by the world surrounding it. The five main characters and their differently accentuated need for socioeconomic selflocalization in the life-fashioning logic of neoliberalism are thus embedded in the ridiculed depiction of America as the home of quasi-Imperial new market networks. *The Corrections* epitomizes the moments in which the fabric of the family loses its density and formerly stable hierarchies dissolve, and in which the socioeconomic narrative of globalization produces more permeable inter-subjective networks. By linking this dissolution to the allegorical struggle between parents and children—between those who stay and those who leave in the ambivalent quest to finally (or, never) come home—, *The Corrections* depicts the formerly self-sustaining ‘space-time’ of the idyll as a nostalgic, but mentally unsustainable mode of self-sufficiency, and as the very place that constantly feeds the urge for expansive imaginary reemplacement.

Biography

Dustin Breitenwischer is a doctoral candidate in Literary Studies at Freie Universität Berlin. In his dissertation *The Narrative of Networking* (working title), he uses a comparative analysis to discuss poetic self-extension and immanent aesthetics as narrative paradigms of modernity. He studied North American Studies and German Literature at Freie Universität and the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, and graduated in 2010. In his Magister thesis, he analyzed the aesthetization of neoliberal space in contemporary American novels. He is currently holding a scholarship from the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes.

LUNCH AND SNACK SUGGESTIONS IN DAHLEM

Luise

Restaurant and Beer Garden

Königin-Luise –Str. 40-42

14195 Berlin

Piaggio

Italian Restaurant

Königin-Luise –Str. 44

14195 Berlin

Seminaris Campus Hotel

Business Lunches

Takustr. 39

14195 Berlin

Eßkultur (in the basement of the Museum Dahlem)

Museum Café/Lunches and Snacks

Lansstr. 8

14195 Berlin

Mensa FU II

Student Cafeteria

Otto-von-Simson-Str. 26

14195 Berlin

Baci's

Coffee, Bagels, Soups

Königin-Luise-Str. 39

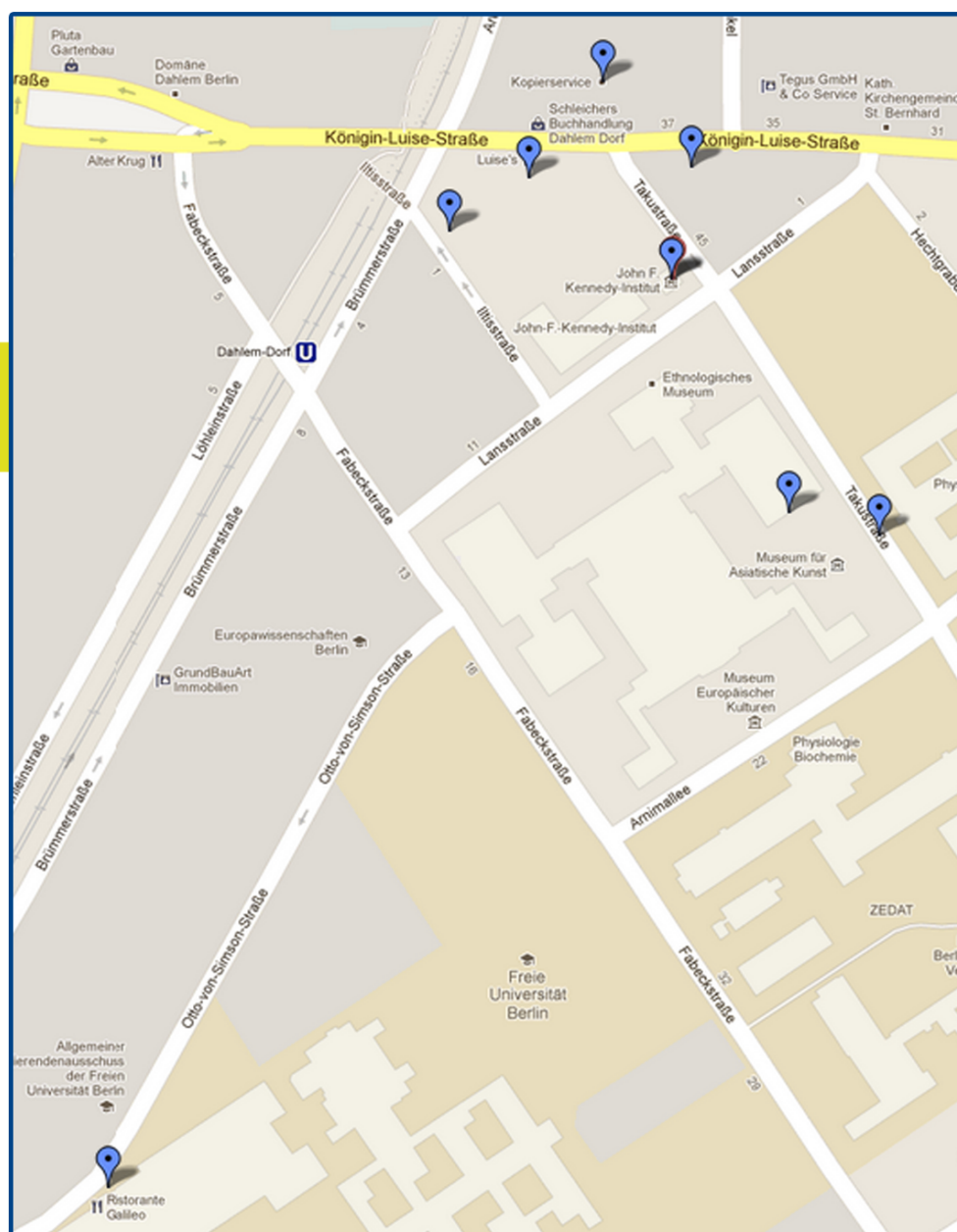
14195 Berlin

Café & Bäckerei Kornfeld

Coffee, Bakery

Königin-Luise-Str. 38

14195 Berlin



John F. Kennedy Institute
Lansstraße 7 – 9
14195 Berlin

