

SCHOOL OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES  
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EMBERI ERŐFORRÁS  
TÁMOGATÁSKEZELŐ

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# Understanding America in a Time of Change

**HAAS**  
CONFERENCE

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**ABSTRACTS**

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# Abstracts

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BALOGH MÁTÉ GERGELY

## **The Hungarian State Security's Perception of the American Political System**

The American political system held a prominent place among the topics during the preparation of Hungarian intelligence officers during the Cold War. This paper will review how the image of American politics in the preparation materials of the Hungarian intelligence changed from the 1960s, the reorganization of Hungarian intelligence after the Revolution of 1956, until the 1980s. In the early textbooks that are translations of Soviet originals, the tone is extremely antagonistic, American politics is perceived through the lens of the communist ideology, and there are numerous obvious factual mistakes. Whereas the later works also contain mistakes, the tone of the books is not as combative, and the ideological influence becomes less pervasive. The selection of issues, political personalities, and events the authors of the materials deemed important enough to be presented and discussed is also telling about how the focus of the Hungarian intelligence shifted throughout the period. As the relationship between the two blocks and the two countries was improving and their scope was widening, there was an increasing need for a more detailed, balanced, less ideological presentation of the political life of the United States. At the same time, the basic situation remained unchanged: Hungary was still a member of the Soviet block, and the United States remained a target for the Hungarian state security organizations until the end of the communist period.

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MICHAELA BECK

## **Containing Plurality in the U.S. Today: 'We' Narration and the Voice of the Middle-Class in 21st-Century American Novels**

Throughout the last two decades, a growing number of American writers have experimented with the first-person plural, or 'we' voice in their texts, a phenomenon which literary research has begun to focus on as well (cf. Vesela 2012; Maxey 2015; Costello 2017). This paper aims to contribute to this incipient discussion by examining the poetics and politics of the 'we' narrator in recent American novels in particular. In this context, it proposes that the increased use of this narrator is largely associated with the voice of the U.S. middle class and its negotiation of increasing socio-economic disparity and anxieties about “ever more diverse definitions of American cultural identity” (Tillet 227) in the 21st century. To follow this argument, this paper discusses two texts, Anne Valente's *Our Hearts Will Burn Us Down* (2016) and Joshua Ferris's *Then We Came to the End* (2006). In combining rhetorical and cognitive approaches to 'we' narration and research on cultural representations of the American middle class, this paper aims to explicate the links between the novels' negotiation of this social stratum in the 21st century and their utilization of the 'we' narrator: being each narrated by a disintegrating middle-class community, the texts reference a perceived crisis of this socio-economic group, and they further employ the dynamics of the 'we' narrator to mirror this image on their discursive level. Further, the texts universalize this implied crisis of the middle class by identifying their narrative/-ing communities with American society at large. Thus, it is suggested, the 'we' narrator in these novels does not necessarily give itself expression to the present pluralization of concepts of American national identity, but it rather speaks to the middle class's persevering claims for economic, political, and cultural dominance in response to this current in the United States of the 21st-Century.

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BENCZIK VERA

### **Virgin Warrior: The Iconography of the Strong Female Lead in Contemporary SF/F Films**

Science fiction and fantasy films during the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century largely follow the patriarchal script of the classic male quest narrative which assigns males leads as the agents of the narrative, while female characters are relegated to the role the object of desire, or sidekick at the best. There are some notable exceptions like the *Alien* franchise, *Star Wars*' subversive take on the princess archetype, or the Sarah Connor of the second Terminator film, but given the large body of films . The end of the 1990s, and the first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century brought significant change: Katniss Everdeen (*The Hunger Games*), Wonder Woman/Diana Prince (*Wonder Woman* and the DC film universe), Amidala and Ray (*Star Wars* franchise), Black Widow and Captain Marvel (MCU), or Michael Burnham (*Star Trek: Discovery*) are all strong female leads celebrating female agency and independence in blockbuster sf franchises. One interesting characteristic many of these characters seem to share is that they conform to the archetype of the virgin warrior: sexuality seems to be fully sidetracked, and the romantic story arc is often negated wholly or interrupted during the course of the narrative. This poses certain questions the present paper will try to address: Does the strong female lead character need to be de-sexualized/de-feminized in order to be able to function in sf/f narratives? Or does the heteronormative patriarchal script rely so much on the (successful) romance that a narrative featuring a female protagonist would inevitably endanger its subversive take on it?

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BODNÁR ÁGNES

### **Manifestations of Intersubjectivity in Indian Captivity Narratives**

The purpose of my presentation is to explore the concept of intersubjectivity discernible in Indian captivity narratives.

Captivity narratives were among the first frontier writings telling the stories of white settlers abducted by Native Americans responding to Anglo encroachment threatening indigenous life and culture. The captives were mostly women compelled to transgress racial and cultural boundaries. The main objective of their accounts was to define their own lost identities while meeting the Other in the wilderness. Following a personal trauma at the beginning of their confinement, some captives were open to perceive the world from the perspective of the Other thus fulfilling a precondition for ethical relations between whites and Native Americans.

While prior to the Amerindian attack female captives possessed partial subject status, their forcible removal from their home community led first to the elimination, then the recovery of their subjectivity. Furthermore, the captivity narrative or by extension autobiography in itself is a self-referential and intersubjective genre presupposing a covert cooperation between writer and reader. Thus, said documents provide fruitful examples both for antagonistic and affective intersubjectivity implying domination or objectification and empathy or embodiment respectively. Intersubjective theories offer an excellent possibility to examine the development of the captives' self and their relation towards the Other, while describing how they achieved agency. Relying on Merleau-Ponty's model I attempt to realize a two-fold research objective as I analyze selected documents of confinement by the help of intersubjective theories and retrace the milestones of the respective agency building processes.

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BOLLOBÁS ENIKŐ

**Triangular Structures of Desire in American Literature**

Triangular structures occur quite frequently in literature: one loves two, or two love one, simultaneously or consecutively. This seemingly simple formula reveals unexpected variations and complexities when exposed to theoretical scrutiny. In an attempt to explore their variability and complexity, I place the triangular structures in a wider theoretical and comparative literary context. I examine texts disclosing both typical and atypical structures, and study them in an interpretive space framed by theories of patriarchy and theories of intersubjectivity, describing triangular structures of desire found in the works of some American and European authors (Henry James, D. H. Lawrence, Stefan Zweig, Sándor Márai, Carson McCullers, and Péter Nádas).

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BÜLGÖZDI IMOLA

**Freedom-fighters of the Future: Net Neutrality in Ernest Cline's *Ready Player One***

Set in a dystopian not-too-distant future, Ernest Cline's young adult novel *Ready Player One* (2011) revolves around one of the most pressing issues any information society has to face: the freedom of the Internet. Following global regression due to the energy crisis, the majority of the world's population retreats to a multiplayer online game, OASIS, which by the 2040s turns into a "globally networked virtual reality," providing its users with the perfect mediated platform for day-to-day human interaction, be it education, business, or leisure.

Cline's novel follows a traditional quest pattern and operates with typical cyberpunk elements, but his protagonist is not the Gibsonian console cowboy: the 1980s pop culture geek is raised on a pedestal and becomes worthy adversary of the major global internet provider. This presentation will focus on how the novel and its film adaptation (*Ready Player One*, dir. Steven Spielberg, 2018 March) thematise the clash between the individual's rights, freedoms, and interests and the surveillance and control entailed by corporate monopoly of information. What makes Cline's work remarkable, on the one hand, is the insight he gives into the power of fandoms and their role in understanding our relationship with the mediated world (Gray, Harrington, Sandvoss, 2007), including the challenges of identity construction in the Digital Era. On the other hand, the novel also explores the consequences of immersion in VR, another key question in the human-technology relationship, by embedding the quest for legal control over the OASIS into a giant video game, thus experimenting with a possible scenario for the partial closure of the gap between consensus reality and VR.

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CRISTIAN RÉKA MÓNKA

**Mis/Matched Journeys Into Night: Times of Change and the Cultural Construction of Aging in *Our Souls at Night* and in *Cas and Dylan***

The presentation will deal with cultural narratives involving longevity and ageing in two North American movies presented in the past five years: the US-produced *Our Souls at Night* (2017, directed by Ritesh Batra, featuring Jane Fonda and Robert Redford) and the Canadian-made *Cas and Dylan* (2013, directed by Jason Priestley, featuring Richard Dreyfuss and Tatiana Maslany) in order to investigate the interplay between change and continuity as markers of life course identities. I will also look into the ways in which the (self-)representation of senior citizens in these visual narratives, who are actually the North American baby boomers generation, is challenging contemporary cultural myths of aging through various acts of performativity.

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CZEGLÉDI SÁNDOR  
**Language and the Federal Congress: Attitudes, Policies and Practices  
between 1789 and 1815**

The present paper examines the language-related attitudes, policies and ideologies as reflected in the written records of the US Federal Congress from 1789 until roughly the end of the “Second War of Independence” in 1815. The investigation focuses on the legislative activities of the first thirteen Congresses as recorded in the *House Journal*; the *Senate Journal*; the *Senate Executive Journal*; *Maclay’s Journal*; and the *Annals of Congress*. Special attention is paid to the role of the English language, minority languages (whether indigenous or immigrant), and foreign languages in the nation-building process. The classification and analytical scheme employed in this analysis mostly relies on the relevant works of Anderson (6-11); Wiley (21-22); and Ruiz (19-28). Finally, the results are compared and contrasted with the findings of a previous study that examined the founding documents of the United States from a similar perspective.

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CSATÓ PÉTER  
**The President’s Fool, or Don Rickles Tells It Like It is**

Don Rickles, who passed away last year at the age of ninety, became a true icon of showbiz comedy in the United States. He distinguished himself by his fast-paced and poignant standup gigs where he earned the laughs by throwing slights and insults at audiences (often individual members). His claim to nationwide fame, however, were his appearances in celebrity roast shows on television, in which he deployed his unique talents with fellow-comedians, movie stars, and sometimes politicians. His humor had none of the intellectual flair of the upcoming generation of standup comedians such as George Carlin or Louis C.K., but his brash, oftentimes improvisatory innuendos are meant to function as truth-claims of relentless sincerity, which does prefigure the acts of his younger and more sophisticated colleagues. My presentation will focus on Rickles’s appearance at Ronald Reagan’s second presidential inauguration in January, 1985. In his five-minute performance, he administers his proprietary jabs to an apparently amused Reagan as well as to his wife and high-ranking members of his prospective cabinet. Thus, Rickles’s role can be familiar from Shakespeare’s representations of the king’s fool, who is the only one in court permitted to overstep the boundaries of socially approved verbal decorum, and make claims the truth of which is apparent to everyone (hence the laughs), but none will risk their rank, social status, or even life by formulating such claims themselves. The question which I wish to investigate is: what is the ethical and epistemological status of “truths” uttered by the “fool,”? In principle, such utterances satisfy both the moral obligation of truth-telling, as well as the epistemologically privileged criteria of truthfulness, yet the only criterion of their permissibility is that the act of uttering them should have no ethical, epistemological, or political consequences. This contradiction poses a challenge to the truth-conceptions of moral philosophers and epistemologists, which I am going to demonstrate by examining the relevant conceptions of two distinguished American philosophers respectively: Harry G. Frankfurt and Bernard Williams.

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CSEH DÁNIEL  
**Japanese Americans and the “Power of Words”: The Redress Movement and the  
Language of Internment**

Words can obscure or clarify, as in the case of the euphemistic language of the internment of Japanese Americans (1942-1945), which dominated the literature until the nationwide redress movement of the 1970s and 1980s. Subsequent to the surprise air assault on Pearl Harbor President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, and authorized the forced removal and incarceration of people of Japanese ancestry. The last incarceration camp, Tule Lake Segregation Center, closed its gates on March 20, 1946, but it took over four decades for the Japanese American community to attain legislative and judicial redress. The presentation intends to discuss the legislative aspect of the redress from the early Evacuations Claims Act of 1948 to the 1983 *Personal Justice Denied* report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. The battle for redress also had judicial ramifications due to the Japanese American coram nobis cases of the 1980s, the legal challenges to overturn the wartime convictions of Fred Korematsu, Minoru Yasui, and Gordon Hirabayashi. Furthermore, the lecture will also tackle the terminology used by the United States government to justify its home front policy. The birth of the nationwide redress movement entailed the revision of the euphemistic language that had previously been used to obscure the war era treatment of persons of Japanese descent. The pinnacle of the redress movement was the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which called for an official presidential apology and reparations in the amount of \$20,000 for the survivors. Nonetheless, the revision of the history and language of the internment period is still ongoing, since many Americans still use the government advocated terminology.

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CSORBA ESZTER

### **The Impact of Media Coverage on History: Rise and Fall of Richard Nixon**

Richard Nixon was famous for many things on a political level; however, he was also prominent figure when it comes to the history of media. The research of my paper focuses on those encounters between the media and Richard Nixon that yielded unprecedented milestones in media history. From his time as a vice-presidential candidate speaking to American voters about his financial situation, to being part of the first televised presidential debate, all the way down to his interview with David Frost, the media had a hand in shaping history. For my paper, I used recordings, video tapes, transcripts and photographs to analyze each significant moment, and then I tried to draw a comparison between these and contemporary media to showcase the significant changes that have occurred since. The list of significant game-changing events that Nixon was involved in is longer but sometimes overlooked because books dealing with the history of media rarely go into detail. For that reason the impact of the media was chosen to be observed in this paper through the political career of a president within the political history of the United States.

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DÉNES MÓNIKA

### **Focusing on the maternal body: constructing female (inter)subjectivity in Toni Morrison's novels**

The maternal body and the dependent, separated daughter are recurring topics in Toni Morrison's novels. Beloved in *Beloved*, Pecola Breedlove in *The Bluest Eye* and Florens in *A Mercy* all stand for a loss of an original sense of wholeness. They constitute a vacuum, a need to be completed. They need bodily connections and a feeling of safety which they strive for and achieve in different ways. They use a language that is full of expressions suggesting connectedness and interdependence. The narrative structure of their speech is often elliptic, waiting for the (m)other to make sense of it by filling in the missing parts.

Sethe (in *Beloved*) is unquestionably the most prominent embodied mother character in Morrison's novels. Her body is a script of the history of a slave mother: different parts of her body belong to different Others outside the self. Pecola's mother, Pauline offers her embodiment to the white family she works for: she feels herself at home in her body when she is working as a servant in a nice uniform in a nice house. In the case of *A Mercy* and Florens, it is rather the unappeasable hunger for and lack of the motherly body and physical intimacy that appears in the novel than the embodied mother. Florens remembers the mother figure repudiating her again and again, and holding her little brother very close. Her whole narrative (and so her whole life) is built up based on this picture: to be held close and safe by a maternal body instead of being (physically) separated.

Although this type of female bond appears in almost all of Morrison's novels, I chose these three (*Beloved*, *A Mercy*, *The Bluest Eye*) as a representative to show the main characteristics of this phenomenon.

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FEDERMAYER ÉVA

### **Reading Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad* (2016) Ecocritically**

A celebrated member of the Hip Hop generation, Colson Whitehead won high popular and critical acclaim with *The Underground Railroad*, his latest book to date, which was published in 2016, its Hungarian translation quickly following suit the following year. In this novel Whitehead apparently dodged Hip Hop's agendas of the post-racial, the alienated and the egotistic, which were ascribed to him and his generation, when opting for a clearly political type of narrative form. It was the slave narrative, indeed, one of the few indigenous American genres, which problematizes the boundaries of the *human* from the perspective of black bondage. My presentation will pick up the core theme of the genre in Whitehead's rendering but relocates it within the context of ecocriticism: I am interested in bringing out Whitehead's figuration of the human and the nonhuman environment, the specific concatenation of the human and the nonhuman that Cora, the female protagonist, captures while riding the underground railroad that literally operates beneath the surface of the ground in the novel's storyworld. When rereading Whitehead, I will probe into his work in the context of *postcolonial ecocriticism* (Huggan Graham-HelenTiffin, 2010) *fugitive humanism* (Lindgren Johnson, 2017) and ownership (of the human and the nonhuman) as *cultural ownership* (Richard L. Shur, 2009). Seeking to realign and weaving together these concepts around my interpretation of *The Underground Railroad*, I hope to discuss this book to suggest its insights into ecological agendas as well as contemporary slavery.

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FEHÉR RÉKA

### **American Pundits**

In today's convoluted media environment there are too many people explaining, presenting, commenting on the news. Some are anchors, political commentators, journalists, "experts" of all sorts, and the most mysterious of them all, pundits. Although several different definitions of pundits exist, there is no general consensus of who and what is a pundit. The term is used to denote people in news media in both a positive and negative sense. Punditry has its roots in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century news environment, a staple of American news that never disappeared even during the technological advances that radically changed the news and how it has been consumed. Today, anyone can, and many times does, give voice to their opinions on events happening both at home and abroad. Along with this trend, today's media environment allows for considerable fluidity in jobs and media platforms. With this in mind, I believe punditry is

a situation, not a specific job title. Anyone can be put, or can choose to be in a situation where their opinion is provided, irrespective of their profession or the importance of their opinion. My aim is to try to describe who pundits are and what their role is in the American news media environment.

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ALEXIS FINET

**Rethinking postcolonialism through Waberi's « realitopia », *Aux Etats-Unis d'Afrique***

Postcolonial studies and theories have emerged and bloomed throughout the end of the twentieth century until now, where we are facing the contemporary challenge of looking at the past and its consequences on the present through a conversational approach rather than historical analysis only. Drawing on Glissant's concept of *relation*, this paper focuses on what the author A. Waberi proposes by looking at how he uses the redefinition of a popular writing genre often seen in duality – *uto-* and *dys-* topos, to an intersection where both sides of the genres meet to create a *third space* allowing to reconsider the relationship between different locations. Following Jacqueline Dutton's 2012 article analyzing Waberi's novel, and while its title, « Flipping the script of Africa's future » suggests an idealistic solution to solve questions within the postcolonial discourse, I argue here that Waberi's strategy in the development of his writing style in his book is somewhat different; rather, his writing seems to affirm a position where the previous dichotomy in representations proposes to reflect on a possible redefinition of borders through culture and identity rather than geography only. Through a close reading of the second part of the text, *A voyage to the heart of the studio*, and its relationship to the ensemble as well as its articulated parts and a myriad of cultural references, this article therefore seeks to identify how themes such as sexuality, art, and psychoanalysis work together to create tensions and releases within these representations, as well as how can the same object be perceived and valued differently according to its environment; and how it all participates in the development of a new way of thinking identity – to shift from a *postcolonial* to a *decolonial* conversation, based here on a cross-reference between Africa and the United States of America.

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FODOR JÚLIA

**Child Pornography: America's Greatest Shame**

In a democracy, it is the individual's right to decide how to conduct his or her life. The only limit on that right is the next person's right to self-determination. But what if the individual is an innocent child who is not versed in distinguishing between harm and pleasure, abuse and true love, shame and self-protection?

Numerous studies have shown that there is a one-to-one correlation between viewing child pornography and becoming a child molester. But we should also look at the questions - how to prevent people from becoming victims and then offenders, and how to bring justice and compensations to the victims?

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FRIEDRICH JUDIT

**Paul Beatty *The Sellout* (2016), The First American Novel to Win the Man Booker Prize**

This year will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the prestigious British literary award, the Man Booker Prize, with now two American authors on the list of winners. Rather than pondering what possessed the trustees of the Man Booker Prize to allow any novel written in English,



published in the UK, to be submitted, thus adding a formidable number of novels to the already large pool for the judges to choose from, this paper would like to explore the nature of *The Sellout*, the first American novel to win. Beatty's novel was hailed as a comic masterpiece. This paper will discuss how comedy works in this novel; how the book fits the profile of the Man Booker Prize; and how the work reads against the tradition of the English comic novel. *The Sellout* starts out with lines much like standup comedy, delivered in a deadpan voice yet featuring references to the latest social and intellectual theories. The topic is the silent erasure of a predominantly black community in the greater Los Angeles area, and its increasingly outrageous, anachronistic and politically incorrect resuscitation. The novel creates an eerie feeling of being set in a vast emptiness, yet indicates a recognizable location in the congested Los Angeles area, moving between desperate satire and magic realism, with an intellectual freedom created by the level acceptance and unflinching description of the cognitive dissonances of the world depicted. The complex sentences and the comic-relief punch lines deliver a story that addresses one of the problems in multiethnic USA that continue to be impossible to solve, are probably inappropriate to discuss in almost any context, including the present, but are even more detrimental to ignore.

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GLANT TIBOR

**“PACKAGING DIFFICULTIES”: A FORGOTTEN ORSZÁGH STORY FROM 1965**

To complement our HAAS 25 session at the conference, in this paper I recall a forgotten story about Professor László Országh, the founder of American Studies in Hungary. In 1965, Országh spent several months in the US on a Ford grant to work on a survey of American literature for Hungarian audiences. As he was returning in the summer, he met Ed Alexander, the freshly appointed PAO to Budapest, and they compiled an American Studies reference library of 100 volumes for Országh's home institution, Lajos Kossuth University, Debrecen. The books promptly arrived in Hungary in the diplomatic pouch by August, but Communist red tape delayed their delivery, seemingly indefinitely. Serving as both press secretary and cultural affairs officer, Alexander pushed both the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Institute of Cultural Affairs (KKI) to deliver the books. Resistance was so resilient that Secretary of State Dean Rusk suggested aborting the whole project (with the books already in Hungary), but Alexander prevailed. KKI cited “packaging difficulties” among its many excuses to delay, but the books finally arrived in Debrecen in November 1965. Alexander was not allowed to travel to the Second City to deliver books, nor was the USIA/USIS authorized to stamp the books as their gift. Országh, however, was granted permission to thank Alexander in writing. All this took place in the 1956-67 period, when American-Hungarian diplomatic and cultural relations began to thaw, some ten years after 1956.

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HEGYI PÁL

**“Based on a True Story”: Oscillating Tales of the Real Simulacra**

Postmodernism as an answer to the exhausted possibilities of representational naivety in former epistemes seems to have become exhausted in its turn, thus, generating a new demand for 'good old storytelling'. In such newly coined labels as post-postmodernism, remodernism, new sincerity, new realism a self-conscious aesthetic incentive to return to grand narratives is manifestly detectable. The allure of 'true stories', stories that *claim* they are *made* singular by a collision of ontological and epistemological aspects, diegetic and mimetic functions, extralingual and intralingual referents into one, self-identical unity, has been under theoretical

scrutiny throughout the history of literature and culture. The fact that the blurring line between fiction and nonfiction lends itself to the emergence of, for example, the hybrid genre of *faction* in a so called post-factual world is one of the many indicators that the trauma of representation and meaning production once again presents itself as a determining characteristic in poetics long *after theory* (Terry Eagleton). This paper will zoom in on innovative contemporary conformations in poetics showcasing contemporary instances from both literature and cinematography to offer insights into how a compulsive return to representational naivety cannot be made possible without probing into yet uncharted territories of storytelling.

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HORTOBÁGYI ILDIKÓ

***Reading new e-voices! Negotiating Contextual and Transnational Identity in CMC  
Platforms related to the Americas***

In a new world where people often negotiate their identities along contextual and environmental lines, medialects, as media bound varieties of language used in computer mediated communication (CMC), offer sound platforms for individuals to access information from formerly scarcely known regions, discover affiliation and allegiance with the conveyed messages. The participatory media foster the development of public voices that are transmitting multiple identities, kinship and cultural heritage. Responding to the scope of the conference, the paper aims to reveal how the Americas in general, the U.S., Canada and several Latin American nations in particular, strive to establish a balanced presence in the news.

Drawing on recent literature and using a comparative approach, the paper investigates what type of content related to the Americas is highlighted in the analyzed media outlets, and how their related social network platforms (Facebook, Twitter and online magazine comment area) provide a terrain open to debates that prove the maintenance of contextual and transnational identities in tackling timely societal issues. Furthermore, it endeavors to present how private opinions have been transformed into public voices in the wake of a changing paradigm in U.S. relationship to the rest of the Americas, and whether people are negotiating their acknowledged and asserted identity depending on the political message sent by the articles on which they comment. The new generation of communication links allow discursive narratives in and among the digital eco-systems to convey solidarity, multiple national identity irrespective geographical provenance.

As media studies are present in a variety of teaching and academic contexts, the findings of this paper can help instructors design authentic multi- and interdisciplinary teaching material in American Studies.

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KARÁCSONY ORSOLYA

***Being a Rat in a Maze- The Psychological and Sociopolitical Reading of *Shutter Island****

My presentation focuses on how four major psychological concepts formulated by Sigmund Freud, namely the concept of the uncanny, the process of repression and melancholia as well as the figure of the double, are represented in Martin Scorsese's mind-bending movie, *Shutter Island* (2010), and how the director takes advantage of them to make a sociopolitical interpretation of the film possible. These psychological phenomena are co-existent and intermingled within the story and Scorsese skillfully combines them with the generic characteristics of suspense thrillers, such as nerve-wrecking non-diegetic music and the concealment of vital visual and narrative information, in order to create the gloomy and eerie

atmosphere in which the protagonist's mental breakdown gradually takes place. Since the mental institute on Shutter Island is separated from the rest of civilization, the historical background should really function as a background for the action, yet it comes to the fore for two reasons. First, the protagonist Teddy is an ex-soldier from WW2 suffering from hallucinations and nightmares as a result of the posttraumatic shock syndrome, and thus he becomes a representative of the "doomed men" who can be familiar from film noir. Second, the mysterious German doctor reminds Teddy of the Nazis on the one hand, and his character can be seen as the monstrous mastermind behind secret Communist human experiments on the other. However, since Scorsese reaches back to the traditions of Gothic fiction to portray the island itself, the only thing that is certain about the institute is that everything is ambiguous. As Teddy is struggling to maintain and/or regain his sanity while experiencing all the problems mentioned above, his inner journey as well as his deeper and deeper penetration into the realm of the island make multiple readings of the film equally plausible - with or without the sociopolitical aspect. In my presentation I concentrate on the former.

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HIMA KALESH

### **Tracing African American Childhood and its Literary Representations**

Steven Mintz, a renowned historian in his seminal work 'Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood' meticulously traces the pattern and themes of American Childhood. According to Mintz, for more than three centuries Americans have believed that children are less respectful, knowledgeable, more alienated, sexually promiscuous and violent, than adults. Today adults fear that children are growing up too fast and losing their innocence too early. Childhood has never been insulated from the pressures and demands of the surrounding society, and each generation of children has had to struggle with the social, political, economic restraints of its own historical age and place. The history of children is often treated as a marginal subject as children are scantily obvious historical actors. They leave very few historical sources and their lack of agency makes them less visible than other social groups.

African American childhood was a world apart from the ordinary American childhood. It could still be seen as obviously less privileged compared to their white counterparts' childhood. Toni Morrison, the Nobel laureate and widely read author, has told and retold us about the racial prejudice that exists in the United States with steadiness of rage and compassion through her novels. A probe on her novels would show us her focus on how something as grotesque as the demonization of an entire race could take root inside the most delicate and vulnerable member of society, i.e., a child. Many of her works, namely, 'The Bluest Eye', 'Beloved', 'Sula', 'A Mercy', 'God Help the Child', 'Paradise', 'Jazz', 'Home', explores the social and domestic aggression that could cause a child to literally fall apart. The different perception and treatment of African American children has deep historical roots in the United States.

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KÁLLAY G. KATALIN

### **Sites and Sights of Hemingway's "Indian Camp"**

In my paper, I wish to present how the responses to a well-known American story, Hemingway's "Indian Camp", have changed over the past twenty-five years in different university classrooms with various audiences, based on my experience of teaching the text in Budapest to Hungarian students, in Santa Cruz, California to American students and in Budapest as well as in Vienna to visiting American students. The varieties of interpretation

challenge the notion of being "American" and give voice to questions that remain unchanged and alarmingly alive.

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KÓNYI JUDIT

### **Emily Dickinson and Changing Publication Practices**

As a consequence of the digital advances of the 21st century, publication practices have undergone significant changes which have influenced the reception of Emily Dickinson's poetry.

For Dickinson, who refused to publish her work during her lifetime, publication was synonymous to print, which she rejected as the commercialization of literature. Presumably, she chose to distribute her poems in manuscript form as she seems to have invented her own, private form of publication with her home-made collections. Since her death her poetry has been published mostly in print editions in spite of the fact that her variants for alternate readings as well as her punctuation, capitalization, line and stanza divisions suggest a resistance to the medium of traditional print. The first facsimile edition of her fascicles and unsewn sets, *The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson*, edited by R.W. Franklin, was published in 1981. This is the first publication that offers a reading experience similar to that of the manuscripts. An important medium that offers an insight into Dickinson's work as she intended it is The Emily Dickinson Archive, which provides open access to the images of the surviving manuscripts. A more recent edition of 2013, *The Gorgeous Nothings* presents 52 poems as they were originally written on used envelopes. With the access to the poems in manuscript form appearing on the reproduction of the original page and material, it appears that Dickinson has finally achieved her objective concerning the publication of her poetry.

Owing to the technological changes of our times, her work did not only find its way back to her chosen medium but she also got recognized as a visual poet creating literary texts as well as artefacts.

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KORCOK MIKLÓS

### **George R.R. Martin's Strategy of Killing Characters in his Fantasy Saga *A Song of Ice and Fire***

This paper analyzes the fantasy genre and its subgenres and deals with the fantasy saga *The Song of Ice and Fire*. The first section examines the fantasy genre itself and tries to define the notion. The following section provides a brief introduction of the most popular representatives of the fantasy genre and their influence on the following works. The third section presents George R.R. Martin and his saga *The Song of Ice and Fire* and shows how the author reinterpreted the genre of fantasy. The section investigates after the subgenres that created the novel series and made it to a melting pot of many genres. The last section includes a brief summary of the plot and the most important characters of the saga. The section examines the phenomenon that the author of the novels kills a lot of main character unexpectedly.

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KOVÁCS ÁGNES ZSÓFIA

### **Edith Wharton's Italian Journeys**

Edith Wharton's *Italian Backgrounds* (1904) and *Italian Villas* (1905) rely on the example of the Victorian critic, John Ruskin. Ruskin "was indubitably the first to interpret the decline of art and taste as the sign of general cultural crisis, and to express the basic, and even today not

sufficiently appreciated, principle that the conditions under which men live must first be changed, if their sense of beauty and their comprehension of art are to be awakened . . .” (Hauser, 1952). In the appreciation of architecture and painting, Ruskin encouraged precise observation of picturesque scenes in order to awaken a sense of beauty in the viewer. He pursued this project also when he wrote about Italian architecture in his *Stones of Venice* (1851-3), in its travelers’ edition (1879), and in *Mornings in Florence* (1881). Ruskin’s awareness of cultural crisis and his cherished way of seeing were embraced and enhanced by Wharton both in her fiction and nonfiction. Focusing specifically on Wharton’s two travel texts on Italy, the paper surveys the functions of precise observation for Wharton. She picks out little known but picturesque buildings along with their popular counterparts, she looks for historical reasons both behind actual functional uses of space and behind structural differences of similar buildings from different ages, and she aims at communicating the aesthetic experience of observing architecture to awaken a connection between viewer and the viewed. Wharton maps out not only how Italian architects of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance used space but also how their colleagues from the Baroque thought of the functional use of space. The paper claims that Wharton’s descriptions of architectural uses of space convey a sense of historical connection that will trigger the viewer’s understanding and enjoyment of art.

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KÖKÉNY ANDREA

**Understanding America in a Time of Change—The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and its consequences**

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed on February 2, 1848, ended the U.S.–Mexican War of 1846–1848. The war broke out in the wake of the annexation of Texas into the United States in 1845 and ended with American military victory. In the Peace Treaty, Mexico had to cede not only Texas, but also what is today the American Southwest (the present-day states of California, Nevada, and Utah, and parts of New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado)—altogether 2.4 million square kilometers. Together with the region acquired in the Pacific Northwest in the Oregon Treaty of 1846, the territory of the United States had grown by sixty-four percent in two years. As a result, there was a major shift in the geopolitical relations of the American continent.

In my paper I propose to discuss some of the reasons and some of the consequences of the outcome of the war. The focus, on the one hand, will be on its effects on inter-American relations and the position of the United States in the world, on the other hand, on the social aspects and the changing ethnic landscape in the borderland region. There will also be a brief discussion of how the war was viewed by its contemporaries and how it has been interpreted in American and Mexican historiography, and how it affected the history and the bilateral relations of the two countries.

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KÖVECSES ZOLTÁN

**Theorizing the spread of American English metaphorical idioms**

Given the large-scale borrowing of metaphorical idioms from one (variety of) language into another, several important theoretical questions arise as regards the process. I discuss three of these in the talk.

It is well-known that many metaphor-based idioms originated in American English and spread to other varieties of English, such as British English. American metaphorical expressions that, to some degree at least, became a part of British English include *hit the panic button*, *kill time*,

*kill a bottle, kick someone upstairs, shoot a movie, go places, grab a bite (to eat), split the scene, hit a roadblock, spinning your wheels, push up the daisies,* and many similar ones. Two questions arise in connection with such idioms: **(1) Why did they emerge in American English, and not in some other variant of English? (2) Why were many of them so easily comprehended (and accepted) by speakers of other dialects of English, such as British English?**

It is also known that many American idioms appeared in Hungarian in the form of, mostly, mirror translations. They include *a (blonde) bombshell* (bombanő, bombázó, szőke bombázó, szexbomba), *a lame duck* (béna/sánta kacska), *a level playing field* (kb. nem lejt a pálya), *my bad* (az én saram/hibám), *shoot oneself in the foot* (lábon lövi magát), and so on. With some other expressions, it is difficult to establish the origin of the expression or its specificity to a particular variety of English. One such case is *push things/sy/sg too far* (túltol, túltolja a biciklit, túlmegy minden határon, túlzásba visz). Hungarians have apparently comprehended these expressions naturally and with ease, and hence they have adopted them into the language as if their own. This raises the third question: **(3) How can we explain the cognitive ease with which speakers of Hungarian comprehended these expressions?**

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KRAUSZ KATINKA

#### **Photographs and Authorship in Margaret Atwood's *The Blind Assassin***

This paper analyses the connection between photographs and memory, and through them, the notion of authorship in Margaret Atwood's *The Blind Assassin*. After a brief introduction of a number of theories on the cultural perception of photographs, the analysis brings up the problems concerning the assumed connection between photographs and memory, the nature of memories, including constructed memories, too. The main body of the analysis discusses the relationship of Iris Griffen Chase to photographs of her family, which reveals her relationship to memories of her family and her past, too. Besides, the paper analyses Iris's way of constructing her past with the help of the ekphrastic descriptions, by which she introduces the photographs during the composition of her memoir. It is also discussed whether the narration of Iris is reliable, and what kinds of techniques she uses to influence and guide the reader in order to create a seemingly authentic and coherent narrative.

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LÉNÁRT ANDRÁS

#### **Fear vs. Facts: Donald Trump's Presidency from the Latin American Perspective**

The United States of America and Latin America have a turbulent past. According to the turn of events throughout the centuries and decades, the Latin American region played both important (during the Cold War) and less relevant roles (from the 1990's) in the formation of the US foreign policy. Latin American politicians' and societies' approach towards the North American "giant" has always depended on the level of cooperation, political sympathy and the American president's willingness to intervene in Latin American affairs. In the 21st century, however, especially after 9/11, Latin America was relegated to the background, as the US State Department focused primarily on other regions. President Barack Obama made efforts to shift the balance, one of his most important achievements was the resumption of the dialogue with Raul Castro's Cuba. Donald Trump's attitude towards Latin America, for the moment, remains ambiguous. Before and right after his election, he expressed plans that alarmed Central and South America, and also the Caribbean region, but only a few of these promises have come into force up to this point. The aim of my paper is to describe the Latin American countries' concerns, expectations and their own image on the United States, as well as to

oppose the fears to the facts. My main sources are Latin American newspaper articles, public-opinion polls, and interviews with politicians and analysts.

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LÉNÁRT-MUSZKA ZSUZSANNA

**The Black Maternal Body in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Politics of Media Representation**

The presentation is concerned with the ongoing cultural shift in the representation of the black maternal body in contemporary media and popular culture. When nude photos of pregnant Demi Moore appeared on the cover of *Vanity Fair* magazine in 1991, the ensuing scandal would have undoubtedly been even bigger if Moore were African American since depictions of non-white pregnant women were thought to be anything but glamorous. The black female body has been animalized, exoticized, depicted as being subhuman, as well as subfeminine and degendered. However, in the past few years, the pregnant and postpartum bodies of non-white superstars such as Beyoncé, Kelly Rowland, Kerry Washington, and Serena Williams have been proudly shown and celebrated both in public and on social media. These depictions, whether eroticized or drawing on religious or classical iconography, are essential in resisting hierarchical arrangements that inscribe white privilege and posit whiteness as a natural, default category. They shift the gaze of white mainstream culture by normalizing the black maternal body. I argue that through a uniquely 21<sup>st</sup>-century phenomenon, these celebrities put the black body on a pedestal by making their public appearances and social media posts an integral part of their own, hypermediated narrative, thereby reappropriating control over the representations of their bodies. Along with images of black women having an abortion, being in labor, or suffering from postpartum depression in TV shows created by and starring people of color, such as *Scandal*, *Empire*, or *Black-ish*, these subversive performances of motherhood shed light on the cultural neuroses and stereotypes surrounding gender and race, thereby also playing a part in identity politics.

The presentation will trace the evolution of these phenomena relying on the idea of oppositional gaze by bell hooks, and on the theories of Denene Millner and Lynn O'Brien Hallstein regarding the racialized media representations of black motherhoods.

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LIMPÁR ILDIKÓ

**“What's in a name?”: Communication through Names in HBO's *Westworld***

*Westworld* (2016), HBO's highly acclaimed television series, is set in a future where technology offers limitless possibilities to create whatever man wishes for: spaces that seem natural, androids that gives us the illusion of a “real” society—and even a historical period, that is, the segment of (an imagined) past. The present paper examines how names used in the show help to get oriented in this futuristic world, where the dream is connected to cultural history. Accordingly, the name *Westworld* will briefly be analyzed in the context of the historical Wild West; but more importantly, the names of the creators will be shown to appear as clues to interpreting various layers of the story line, suggesting that Arnold, Bernard, and Robert Ford are linked to each other and to the major themes of the TV-series by the means of their names, evoking various aspects of the communal dream that the theme park *Westworld* represents.

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PATRICIA A. LOBO

## **Reframing the New *Mestiza*: identity politics and social commitment in Chicana Border Art**

Since the mid-1970s, Chicana feminist art has been a key element in the evolution of Chicana self-awareness and community building, insofar as artists have sought to denounce their triple oppression, empowering other Chicanas to overcome the limitations imposed on them by virtue of their class, gender and ethnicity. These artists have become producers of visual education, reconstructing and clarifying cultural identity to those who do not access Chicana literary texts.

In 1987, Anzaldúa's path-breaking *Borderlands/ La Frontera: The New Mestiza* provided a new feminist epistemology based on the experience of this minority group, being particularly accurate in exposing sexism, racism and classism endured by Chicana women. Its innovative concepts have rebuilt and strengthened Chicana's self-definition and led their self-determination into a more cohesive female coalition.

This proposal is an interdisciplinary approach that focuses on parallels between representations of gender and ethnicity in Chicana feminist art and Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera*. It aims to expose how the text's key-concepts and theoretical framework can be revisited in the myriad ways visual artists portray Chicana (his)story. A dialog between the two cultural productions can be established whenever the lost indigenous past is reclaimed, female myths are retold or a new Chicana identity is reconstructed. Both can be considered Chicana feminist practices with the purpose of individual and community healing, as well as social activism, by the deconstruction of dogmas, canons and stereotypes about Chicana women. Both highlight the possibility to transform conditions of marginality and exploitation into individual and collective empowerment.

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MATHEY ÉVA

## **The Hungarian Image of the United States as “Arbiter Mundi” between the World Wars**

Hungarians' romanticized and highly idealized image of the United States as “the land of freedom, democracy and fair play,” or as Lajos Kossuth put it at the Corporation Dinner at Irving House, New York, December 11, 1851 “the guardian of laws and humanity” gained momentum following World War I—especially so in the semi-official and popular political discourse (the contemporary press, pamphlet literature, etc.) on the possible rectification of Hungary's Trianon frontiers., which has proven to become the most important national cause during the period between the world wars. Hungarians' view of the USA as “arbiter mundi” fed political expectations toward America as a potential political ally of the Hungarians in their political efforts. The presentation proposes to examine how this image manifested in the way Hungarians idealized and idolized some contemporary American politicians with special focus on one of the most popular Americans in Central Europe that time, Chairman of the Senate Committee of Foreign Relations (1924-33) Senator William Edgar Borah of Idaho to conclusively argue that the image of the United States as “arbiter mundi” in general, and the image of Senator Borah as the “Savior of Hungary” in particular lacked any political grounds, and were but popular illusions and misconceptions.

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MOHÁCSI ESZTER ENIKŐ

## **Racial Melancholia in Korean American Literature**

The USA has always been a melting pot of different nationalities; an amalgam of quite distinctive cultures. Naturally, this diversity has been presented in its literature as well. Asian



American literature, which is a fairly new subject of literary studies, presents one example of the States' varied literary landscape. Some recurring themes studied in works written by authors from the Asian diaspora are hybridized identity, language, gender, trauma and belonging. This paper also highlights the theme of identity and gender in connection with recent theories concerning racial melancholia. According to Freud, melancholia is pathological and resides in the unconscious: a person suffering from melancholia is ultimately unable to identify or even fully comprehend their losses. As unresolved grief, melancholia offers an intriguing framework of interpretation to analyze Asian American works centering around problems caused by immigration, assimilation, racialization; overall, a loss of identity. This paper will analyze novels written by contemporary Korean American authors, focusing on Catherine Chung's *Forgotten Country* (2012), to show how they treat the theme of loss through racial—and oftentimes gender—melancholia. Moreover, this paper argues that melancholia can function as a form of resistance, an answer to the unattainable and irrational demands of cultural belonging. Therefore, the process of depathologizing melancholia can be observed in these texts. Also, by means of memory and history, both personal and collective, and by going back to one's roots (both in a literal and a figurative sense), clinging to loss can be transformed from a debilitating state into a productive one. Namely, by becoming an 'inside outsider', eventually a positive sense of identity can be attained through loss.

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MOLNÁR ANDRÁS

**The Subversion of the Subject-Object Relationship and the Decline of the Anthropocene in the Works of H. P. Lovecraft**

In the course of the past decade, American weird fiction writer H. P. Lovecraft became widely acknowledged by researchers as a forerunner of contemporary posthumanistic thought. Utilizing the medium of weird fiction, he pointed out the insignificance of the human species facing a vast and indifferent universe. This point of view, as critics have repeatedly shown, became more actual than ever in a time when many theorists speak about the end of the Anthropocene and the destabilization of anthropocentrism.

My presentation aims to add some new aspects to the evaluation of the (oft-criticized) flatness of Lovecraft's characters by demonstrating how it expresses the decline of anthropocentrism, and how these characters become objects in a scheme of non-human agency. Even Lovecraft himself admitted that he is interested in "phenomena" rather than the everyday problems of human beings, or their personal characteristics; and his characters mostly walk to meet their doom without, so to say, putting up a fight. This recurring motif leads to the question of subjecthood in Lovecraft's writings. If Lovecraft's protagonists are so passive, then perhaps the autonomous subjects of many of his tales are not the human beings (usually victimized in the end), but the higher forces beyond common human knowledge that catalyze their fate. With the aid of Jane Bennett's theory of the "thing-power," and by taking Lovecraft's materialistic thought and its development into consideration, I attempt to demonstrate how impersonal, material phenomena emerge as autonomous subjects, relegating human beings to the status of objects. The primary specimens for my analysis are, on the one hand, "The Shadow over Innsmouth," a major novella of Lovecraft which testifies to the unsurpassable power of (d)evolution, genetics, and sexual drive; and, on the other hand, *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*, a short novel in which the birth of the eponymous protagonist in fact turns out to be the design of the superhuman forces employed by his ancestor Joseph Curwen, a design that essentially questions Ward's autonomy.

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MÓZES DOROTTYA

***In America, You Are Black, Baby: On Vernacularity, Blackness and Diaspora in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* (2014)***

In Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*, Nigerian immigrants grapple with what it means to be black in the United States; Nigerian returnees, on the contrary, try to figure out new ways of being African. This paper argues that the aurality, culturally and locally embedded vernacularity of black speech has an important role to play in the construction of Afrodiasporic identity and space. On the one hand, I focus on the multimodality and interactivity undergirding the transcultural negotiation of meaning and space-making in new media, arguing that the orality of black vernaculars traverses national boundaries forging a diasporic community. I reflect on how digital spaces and modes of vernacularity are being used to (re)construct and (re)mediate blackness within Afroatlantic cultures connected to colonialism and slavery. On the other hand, I explore the ways in which offline interactions enable, disrupt, or rupture the creation of shared diasporic spaces in contemporary America and Nigeria. In order to tackle these questions, I examine the following communities of practice: the natural hair community, the Barack Obama fan club, the Lagosian Nigeropolitan Club, Ifemelu's American blog about race, and her Lagosian blog. The paper hence considers the extent to which vernacular practices are capable of forging diasporic cultural flows in the afterlives of slavery.

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PALOTÁS ZSOLT

**Uncle Sam in Barbary Reconsidered: Tunisian–American Relations during and after the Tripolitan War, 1805–1807**

The Regency of Tunis (1574–1881) and the other Barbary States were important factors in the history of the Mediterranean in Early Modern Times. The Muslim States did not only have an impact on the Mediterranean at a regional level but, because of their piratical activity, they also affected several aspects of everyday life in the United States.

The American historians so far have concentrated on the captivity of American merchants and sailors in Algiers (1785–1796/7) and the so-called Barbary Wars (1801–1805 and 1815–1816). Thus the American relations with the Regency of Tunis, which did not take an active role in these wars, has been a peripheral topic in historiography.

The aim of the present paper is the development of Tunisian–American relations during the Tripolitan War, when Hammuda, Tunisian pasha bey (1782–1814) was at variance with the Americans several times. The peak of these tense relations was in the spring of 1805. The so-called "Tunisian xebec affair" provides an insight into the United States policy, which afterwards did not only characterize the American relations with Tripoli, but also with other states.

The central topic of this essay is the presentation of the diplomatic solution to the misunderstanding which emerged in 1805. Sidi Soliman Mellimelli was the first Muslim envoy who negotiated in the United States (November 4, 1805 – September 17, 1806). Through Mellimelli's mission we get some information about the attitude of the American politicians and inhabitants towards to the Muslim world and its customs. Thanks to this legation we can also observe what methods were used by the American diplomats during the negotiations with a Muslim envoy in the early 19th century.

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PETERECZ ZOLTÁN

**Hungary through the Eyes of an American Officer in 1919**

On the eve of the one hundredth anniversary of the end of World War I and the subsequent peace negotiations, it is inevitable that the historically outstanding topic will get in the limelight. In this fashion, this paper will deal with American involvement in Europe, but especially in Hungarian affairs, doing this in the private realm rather than in the official spectrum. American participation was always on the border of official and unofficial type, which statement is even more true for the successor countries in Central Europe. A few Americans visited Hungary during the Peace Conference in various capacities. Although their official work has been to a large degree uncovered by historians, their private work still remains elusive. Hence, the diary of such an American officer will shed light on various interesting angles of the American thinking of the era and the relationship between American representatives and Hungarians. The paper will introduce Charles Moorfield Storey's journal, a significant part of which was written while he was in Hungary in the first few weeks of 1919. Storey was a member of the famous Coolidge Mission, whose headquarters was at Vienna. From here Americans set out to visit and gather information on the various countries in their purview, Hungary among them. Based upon the diary entries, one can learn about the Americans daily work at the Paris Peace Conference, the Coolidge Mission, and Storey's experience in Hungary shortly after the conclusion of the war.

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PINTÉR KÁROLY

**The Cult of the Constitution as Criticism of the US: Originalism as a Form of Radicalism**

One of the distinguishing features of the American system of government is the exceptionally strong, almost universal respect, admiration and veneration of the US Constitution and its framers. The outlines of the American government, as defined by the Constitution, have been nearly sanctified by the Constitution's longevity and the unquestionable authority and wisdom of the Founding Fathers. As a result, radical movements of various hues in the course of American history have never managed to mobilize significant public support in favor of any agenda that seemed to question, let alone to do away with some of the fundamental features of the Constitution.

Therefore, American radicalism often assumes the form of originalism: radicals claim to return to the basic principles and values delineated by the Constitution and want to assert one or more of such principles (e.g. individualism, civil liberties, federalism, restricted government, etc.) against the status quo, that is, a corrupt, bureaucratic, overpowering and ineffective federal government that has strayed from, twisted and degraded the noble intentions and principles of the Founders.

In my presentation, I wish to comment on some of the features of the originalist outlook and make some observations, with particular attention to contemporary American politics.

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PINTZ KATALIN

**Transnational Relations between Hungary and the Hungarian Diaspora: The Reception of Hungarian Folklore in the Eastern United States**

The scope of this presentation is to explore how the relations between the North-American Hungarian communities and the Hungarians of the Carpathian Basin affected the interpretation of Hungarian folk art and folk dancing in the USA from the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup>- 20<sup>th</sup> centuries until today. One of the most characteristic aspects of contemporary Hungarian-

American communities is that their identity maintenance is centered around Hungarian folk culture, besides also placing emphasis on heritage language preservation. A visitor coming from Hungary would assume that the attention that Hungarian Americans give to folklore must be a result of their isolation from present-day Hungarian culture and a continuation of village traditions brought to the USA by their ancestors. In reality, the in-depth knowledge about “authentic” folk dances and folk costumes in America was initially gained by people with no village background from encyclopedias and video recordings, whereas those who were of this background tended to shun their peasant origin and culture, and were keen on adopting middle-class behavior and values.

In my presentation I particularly intend to focus on the Hungarians living in New Jersey and how their transnational relations and social background affected their perception of Hungarian folk culture. I will discuss the popularity of the so-called “magyar ruha” among Old Hungarian communities (turn-of-the-century immigrants and their descendants) as opposed to the intellectual interest that arose for Hungarian folklore among the DPs and 1956ers and their focus on “originality”. Later, I will present the origins of the “táncház” (folk dance) movement in the USA, and elaborate on the reasons for its relatively late acceptance among North-American communities and their members’ initial resistance to improvised dances coming from Transylvania. Finally, I will present the current role that folk culture plays in identity maintenance and the relations between the diaspora and the Hungary, bound together partly by the dance house movement.

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#### PUTZ ORSOLYA

##### **The concept of the NATION in American English**

What is the American nation like? If this question is raised, one could expect replies like, ‘It is like a *melting pot*.’ or ‘The American nation is a *salad bowl*’. These are just two of the countless metaphorical linguistic expressions that play a role in the mental representation of the American nation. This paper aims to identify the conceptual metaphors, applied by the members of the American nation in the mental construction of the concept of the American NATION.

To accomplish this goal, a sample of 1,000 items containing the concept of NATION was randomly generated in the COCA Corpus. Data gathering was carried out in all text types (spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers and academic texts) within the time span of 1990 and 2015. Each item was studied in context: every paragraph, comprising 3-4 sentences, was carefully read and the metaphorical linguistic expressions relating to the NATION target domain were identified.

It was found that far the most salient source domain is the PERSON, which is followed by the OBJECT, GROUP, ENTITY, BUILDING, HUMAN BODY, LIVING ORGANISM and LAND source domains.

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#### JULIUS ROZENFELD

##### **The Concept of a New Nation or the New Concept of a Nation**

According to Spiegel and Dawson “the meaning of ‘America’ in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is itself subject to the transnational flows of a ‘global’ image market in which television and digital media play a central role” (Hallywell & Morley, 2013). The direction(s) of the development of digital media is/are unpredictable and its transformations beyond its classical boundaries defined by the postmodern era is subject to investigation. Postmodernism operates with the concept of nation that revolves around culture, geographical positioning, and language and

therefore cannot offer a suitable apparatus for re-defining its meaning in the era of the digitalized transnational world. This also may evoke the false idea that the very concept of nation has become obsolete and outworn, however we may only lack the suitable vocabulary necessary for the correct description of its new meanings. The objective of this paper is to investigate whether digimodernism, as one possible alternative to postmodernism, has the potential to redefine the concept of nation in a globalized world, maintain its original flavor and, at the same time, describe it suitably in this new epoch of social evolution.

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RUBÓCZKI BABETT

**“Marred Testaments” of Political Violence: Environment and the Somatic Body in  
Cherrie Moraga’s *Heroes and Saints* and Edwidge Danticat’s *The Farming of Bones***

The dissolution of boundaries between corporeal and environmental vulnerability thematically links Chicana Cherrie Moraga’s play, *Heroes and Saints* (1992) and Haitian American Edwidge Danticat’s novel, *The Farming of Bones* (1998). The interlocking images of women-of-colors’ disfigured bodies and the environmental devastation caused by (post)colonial violence underline the pervasiveness of harm done to both earth and the somatic body. Set in the U.S. Southwest and the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, respectively, both works foreground the wounded and disabled female body as a “marred testament” of a systematic political massacre directed against the marginalized community of people of color inhabiting those border(ed) territories. Moraga’s wheelchair-bound protagonist, Cerezita, falls victim of the 1980s’ chemical poisoning of the San Joaquin Valley farmlands the American government orders to control the population growth of Chicano/as in the area. Similarly, Danticat presents the disfigured body of Amabelle to evoke the national trauma related to the 1937 political massacre of 20,000 Haitians who labored in sugarcane fields in the neighboring country of the Dominican Republic.

The paper provides a cross-cultural analysis of the complex interplay between ecocide and genocide, which metaphorically represents the Chicana and the Haitian imagery of female vulnerability. The ecocritical approach to the selected works explores how memories of personal and national wounds intersect with the agricultural images of harvesting and illuminates that the violently marked female body in the works features as a rhizomatic space interlinking the physical, mental, environmental, and political implications of colonial subjugation and environmental racism.

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RUSVAI MÓNKA

**The Monstrous Father in Neil Gaiman’s *The Graveyard Book***

*“There were people you could hug, and then there was Silas.”*

Neil Gaiman’s *The Graveyard Book* places a traditional coming-of-age story into a most untraditional setting: the young orphan, Nobody Owens is raised in a cemetery by ghost foster parents, and is looked after by an otherworldly guardian, Silas. All little hints put together, it becomes clear that Silas is a vampire – yet he is the most important father figure for the young protagonist. In my paper, I will argue that the undead Silas becomes a positive father figure thanks to his monstrous attributes: his supernatural power, special perspective and experience enable him to teach young Bod more about life than anybody else. Basing my analysis on Jeffrey Jerome Cohen’s monster theory, I will first observe the complex relation between the monster’s prohibiting function and the psychoanalytic dimensions of fatherhood and then I will focus on the otherworldly, yet human knowledge we can only access through interaction with the monstrous.

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SÁRI B. LÁSZLÓ

**Masculinity, Affect, Addiction and the Postmodern Condition in America in David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest***

David Foster Wallace's encyclopedic bestseller, *Infinite Jest* is said to explore the postmodern condition by way of what seems an infinite number of digressions adding up to a vast catalog of loosely interrelated themes and styles. Wallace's novel brings together corporate America with political radicalism, academia and affect, only to wield a style that – while dissolving the plot into what borders on the incoherent – gives way to an understanding and a possible reworking of postmodern American masculinity. In my presentation I will argue, through the analysis of distinct passages from the novel that Wallace's project is first and foremost to transcend and put into overdrive postmodern reflexivity and consciousness in order to forge an authentic language capable of expressing genuine affect, a venture to go beyond the critical project of postmodernism, conceived of by Wallace himself as an artistic reaction to technological, cultural and political changes in the sixties, and quickly appropriated by mass media to undermine postmodernism's original objectives. Thus, I will argue that Wallace joins contemporary authors recently labelled as post-postmodernist in their attempt.

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SCHAFFER ANETT

**Emigration and Identity in Colm Tóibín's *Brooklyn***

Emigration and the changes of identity are deeply connected. The emigrant decides to leave their home, travel a long distance and start a new life surrounded by strangers, a new culture and new rules. In *Brooklyn* Eilis, a young Irish woman moves to New York in the 1950s. Irish immigrants are often depicted in novels and films from an American viewpoint. This novel turns around this perspective and shows how Irish people felt about the emigration, and how they saw America. Among the Irish emigrants many young women arrived, who did not have as many work opportunities as their male counterparts. One alternative was to be a shop-assistant in – an important and moderately new phenomenon of the city – a department store. Eilis works in one of these and gets to know the city from this unique perspective. One of the most interesting parts of the novel is where Eilis travels back to Ireland, and we can see how her family and friends react to her new American lifestyle, and how these reactions and the movement modify her identity. New York and her birthplace, the small Irish town do not only represent two different cultures and the difference between the city and the countryside, but also the changing female roles of the 1950s.

In my paper I analyse how America is depicted in the novel, how Eilis' identity change, how these changes reflect her movement between the two countries and her integration into urban main aim of the analysis is to show how the novel connects the questions of emigration, urban life and identity.

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SZABÓ ÉVA ESZTER

**The US-Mexican Border Barrier and the Emergence of Global Walls**

The building of a concrete wall along the entire length of the US–Mexican border proposed by Donald Trump upon officially announcing his candidacy for the presidency in June 2015 led to widespread indignation in the US, Mexico, and Latin America at large. The border barrier issue, however, has been poisoning US–Mexican and inter-American relations since 1993 when President Clinton ordered the construction of a border wall between San Diego

and Tijuana. Since then some 1,100km of border barrier have been built mostly during President Obama's administrations in line with the 2006 Secure Fence Act as signed by President George W. Bush. That still leaves two-thirds of the border unfenced. President Trump's border wall thus would be the culmination of a process that has been going on for twenty-five years and has shown more continuity than difference over the various administrations in the White House. The US–Mexican border barrier in fact has inspired dozens of similar migrant walls, among them the Hungarian–Serbian fence wall. As of today, one third of the countries of the world have some type of walls. Once construction of the new US–Mexican border wall begins in earnest, it will definitely contribute to the emergence of the era of global walls in our post 9/11 world as it will speed up the construction of many more. But the Iron Curtain metaphor serves as a poor reference for this new era of global migration controls that the world has entered. The legacy of the Cold War may still be strong but our multipolar world of unprecedented degrees of globalization moves to different drummers. Even though the setting up of border barriers may seem to contradict globalization, they might as well be seen instead as the very products of the globalization of securitization.

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SZABÓ F. ANDREA

**America, Appropriated: Transcultural Gothic Art Film and the Western**

The Gothic has always been concerned not only with the local but also with what lies beyond an imaginary threshold symbolically demarcating the boundary between self and other/Other, us and them, the nation and those unincorporable within the nation's body. But, recently, "the Gothic, it would appear, has gone global," as Glennis Byron puts it (in David Punter (ed.), *A New Companion to the Gothic*, Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, p. 369), which has left a visible imprint both on individual works and on conventions traditionally associated with the Gothic. In my paper I examine a cinematic genre, the western, and discuss how the gothic has inflected the form by focusing on Martin Koolhoven's *Brimstone*, which, it seems, oversteps—or at least peeks over—several boundaries (concerning genre, theme, geography, history, literary and cultural history, art form, sociology of art) as well as how a transcultural—globalized—production (and consumption) practice has appropriated a rhetoric of the Gothic, resulting in a work that dwells uneasily in a border zone. Yet, my focus falls less on interpreting a particular text than on trying to decipher the functions of America—and of foundational national narratives about America—in a European art film director's historical western thriller marketed on a global scale through global networks for local/global/transcultural audiences.

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SZENTGYÖRGYI SZILÁRD

**The RP accent as a metaphor of distance in the United States**

This paper is concerned with the status of the RP accent in the United States and the kind of attitudes that it automatically evokes in much of the American society in general and in movie-goers in particular. I have argued in earlier papers that the American movie industry uses an RP accent as a sign of certain character types: the evil genius, the wise mentor, or a historical figure from an early time.

In this talk I will concentrate on what the common factor of these different aspects of an RP accent is – I argue that what the abovementioned and others share with each other is distance from the American varieties, be it physical or abstract distance, distance in time, or distance on the social scale. I also argue that RP English is an ideal sign of distance as it sound

significantly different from American varieties to make it easy to identify, yet it is still understandable for all.

I will demonstrate with examples of characters in American-made movies the different uses of the RP accent as a sign of physical distance – as in *Love actually* –, abstract distance as between our real world and the imaginary world of a film – as in almost any fantasy movie since *The Lord of the Rings* –, distance in time – as in movies taking place in a historical setting –, and finally social distance between different classes of layers of society - as in the *Star Wars* universe.

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SZÉLPÁL K. LÍVIA

### ***Free State of Jones: legend or historical fact?***

The 2016 US-produced *Free State of Jones* (dir. Gary Ross) is based on the legendary true story of Jones County as a free state during the Confederacy Era. *Free State of Jones* is set during the Civil War, and tells the story of a Southern farmer, Newton Knight, who waged guerrilla war against the Confederacy and declared loyalty to the Union. Uniting together with other local farmers and slaves, Knight launched an uprising that led Jones County, Mississippi to secede from the Confederacy, creating a Free State of Jones. Knight was a compelling, and at the same time controversial, figure of civil disobedience and audacity. This film is marked for providing a collection of historical facts and based on the book of historian Victoria E. Bynum entitled as *The Free State of Jones: Mississippi's Longest Civil War*. The book traces the origins and legacy of the Jones County uprising from the American Revolution to the modern Civil Rights Movement. The film adaptation, in bridging the gap between the legendary and the real Free State of Jones, shows how the legend reveals a lot about the racial, gender and class politics of the period, and the construction of American national identity with the persistence of symbols of the Confederacy, along with its racist premise; and highlights a form of political action that filmmaker/director Ross considers persuasive today. This presentation aims to focus on the film adaptation of Victoria E. Bynum's book of *The Free State of Jones* and intends to, firstly, focus on the genre of white savior narrative, and secondly, scrutinize the principal causal forces of representation (the dramatic and spectacle elements).

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SZUJER ORSOLYA

### ***Peggy Carter and the Patriarchal Script***

The following paper discusses the television series *Agent Carter* that aired on ABC in 2015-2016 for two seasons, focusing on the series' representation of women, using the protagonist Peggy Carter, and two female antagonists, Dottie Underwood and Whitney Frost, as examples. It argues that Peggy is allowed to be a hero because she ultimately submits to the patriarchal script, while her female adversaries rebel against it, and are therefore perceived as fallen women. The paper addresses the following components of the patriarchal script: 1, passivity/submission (to male dominance), 2, conventional beauty, 3, sexual availability (to men), 3, purity/virginity, and 4, fertility/motherhood. It points out that 1, Peggy is always placed in an active role through the will and permission of men; 2, always shown to be conventionally attractive, something that is constantly pointed out by the men around her; 3, she is positioned as the object of the male gaze and always has a male romantic interest; 4, but is punished every time when it is assumed that she is having a sexual relationship; 5, she functions as a symbolical mother of the organization of S.H.I.E.L.D. and is known to become an actual mother post the end of the series. Meanwhile Dottie is presumably a lesbian and



sterilized, and does not live up to the purity standards of patriarchy, and Whitney constantly rebels against male dominance, loses her beauty as a part of her fall, and rejects the idea of motherhood. The claims made are supported by clips from the series.

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TARNÓC ANDRÁS

**The Slave Ship as the Chronotope of the Black Atlantic: Interaction between Space and Time as Reflected in the Antebellum Slave Narrative**

The purpose of my presentation is to explore the applicability of the concept of the *chronotope* to the Atlantic slave trade, with special attention to the slave ship. While the original concept is forwarded by Mikhail Bakhtin as the *chronotope* implies the “intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed,” Paul Gilroy emphasizing the slave ship’s capability to move or circulate ideas, people and goods between continents or by extension cultural systems considers it the primary metaphor or central organizing symbol of the Black Atlantic. Furthermore, Frances Bartkowski’s view of travel as “affirmative groundlessness,” or a compelled or voluntary movement entailing physical and metaphysical dislocation also bears relevance. Chronotopes can take two main forms as in case of dislocation or uprootedness time dominates over space while in case of the so-called pastoral *chronotope* space prevails over time. Slave narratives dating mostly from the second half of the eighteenth century and commemorating the forcible removal of Africans from the west coast of the black continent offer promising examples of the first type. Consequently, in my analysis I will rely among others on the narratives and reports of James Albert Gronniosaw, Ottobah Cuguano, Olaudah Equiano, and Venture Smith. The application of the *chronotope* concept implying a simultaneous perception of space and time by the “cargo” of the slave ship refutes the view of slaves as objects while it inscribes such displaced individuals into history.

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TÁBOR ÁRON

**The construction of American exceptionalism: Countering “America First” in the 1940s**

Donald Trump’s rise to the U.S. presidency has shaken previously accepted assumptions about American politics. In particular, his “America First” doctrine counters the foreign policy-traditions of post-WWII presidents, who – despite their very real differences regarding the use of American power and the value of multilateralism and diplomacy – all subscribed to a version of *American exceptionalism*, which encompassed a consensus on the U.S. role in international leadership. However, this understanding of exceptionalism was itself a response to the isolationist slogan of “America First” of the early 1940s, which became discredited during World War II and in the early Cold War period. During these crucial years, left-wing intellectuals – partly former Communists or at least coming from a wider Marxist movement – had an important role in articulating a more assertive foreign policy, as they argued for continued engagement and a recognition of U.S. responsibility for a reconstructed international order. Indeed, even the word *exceptionalism* is originated in earlier Marxist discourse, and transformed into the language of foreign policy through the works of these leftist intellectuals. How could this group of intellectuals influence foreign-policy making, and what were the long-term implications on American identity construction? What is the relevance of the intellectual history of American exceptionalism in the context of the “American First” rhetoric of the twenty-first century? The paper analyzes the discourse of the 1940s, and highlights how a particular leftist narrative made its way into the mainstream of American foreign policy.

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TÉGLÁSI GERGŐ

**Cultural Turns in the Discourse of Love: A Transdisciplinary Approach to *Call Me by Your Name***

The linguistic turn, theorizing that words both in their articulation (speech) and materiality (writing) signify existence, marked a disciplinary paradigm shift—poststructuralism—within the humanities. However, it was followed by a number of “cultural turns” across disciplinary borders, resulting in inter- and transposed conceptual domains. Focusing on the linguistic medium in Luca Guadagnino’s *Call Me by Your Name*, I aim to explicate its transdisciplinary functions via the discourse of love between Oliver and Elio whose very existence is subject to the language of one another in that they are called and written into being by the name of the Other within the performative and translational matrix of subjectivity; when their love is deferred, the Father reassures Elio that it is, in fact, not lost—Oliver, the trace of love, will perpetually remain present as the Other within. By interrogating these three subjectivities from three disciplinarily liminal perspectives, their Self–Other relations are rendered transparent: (i) in socio-linguistic terms, Oliver manifests the speech patterns of an archetypal American and is spaced out as the Other within via the concept of *cognitive geography*; (ii) in media-anthropological terms, Elio articulates being in writing and is translated into the silence of the Self via the concept of *material inscription*; (iii) in performative terms, the Father subverts the discriminative positions of heteronormative patriarchy and is effected into the Mediator between gender and sexuality via the concept of *cultural scripts*. Employing pluralistic approaches to map the cultural texts of contemporary phenomena may result in a sufficiently extended scope to transcend limitations that are posed by uni-disciplinary analyses, pointing toward new orientations in critical theory.

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TÓTH ZSÓFIA ANNA

**The Proliferation of American Female Humorists in the 21st century**

In my paper I would like to address the question of female humorists and their proliferation on the American cultural scene in our current times. For a long time, it has been considered that women, in general, lacked a sense of humor and there were hardly any female humorists to be found (Martin 25). Humor theorists as well as cultural theorists and scholars of literature, visual culture and film (also dealing with issues of humor) generally agree/d that the use of humor is/was primarily a male privilege (just to name a few: Molly Haskell, Regina Barreca, Jillian Heydt-Stevenson, Eileen Gillooly, John Parkin, Rod A. Martin, Joanne R. Gilbert and Kristen Anderson Wagner) and women were/are not culturally viewed as producers of humor or they lost/lose their femininity and status as a woman if they did/do. “The idea that women were too morally upright, too emotional, and too passive to enjoy comedy was deeply engrained in American thinking by the beginning of the twentieth century, and the result is a general perception that women are not as funny as men” – argues Anderson Wagner (41). This trend has dramatically changed since the 1990s and the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, especially in the US. Additionally, a real paradigm shift occurred with the appearance of *Bridesmaids* (2011), and the work of such female comedians and humorists such as Kristen Wiig, Maya Rudolph, Rebel Wilson, Rose Byrne, Melissa McCarthy, Amy Schumer, Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, Kate McKinnon etc. opened up a new era in the field of humor (studies). These outstanding female humorists and comedians are really part of a social and cultural revolution – actively taking part and commenting on the current issues and events within American culture and life. They productively contribute to the debates concerning

current events and often provide new insights as well as redefinitions that help a better or deeper understanding of current occurrences as well as the situation of women in general.

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TÖRÖK ANNA

**The problem of personal pronouns in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”**

The central claim of this paper is that the use of personal pronouns in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” is indicative of Prufrock’s perception of the social and personal distance between him and the faceless-nameless characters he talks about. It will further argue that the fact that not even the only intimate relation, the enigmatic “you”, is able to attain a face or character in the poem, stems in and aims to evoke epistemological uncertainty. This sense of intangibility exaggerates Eliot’s notion that personality is not fixed, and that it is impossible to keep track of its changes: “the soul is, in fact, the whole world of its experience at any moment” (299). The unknowability of his own self severs Prufrock’s connections with others as well; this makes him an almost dysfunctional speaker. His inability to reach out and capture the essence of these characters results in the lack of description, which leaves the reader almost fully blind. To remedy this, Prufrock attempts to define himself within and without society as well. However, the group of high society women and men remain signified by a distant and hostile “they”, while the tentative “I” never takes a satisfactory shape. Therefore, this paper will argue that the root of Prufrock’s struggle with self-definition and character description is the same: epistemological uncertainty.

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VAJDA ZOLTÁN

**“Mystic Chords of Memory:” Abraham Lincoln’s Sentimental Conception of the Nation in his First Inaugural Address**

This paper is proposed to investigate the workings of the political sentimental tradition in Lincoln’s rhetoric taking the Union and US nationhood for his subject. Derived from eighteenth-century moral philosophy, political sentimentalism posited the national community as one based on bonds of sympathy and affection. Discussions of Lincoln’s nationalism tend to regard it as one based on an intrinsic conception of the nation or to place it within the tradition of American civil religion, linking ideals related to the transcendental with the national one. An equally viable connection, at the same time, I argue, would be the sentimental one. On the eve of the Civil War, Lincoln imagined the American nation as a community held together by sentimental ties demanding the restoration of a Union of affection. In accordance with this task, concentrating on his first inaugural address, I attempt to show how this stance informed his understanding of the “perpetual union,” and how his sentimental conception of the American nation also connected with his use of the terms coercion and majority rule. His relation to the US tradition of political sympathy will be explored by probing into his use of the various dimensions of political sympathy.

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VANCSÓ ÉVA

**“Trial by American Idol” – Social commentary on social media obsessed culture in *The Orville***

*The Orville* is a science fiction series created by Seth MacFarlane who is popularly known as the writer of the satirical animation comedy *Family Guy*.

*The Orville* is built on the fictional universe of Star Trek; it pays homage and also reinterprets Gene Roddenberry's classic science fiction series.

According to Andrew Milner Star Trek represents „popular utopianism” in the American science fiction; in the United Federation of Planets technical innovation solved the practical problems that had confounded humanity – poverty, inequality, social conflicts, etc. – and both genders and races are equal. Based on its utopian view on the future, Star Trek has always been relevant in making social and political commentary about each generation since its beginning in the 1960s (sexism, feminism, racism, militarism, human rights etc.) and expressing the tension between different principles (e.g. Prime Directive of not interfering, recognition of the autonomy of the individual).

In this presentation I examine the episode *Majority Rule* of *The Orville* series (01e07) as social commentary on the social media-obsessed culture: in a 21<sup>st</sup> century Earth-like alien planet, where social media votes (up or down) control every aspect of life, including elections or the judicial system. I intend to highlight the key patterns of the way the portrayed society works and provide a satirical look at our mediatized society. I also focus on the appearing of traditional themes and tropes of Star Trek and how they are transformed by using satire and comedy elements – that distinguish *The Orville* from the other Star Trek series – in order to open up new ways for social commentary.

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VENKOVITS BALÁZS

### **Fear, Restrictions, and Quotas: Changing Immigration Patterns to the USA in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Although historically depicted as a nation of immigrants, at various points in US history some Americans questioned the wisdom of an open-door policy towards immigrants and demanded severe restrictions to control, limit or stop the inflow of (certain groups of) people to the country. Such attitudes could have various manifestations, ranging from requests for stricter investigations at the border to numerical limitations, quotas and outright exclusion. Attempts to restrict immigration to the country were often the result of fear of people coming from different racial, ethnic or religious groups and were often linked to periods of economic depression, political conflict or war. This paper examines the period of New Immigration (1870-1914) primarily to call attention to trends visible in other eras as well. It introduces various attempts to restrict immigration to the country, including Chinese exclusion, literacy tests and ultimately, the quotas introduced in the 1920s. Besides such a historical overview, the paper also provides insights into how these attempts and changes in official US immigration policy changed immigration trends, altered routes of immigrants in an Inter-American context, and influenced the ethnic and racial composition of the country. As a group in focus, the presentation briefly introduces the case of Hungarians during New Immigration and their changing migration patterns to the North American continent during the 1920s.

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VÖÖ GABRIELLA

### **The Creativity of Matter in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* and *Gardens in the Dunes***

The presentation addresses the dynamism and agency of matter in two novels by the Native American author. In both *Ceremony* and *Gardens in the Dunes* minerals and other forms of nonliving matter are telling an “onto-tale” (Jane Bennett's term) that underlies the history of humans on the American and the European continents. In both novels there are instances in which the productivity, generative power and self-organization of matter serves as evidence

that the “mind” of the planet is active and creative. In Silko’s work the Native American world view merges with the perspective of material ecocriticism and cultural ecology.

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MUSTAFA WSHYAR

**Invisible Violence in Khaled Hosseini’s *A Thousand Splendid Suns***

This paper will look at the representation of invisible violence in Hosseini’s *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Johan Galtung’s theory of Violence Triangle will be used for the analysis. Structural and Cultural violence are the types which are going to be identified as the invisible types and those are the types which the research attempts to look at. The ways that invisible violence is represented and its influences will be shown; it will be explored if it can be avoided by any means. The process of converting the invisibility into visibility is another aspect to be studied in this study. There will be an introductory approach towards the type of violence to introduce it before analyzing the literary text. Then, the theory will be adopted into the novel to discuss the theoretical approach in order to looking at the representation of the violence and to see if it is represented in the same or a similar way of which its representation in non-fictional context.

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EWA ZIOMEK

**America’s Future in the TV series *Black Mirror***

It is not an exaggeration to say that the mass media have seized the modern world. One can hardly imagine life without the Internet and a smartphone. The TV series *Black Mirror*, created by the British satirist Charlie Brooker and recently revived by Netflix, depicts the “side effects” that the technology may have on one’s life as well as the repercussions it may bring if used without caution. The series may be perceived as an accurate comment on the current social and political changes taking place in America. Not only does it refer to the United States presidential election, but it also analyzes the modern American society. The creator conjures up the future world in which media and technology destroy interpersonal relationships leading to moral atrophy. Nevertheless, *Black Mirror* is not a criticism of both the media and technology as such. What the TV series warns against is the abuse of technological inventions and the addiction to the mass media. Looking through “black mirrors” of smartphones, one does not perceive other individual as a human being, but rather as a virtual simulacrum. What nowadays makes people even more virtual are social accounts which give any stranger an easy access to one’s life. The users covet for approval which is reflected in the number of likes. Human being is defined based on an artificial profile, which provides its viewers with fake information. Charlie Brooker wants the audience to realize that if one forgets about the value of other human being and starts to abuse media and technology, the forthcoming future will indeed be dystopian.