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# Methodologies in American Studies

## 2<sup>nd</sup> PAAS WORKSHOP

September 16-20, 2014

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**Target group:** doctoral students and young scholars with PhDs in the humanities and social sciences, affiliated with universities in Central/Eastern Europe, who are seeking new theoretical approaches and critical tools

**Venue:** University of Wrocław, Poland <https://international.uni.wroc.pl/en/s3.php>

**Format:** 5-day event consisting of 7 workshop sessions, and 3 conference sessions

**Description:** Members of the Polish Association for American Studies and several invited guests will offer **7 workshop sessions** on contemporary theoretical approaches and methodologies used in American studies. The workshop format requires that **all participants read a set of assigned materials in advance**. Reading materials will be posted online by July 5, 2014.

Participants will also have an opportunity to present their work in progress during **3 conference sessions**. Several instructors will be present at each session to offer research-related advice and comment on the technical aspects of the presentations.

### **Workshop topics and instructors:**

Transnational Literature - Prof. Ruth Mayer

Urban Studies – Dr. Aneta Dybska

Film Adaptations – Dr. Justyna Kociatkiewicz

Ethnographic Encounters and Writing – Dr. Jan Lorenz

Towards Non-anthropocentric Media Studies– Dr. Anna Nacher

Biopolitics and (Post)ecology– Dr. Tomasz Sikora

Fan Studies – Dr. Agata Zarzycka

### **Conference session respondents:**

Dr. Anna Czura

Dr. Tomasz Majkowski

**Accommodation:** 16-20.09.2014, University of Wrocław dormitory

**Participation fee:** PLN 300, payable by July 31, 2014 to the PAAS bank account no. 20 1060 0076 0000 3380 0003 6108.

The fee covers accommodation for 5 nights, 5 lunches, and an ice-breaker supper on the first night of the workshop.

Fee waiver for participants from Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine.

**Eligibility:** The workshop is open to young scholars who are either working on their doctoral dissertations or have recently received a PhD, and who are affiliated with an institution of higher education in Central/Eastern Europe.

Since the number of participants is limited to 27, the organizers reserve the right to make a selection based on academic and geographic criteria.

Last year's workshop participants are welcome to apply again.

In order to apply, please send your CV and a 300-word statement explaining why you would like to take part in the workshop to: [dferens@poczta.onet.pl](mailto:dferens@poczta.onet.pl).

**Deadline: June 15, 2014.** Applicants will be notified about the results of the selection process by June 30.

If you are interested in **presenting a paper**, additionally submit a 200-word abstract. Since there will only be time for 15 speakers, the organizers reserve the right to select presentations that focus on methodology/theory and/or are thematically related to the workshop sessions.

## Workshop instructors

**Ruth Mayer** holds the chair of American Studies at the Leibniz University of Hannover, teaching American literature and culture from the 17th century to the present time, with a strong focus on theoretical and formal questions. Her research focuses on aspects of popular culture, globalization, science studies, and cultural contact. She has been involved in several third-party-funded research projects in recent years. From 2006 to 2010, she directed "Diasporic Self-fashionings: The USA and China" (DFG, 2006-2010), which produced international conferences, essays, and two edited volumes, *Trans-Pacific Interactions* (2009) and *Chinatowns in a Transnational World* (2011). Since 2010, she has been part of the research unit "Aesthetics and Practice of Popular Seriality" (Berlin, Hannover, Göttingen), first with the project "Serial Figures and Media Change" (2010-2013) and currently directing a project investigating the intersections of mass culture and film serials from the 1910s to 1940s. Her most recent book publication is *Serial Fu Manchu: The Chinese Supervillain and the Spread of Yellow Peril Ideology*, which appeared in 2013 with Temple University Press.

**Aneta Dybska** is an assistant professor at the Institute of English Studies, University of Warsaw. She teaches courses in American Studies, with a focus on the 19th and 20th century American culture and social history. Those courses reflect her academic interest in the ideologies of the nation-building, class, race, gender, and sexual formation. Her recent research engages scholarly debates on urban revitalization and gentrification, the "right to the city," as well as grassroots struggles for the urban commons against privatization and surveillance—preoccupations that have dominated urban politics from the 1970s until today. Her writing is informed by insights into the use and production of urban spaces in American cities coming from scholars in cultural studies, sociology, geography and urban studies. She is currently working on a book project dealing with the spatial aspect of struggles for social justice in the 1980s and 1990s. This research builds on her earlier interest in 1960s urban ethnography on black communities, which culminated in the publication of *Black Masculinities in American Social Science and Self-Narratives of the 1960s and 1970s* (Peter Lang, 2010).

**Justyna Kociatkiewicz** is an assistant professor in the Department of English Studies, University of Wrocław, where she received her MA (1993) and PhD (2001) degrees. She is the recipient of Tempus and Fulbright scholarships. She published *Towards the Antibildungsroman: Saul Bellow and the Problem of the Genre* (2008) and co-edited (with Dominika Ferens and Elzbieta Klimek-Dominiak) *Traveling Subjects: American Journeys in Space and Time* (2004). Her research interests include generic and narratological aspects of the contemporary American novel, while her broader academic interests include strategies and devices of conspiracy narratives, as well as issue of *Bildung* in American literature and culture, gender problems in the nineteenth century European novel, the contemporary historical novel, theories of film narrative,

problems of film adaptation.

**Jan Lorenz** received his MA in Ethnology from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and his PhD in Social Anthropology with Visual Media from the University of Manchester. From 2006 to 2008, he worked at the University of Lower Silesia in Wrocław and from 2008 to 2013 he was a teaching assistant at the University of Manchester. He has done ethnographic fieldwork in Poland, Israel, and Haiti, and is the author of an ethnographic documentary on young Jews in Poland - *The Passage* (2013). His main research interests include globalization, religiosity, social belonging, morality and identity transformation. He has also done research and written on affect, space, memory and trauma in postcolonial and post-Holocaust contexts. His research activities are informed by his academic interests in anthropological research methods, ethnographic writing, visual anthropology, art and experimental film.

**Anna Nacher** obtained her Ph.D. in cultural studies in 2006. She teaches at the Institute for Audiovisual Arts of the Jagiellonian University, in Krakow, Poland. Her current interests include a number of subjects in the field of culture and media studies: transmedia storytelling, geomeia and sound art. She has written two books in Polish, one on gender in television in the age of globalization (*Telepłeć. Gender w telewizji doby globalizacji*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2008) and the other on contemporary countercultural movements (*Rubieże kultury popularnej. Kontrkultura w świecie przepływów*, Galeria Miejska Arsenał, Poznań 2012), as well as a number of articles in Polish peer-reviewed academic journals and in edited books. She recently contributed a chapter on interactive fiction (*We Tell Stories – Storytelling in the Age of Media Convergence*) to a book on media convergence (R. Szczepania, ed., *Media Convergence - Approaches and Experiences*, Peter Lang Edition, Frankfurt am Main 2013). Her article, "A Humument App by Tom Phillips as a work of liberature: Between text and embodiment," is available in the ELMCIP Knowledge Base Anthology (<http://elmcip.net/critical-writing/humument-app-tom-phillips-work-liberature-between-text-and-embodiment>). She also creates her own projects in sound art and improvised music.

**Tomasz Sikora** teaches at the English Department of the Pedagogical University of Cracow. He received his MA degree from Adam Mickiewicz University (1996) and a PhD in English from the University of Silesia (2001). He is the author of *Bodies Out of Rule: Transversal Readings in Canadian Literature and Film* (2014) and *Virtually Wild: Wilderness, Technology and the Ecology of Mediation* (2003). He has co-edited several volumes of essays on queer studies (including *Out Here: Local and International Perspectives in Queer Studies*, 2006) and on Canadian studies (including *Towards Critical Multiculturalism: Dialogues Between/Among Canadian Diasporas*, 2011). He is also co-founder and co-editor of the online journal of queer studies *InterAlia*. His main areas of interest and academic activity include critical and queer theory, biopolitics, ecocriticism, and cultural studies.

**Agata Zarzycka** is an assistant professor of literature at the Department of English Studies, Wrocław University. She has authored a monograph on role-playing games, *Socialized Fiction: Role-Playing Games as a Multidimensional Space of Interaction between Literary Theory and Practice* (2009). Her other publications deal with role-playing games, fantasy literature and participatory culture. Her current research project is devoted to Gothic influences on popular culture. She is also interested in remix, game studies, fandom and subcultures, as well as broadly understood speculative fiction.

### Conference respondents

**Anna Czura** is an assistant professor in the Department of English Studies at the University of Wrocław. She was awarded a PhD in linguistics from the University of Wrocław in 2010 for her dissertation on the role of authentic assessment in developing learner autonomy in adolescents. In her research she is mainly interested in content and language integrated learning, European language policy, language assessment, learner autonomy, intercultural communicative competence, the role of new media literacy in English language teaching, educational mobility and teacher training. At the moment she is a team member of the "PluriMobil: Mobility programmes for sustainable plurilingual and intercultural learning," a project coordinated by the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz. She has participated in a number of training sessions on the role of presentation skills in academic career ("Science Communication and Popularisation for Non-Specialists," Foundation for Polish Science; "Successful communication in academic career," Wrocław University of Technology).

**Tomasz Z. Majkowski** is an assistant professor at the Department of Literary Anthropology and Cultural Studies of the Faculty of Polish Studies at Jagiellonian University in Cracow, where he carries out research on popular culture, speculative fiction and games. He is the recipient of three awards for excellence in teaching by the Rector of Jagiellonian University. His academic interests include rhetoric, communication and self-presentation in academic and teacher-student/didactic relations. In the years 2011-2013, he ran classes and workshops on the above-mentioned topics for students of the Faculty of Polish Studies of Jagiellonian University and PhD candidates of Polish Academy of Sciences.

### Organizers

**Dominika Ferens** teaches American literature the Department of English Studies, University of Wrocław, Poland. She received an MA in English from Wrocław University and a PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research interests include American minority literatures, intersections of literature and ethnography, as well as theories of race, gender and sexuality. She is the author of *Edith and Winnifred Eaton: Chinatown Missions*

*and Japanese Romances* (2002), and *Ways of Knowing Small Places: Intersections of American Literature and Ethnography Since the 1960s* (2010).

**Agata Zarzycka** is an assistant professor of literature at the Department of English Studies, Wrocław University. She has authored a monograph on role-playing games, *Socialized Fiction: Role-Playing Games as a Multidimensional Space of Interaction between Literary Theory and Practice* (2009). Her other publications deal with role-playing games, fantasy literature and participatory culture. Her current research project is devoted to Gothic influences on popular culture. She is also interested in remix, game studies, fandom and subcultures, as well as broadly understood speculative fiction.