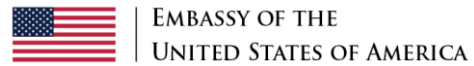


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Paulina Ambroży, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

Experimental Form and the Ethical Turn in Contemporary Poetry

The presentation is aimed to address the recent discussions of the problematic relation between poetry and ethics. The tension is especially visible in experimental forms in which any constraint is bound to limit the autonomy and openness of artistic practice. My intention is to examine selected instances of poetry vis-à-vis “the ethical turn”. I shall look into the role of “the ethical subject” and probe the limits of innovative forms in relation to the normative ethical ideals of the American public. Using the philosophical conceptualizations of ethics by Jacques Rancière, Alain Badiou and Emmanuel Levinas, I will consider the examples of poetic appropriation which have scandalized the public, namely the conceptual projects of Vanessa Place and Kenneth Goldsmith. I shall then juxtapose those engagements with a more indirect example of the poet(h)ics of space and identity in David Herd’s most recent volume *Through* (2016). The selected examples contribute to discussion of poetry’s situatedness in the public space and its impact as a cultural and political practice. Place’s and Goldsmith’s controversial use of public documents and uncreative writing to engage with the issue of racial consciousness and racial violence has provoked a severe critique of the institution of the avant-garde; while in *Through*, Herd explores and challenges the complicity of public discourse in creating narratives of exclusion, hostility and political usurpation. The British poet engages with the recent refugee crisis and the problem of exile, public (in)visibility and exclusion through his ethical interrogations of linguistically constructed nation-state and its politics of “hostile environment”.

Ewa Antoszek, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin

Challenging the Official History: the U.S.-Mexico Border Art

The case of the U.S.-Mexico border has undoubtedly been one of the most frequently discussed topics in the recent few months, due to multiple controversies concerning, among others, border crossers, deportations and family separations, to mention just a few issues that have hit the headlines.

However, the controversies about *la frontera* have appeared ever since the political division line between Mexico and the U.S. was drawn under the premises of the Guadalupe-Hidalgo Treaty in the mid-19th century. Due to the problematic status and functions of the border, it has always been interpreted through the lens of at least two perspectives: the official, mainstream discourse, supporting the idea of a fixed demarcation line with the wall as a marker of this political division and a re-visioned image of the border, focusing on its putative and arbitrary status.

Those different visions of the border have been reflected both in literary and artistic representations. Border-wall art constitutes a particular voice in the discussion on the U.S.-Mexico border, as it aptly reflects ongoing debates about the border and therefore, recent years have witnessed a proliferation of different examples of border-wall art. Due to its inherent characteristics – immediacy, as it quickly reacts to current events and since it has allowed marginalized voices to be heard border-wall art often works as Freire’s limit acts. The purpose of my presentation is to analyze selected examples of border-wall art and their role in subverting the official history of the U.S.-Mexico border and creating an alternative vision of this contested space.

Patrycja Antoszek, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

Postwar Psychiatry and Female Melancholia in Shirley Jackson’s *The Bird’s Nest*

The aim of my presentation will be to discuss the postwar medical treatment of female mental disorders as depicted in Shirley Jackson’s most critically neglected novel *The Bird’s Nest* (1954). Commonly described as a psychological horror story, the book deals with the problem of medical pathologizing of women whose complex subjectivity rendered them psychologically unstable. I want to argue that Jackson’s narrative anticipates in many ways Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* and may be read as a commentary on the 1950’s cultural politics with its clearly defined roles for women. Through its critique of scientific methods of treating female melancholy, and through an implicit defense of madness, the novel combines the psychological and the social to make an important political statement. What is more, Jackson challenges not only the postwar approach to “the female problem” but also the Female Gothic tradition by suggesting there may be no escape from feminine entrapment.

Kacper Bartczak, *University of Lodz*

Ironic Self-Making in Rae Armantrout's Recent Poetry

Rae Armantrout's minimalistic language montages examine and undermine related clusters of conceptual schemes. Some of them belong to the broad idea of nature, the natural, including the evolutionary – especially the tendency to treat those as the new version of the myth of the given. Others focus on the philosophical and mathematical idea of oneness, unity, digital-like coherence of systems. A still different group of her poems deconstruct the notion of the self-reliant, independent individual subject who allegedly has access to his or her authentic needs and desires. Such self is exposed in this poetry as one more harmful myth of the given. The unitary self is a kind of system and its destructive tendencies show that oneness-bound constructs are a form of obsessive disorders. In Armantrout's earlier volumes this critique extended over various spheres of American public discourse: the consumerist culture, journalism and media, the conglomerate of media and politics. In a group of her more recent poems, however, the scrutiny seems to have shifted to what used to be called the "inner" psychological sphere. The attention given to certain psychological phenomena is part of the poet's ongoing battle against the logocentric clichés. At the same time, these poems work toward a version of the self in which irony is not exclusively a corrosive tool. Instead, the poem's critical and ironic dismantling of the essentialist discourses of subjectivity creates a network of shifting self-portraits in which self-making is equivalent to negotiating our entanglement in the many deficient systems we want to distance ourselves from.

Tomasz Basiuk, *Warsaw University*

Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri and the Katechon in the Lens of Sedgwick's Paranoid versus Reparative Reading

The film's allusion to Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" suggests the theme of diffuse responsibility and of a sense of mystery shrouding the identity of the evil doer. The film ends without achieving resolution other than the protagonist comprehending that she has the choice of meting out justice as a vigilante while targeting the factually wrong person with her punitive action, or of exercising restraint in her radicalism. This scenario may be read as a political allegory illustrating the principle of the katechon understood in one of two ways: either in terms of the canonical reading of the katechon as republicanism or in terms of Paolo Virno's discussion of the multitude as katechon. Furthermore, the film illustrates the two modes of reading identified by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick as paranoid and reparative (a distinction modeled on Melanie Klein's discussion of the paranoid-schizoid position and the depressive position). Although these various ways of looking at the film are not collapsible, they reinforce each other, making the film readable in both psychological and political terms.

Magdalena Bazylewicz, *University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw*

Is There Anything Engaging in American Socially Engaged Fiction?

Literature of social reform brings to mind the turn-of-the-century gritty novels, a belletristic indictment of uncurbed capitalism chronicling the plight of American worker, written by activist, left-wing and communist authors who aimed to change the world. Not only did those novels resonate with the audience and legislators of that time, but also became American classics, representative of their era. Today, a rather peculiar notion has arisen: in the incredibly vast American literary market novels for social change found their corner within the PEN/Bellwether Prize for Socially Engaged Fiction. Since 2000 a jury comprising of distinguished authors, including Barbara Kingsolver, Toni Morrison and Ursula K. Le Guin, have chosen nine unpublished novels that address issues of social justice. What makes them "socially engaged"? What issues do they tap into and what is their place on modern political grid? Is labeling an unpublished novel as socially engaged a bold move or one that proves that such fiction has become a literary niche commenting upon certain agreed topics with no consequence? Through literary and historical analysis of these self-proclaimed social novels we can begin to examine what has become of American literature of social reform.

Anna Bendrat, *Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin*

"Old Hunger": Metaphors of Embodiment and Identity in the New Generation of Asian American Voices

Recent linguistic, cultural and psychological studies carried out under the umbrella of cognitive studies promote the view that culture plays a significant role in the use of metaphorical language. As Zhang Lei (2016) points out, "Two cultures may

use different metaphors to represent the same reality or they may share a conceptual metaphor but the linguistic expression of the conceptual metaphor may show subtle differences.” The paper focuses on the metaphors related to the notion of the embodiment characteristic for Asian American culture. The metaphors come from two cultural productions: Julia Cho’s play *Aubergine* (2017) and the blog *Thick Dumpling Skin* run by Asian American actors and writers. As the selected examples will demonstrate, the metaphors defining Asian American identity are definitely more than simple devices of poetic imagination. Instead, in the culture where “teeny tiny appears to be the norm,” the body-based metaphors are first and foremost “social, cultural and familial” (*Thick Dumpling Skin*’s intro).

Michał Choiński and Jan Rybicki, Jagiellonian University, Cracow

Lee, Hohoff or Capote? - On the Stylometric Relationships Between *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Go Set a Watchman*

Because of their complex relationship, the two books written by Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960) and *Go Set a Watchman* (2015), constitute a truly exceptional pair in the history of American literature, if not the history of literature in general. Lee’s is the only case of a highly promising writer who, having authored a celebrated novel, remained silent for long years, only to have published another book five decades later - a novel that is, in fact, the first version of the debut text, and whose plot is set after the storyline of the first book. Understandably, the publication of *Go Set a Watchman* generated a great deal of controversy. The doubts of critics and readers regarded, among others, the issue of authorship, as some speculative minds attributed large fragments of *Go Set a Watchman* either to Truman Capote, Lee’s friend, or to Tay Hohoff, Lee’s editor. This paper seeks to address these controversies by the help of Digital Humanities. In the talk, the stylometric author attribution method, based on Burrow’s Delta measure of distance, is employed to study the stylistic connections between Capote and Lee as well as between Hohoff and Lee. By counting the frequencies of words and diverse quantifiable features of style, the author seeks to determine to what extent the “authorial fingerprint” of Capote and Hohoff remains visible in *Mockingbird* and *Watchman*.

Lennard Davis, University of Chicago

After Identity Politics and Intersectionality: Diversity, Disability, and Transclass

In the talk, I point to the hegemony of the normal giving way to the idea of diversity. Diversity, itself has its own prejudices built into the paradigm—particularly in its exclusion of the poor and disabled. Intersectionality seeks to be inclusive, but has trouble with identities that are transsectional and is retrofitted to resist the idea that it has left out anyone. Perhaps one solution is explore the possibility of the transclass and/or disabled person as an paradigm of what transsectionality might look like.

Dominika Ferens, University of Wrocław

Comics as a Medium of Crisis Ethnography

American cultural anthropology, and the practice of writing ethnography in particular, was repeatedly challenged in the last fifty years – by postcolonial subjects after the decolonization (Said, Trask); by feminists who exposed the discipline’s gender bias (Rubin, Moore); and by postmodernists who contested ethnographic representation as science (Clifford, Marcus, Fisher, Pratt). Rethinking their role in response to these challenges, American anthropologists initially turned to the study of groups and institutions within the United States rather than in faraway countries. Yet given the degree of global integration, the United States’ role in this process, and the resultant mass migrations of peoples around the globe, anthropology has been trying to reassert its role of cultural interpreter. Rather than seek out small homogeneous communities off the commercial and tourist routes, it now often studies communities in crisis, particularly those affected by war, capitalist expansion, and ethnic conflicts (Hannerz, Hartigan). A major research field is medical anthropology, which studies human health and disease, health care systems, and biocultural adaptation.

It is not only the subject matter of anthropology that has changed; so have the forms in which ethnographic knowledge is disseminated. Whereas the monograph and the ethnographic film once reigned supreme, today scholars reach for such unexpected forms as the graphic novel or ethno-fiction. The purpose of my presentation will be to survey the recent formal innovations ethnographers have introduced to withstand the various challenges from within and without the discipline. As a case study I will analyze the graphic novel *Lissa: A Story about Medical Promise, Friendship, and Revolution* (2017), co-written by ethnographers Sherine Hamdy and Coleman Nye, with art by Sarula Bao and Caroline Brewer. This highly acclaimed text, the first to be published in a series announced by the University of Toronto Press, fuses medical ethnography

and crisis ethnography. Set in Egypt and the United States, it traces the intersecting lives of two (fictional) girls, an American and an Egyptian, who face both medical and political crises.

Iwona Filipczak, *University of Zielona Góra*

Literary Revisions of the American Colonial Past in Bharati Mukherjee's *The Holder of the World* and Toni Morrison's *A Mercy*

The aim of the paper is to show how two literary texts, Bharati Mukherjee's *The Holder of the World* (1993) and Toni Morrison's *A Mercy* (2008), challenge the myth of homogeneity and purity of American origins. What connects the novels is the same historical period they refer to – they focus on the American colonial past in order to revise history. Following the statement about the “fallacy of cultural homogeneity” (Parillo 1994), which for a long time governed the thinking of many Americans, and which stems from what Parillo calls “the Dillingham Flaw”, that is, simplistic categorizations and/or anachronistic observations which can falsify the reality, I explore how the texts revive the multiculturalism of the prenational American beginnings and place it against globalization processes of that period. I argue that the novels highlight the 17th century interconnectedness of the world in order to make references to the contemporary reality. The novels can be interpreted as attempts to dispel the fears of both the diversity of contemporary immigration and its disintegrative influence on the American society.

Edyta Frelik, *Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin*

Minding the Gap: Intellect and Emotion in American Painting

The question of whether thought and feeling are incompatible, mutually exclusive, complementary or two sides of one coin is one of the oldest philosophical quandaries. In art it has often been manifested in the division between intellect- and emotion-oriented styles of expression. My main point of reference in this paper is Barbara Novak's classic art historical study, *American Painting of the Nineteenth Century: Realism, Idealism, and the American Experience*, which I will read with a view to how the author uses literary terminology and references literature in her discussion of painters and their works. On the one hand, Novak argues that 19th century American painters rarely succeeded in “interfusing the literary idea and visual form,” which she sees as corroboration of her observation that “taste in America seems always to have gone against the frankly literary romantic sensibility in the visual arts.” She goes so far as to claim that in some cases painters' literary inclinations hindered their achievements as visual artists. At the same time, she acknowledges that several of the era's most significant artists were “afflicted with a romantic literary sensibility” and yet excelled as painters who also wrote notable poetry. Interestingly, in making her case Novak relies on literary tropes when discussing how the dynamic relationship between, on the one hand, object and thought, and, on the other, thought and emotion produced many varieties of painterly realism throughout the 19th century. In fact, she defines the crucial dichotomy of thing/idea and mind/feeling not in “visual” but rather “literary” terms – thus, while some artists produced “stories in paint, but not necessarily paintings,” others highlighted “the poetic response to the felt sensation.” Ironically, Novak's most important intimation about the importance of literary ideas for art criticism is a “superficial” digression about what she calls “the ubiquity of the word in America.” Unwittingly, perhaps, she acknowledges that language-based self-awareness, today identified as the defining trait of postmodern consciousness, is the hallmark of great art, as it is of great literature, irrespective of time and place. In my examination of Novak's study, I will tease out the contradictions and ironies it contains and point out the value of art historians addressing such considerations.

Dorota Golańska, *University of Lodz*

Decentering the Human / Pluralizing Agency: Jim Denevan's Land Art

Situated within a new materialist philosophical framework and inspired by its posthumanistic, postdualistic, and affirmative orientation, this paper explores artistic projects by Jim Denevan. As I argue, an inquiry of different relationalities involved in the artistic process enables a study of how subject and object emerge as a result of “intra-activity” (Barad 2007) and let us engage more thoroughly with the “how” question of this process. Using his own body as both a tool and an active corporeal entity merging with the surrounding landscape, Jim Denevan rhythmically and in a dance-like movement creates ephemeral gigantic drawings on sand, soil, or ice. They emerge out of a dynamic assemblage of the artist's body and his tools and the local geophysical situation with different sorts of matter or forces present there. The natural environment operates as an agent actively engaged in the whole process of artistic creation—of both making and unmaking of the drawings. Focusing on the engagement of the artist with the environment and the random audiences present on site, I want to make clear that

such eco-sensitive creation may serve as an illuminating example of the dispersed and plural nature of agency, offering a truly davispostanthropocentric view of art.

Sylwia Gryciuk, University of Wrocław

Appropriating the Voice of a Child Murder Victim/Survivor: JonBenét Ramsey Case in American Literature

On December 26, 1996 the quiet town of Boulder, Colorado was shaken out of the holiday mood by a shocking news – six-year-old JonBenét Ramsey was found murdered in the basement of her upper-scale home, hours after her parents reported her kidnapped for ransom. When it quickly emerged that the little girl had participated in controversial child beauty pageants, her story attracted nationwide attention, and soon the images of JonBenét stylized to look like an alluring woman became a disquieting presence recurring in media and academic discourse. Lacking legal closure, many were tempted to speculate not only on the identity of the killer, but also on the broader culture significance of the crime and its aftermath. What resulted were troubling tales of wealth, status, sex, and death, with the murdered child as the silent protagonist. In my presentation, I will take a look at how the Ramsey murder mystery is being interpreted in American literature. Namely, I will show how JonBenét's voice—or the voice of a proxy figure—is being appropriated to present a critique of American ethos, with an emphasis put on such concepts and issues as: American dream, American family, and consumer society. The primary sources will include a work by a critically and popularly acclaimed author (*My Sister, My Love: The Intimate Story of Skyler Rampike* by Joyce Carol Oates), as well as two semi-professional works of English professors (“Cowboy's Sweetheart” by Walter A. Davies, and *The Memoirs of JonBenet* by Kathy Acker by Michael du Plessis).

Elżbieta Horodyska, Warsaw University

How Is Affective Critical Regionality Different from Critical Regionalism? Ways to Rethink the Region in Jim Harrison's Novels

One of the novel yet nostalgic tendencies emerging in America is a return to the region and one's roots. But, rather than imagining the region as an isolated stagnant place in opposition to forces of globalization, reminiscent of the root system of a tree – growing vertically downwards, critical regionalism sees the region as a vibrant meshwork of histories, voices and presences intersecting with and open to global phenomena, more like the root system of a rhizome – spreading horizontally, sending new roots and upward shoots on its way. One of the protagonists of Jim Harrison's 1988 novel *Dalva*, the eponymous heroine's great-grandfather, is a botanist who studies root systems of plants in Western territories of 19th century United States. His approach to building a life in America very literally invokes Lewis Mumford's “from-the-ground-up” approach to architecture: before considering implementation of universal norms, start with the particulars of place. For Northridge, these include local people – indigenous Americans. His building of a connection based on dialogue, respect and exchange with the Sioux continues well into *Dalva*'s present, having spread like Neil Campbell's rhizomes of the *Rhizomatic West*. Another protagonist, the historian granted access to Northridge's 19th century journals digs the past very much like Northridge dug the earth, and in the course of study abandons the disconnected cosmopolitan stance characteristic of academia in favor of a partial idiosyncratic viewpoint of a man constantly mending the casualties of Indian Wars in an effort to include indigenous population in the emerging new state.

Tomasz Jacheć, University of Warmia and Mazury, Olsztyn

The Challenge of “Knowing Your Place”: Protests by AfricanAmerican Athletes 2014-2018

When discussing social activism in American sports, Orin Starn distinguished three categories of professional athletes. First, there were activist athletes. Those, socially-conscious sport stars emerged during the Civil Rights Movement era, and one could find among them such names as: Muhammad Ali, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Roberto Clemente, or Tommy Smith. Second, corporate athletes who took to stage in the mid-80s and 90s of the twentieth century. The embodiment of a corporate athlete would be Michael Jordan. In the recent decade, Starn observed an emergence of a blend of the previous two types of athletes: corporate-backed, yet socially active athletes such as Colin Kaepernick, LeBron James or Steph Curry.

Since 2014, a growing number of professional athletes have gotten involved in social issues. “Black lives matter”, “We can't breathe”, or “Hands up, Don't shoot!” were the slogans used by some athletes. Others knelt while national anthem was being played before games. Ever since January 2016, verbal quarrels between predominantly black athletes and predominantly right-wing republicans have become more frequent. There is a reason for that.

In the paper, I would like to present a number of variables (and one main factor) that pushed black, corporate athletes towards outspoken and unapologetic, public quarrel with right-wing politicians and journalists. Also, I would like to place the open exchange of invectives between politicians, reporters, and athletes in a broader context of the discourse on race, class and culture

Jerzy Kamionowski, *University of Białystok*

“Keepin Things Honest”: Wanda Coleman’s (Formal) Challenges to American Racism

Wanda Coleman, who attended a deep image poet Diane Wakoski’s workshop in 1971, forty years later complains in an interview with Malin Pereira that “[her] content always received the most of any outside attention”; whereas the form was either entirely neglected or dismissed as “oral.” As she claims, her poetry is as much immersed in the deep image poetics, with its focus on direct expression of anger and the exploration of “narratively shaped landscape of images,” as in the projectivist formal experiments. The constant subject of her poetry is a gendered experience of racism, its aim – to “deepen the dialogue on American racism,” whose most striking and literarily ambitious example are the poems included in *Metaphysically Niggerish*.

For this purpose, Coleman altered/refreshed her poetry formally by consistent practice of producing poems that represent deliberate interventions in the hegemonic Euro-American tradition. She experimented with the sonnet, destabilizing the form by “jazzing it up” in *American Sonnets* series, and undertook a project of polemical dialogue with the white American tradition and the individual poets who subscribe to it, by re-writing and “shape-shifting” their poems in *Retro Rogue Anthology*. She did it from a “very black” perspective, anchored in the black (woman’s) experience. Most of the *Retro Rogue* poems are intentionally the black “versions” of poems found in a 1971 anthology entitled *The Contemporary American Poets. American Poetry Since 1940*, which excludes almost completely African American poets. Coleman engages deeply with their poems, often taking them to task or going for the jugular, preferring to keep “things honest” rather than keep them “whole,” as Mark Strand does. I am going to explore the interconnections and interplay between the sanctified poetic forms and concrete poems, and racist reality in America.

Jeff Kleiman, *University of Wisconsin*

American Exceptionalism and the Authoritarian Appeal

American Exceptionalism is a dangerous myth that blinds many in the United States to the dangers of authoritarian rule. It remains ingrained in the popular mind so deeply that any mainstream politician dares not reject it. As recently as 2008, some assailed Obama for suggesting that this country did not occupy a unique and special place in the world’s history.

A critical component of this belief rests with the conviction that a divine presence protects the American people. Religion, notably evangelical and fundamentalist Protestantism, embraces and promotes this view. It is important to note that religion remains a vital component in American culture, far greater than exists in much of contemporary Western Europe. These levels exceed those in Ireland and Poland. They help to explain the continued voices advocating for America’s divinely ordained mission.

These highly motivated voters can wield a disproportionate influence in national elections, having done so since 1980. Their demand for absolute truth rooted in divine revelation expresses a radical vision, of both leaders and followers, at odds with modern values of an open, tolerant, democratic society.

This particular form of religious faith lends itself to strong authoritarian behaviors, often encouraged by those who also possess an authoritarian inclination to dominate. The result becomes a marriage between those who seek to follow and those who want to lead. Rather than build upon consensus and compromise, people who want certainty and absolute control, especially in service to a higher cause, seek to silence other voices.

Authoritarianism promises these results with pledges to deliver. The values put into place emerge as strongly anti-democratic, highly intolerant of any deviation from the approved cultural beliefs, and an understanding that inequality is normal. Justice focuses on punishment for the traditional crimes against society as well as dissent. By voting en bloc, authoritarians dramatically increase the possibilities to influence outcomes at the local and national levels.

However, more is at stake than the form or philosophy of authoritarian government. Authoritarian personalities, both leaders and followers, produce dreadful results through their policies at home and abroad. The willingness to engage in violent

conflict not only degrades the life of their citizens, but also threatens larger regional and global conflict. In sum, the twin strands of American Exceptionalism and religious radicalism open the doors to an authoritarian state in America.

Agnieszka Kotwasińska, Warsaw University

Transgenerational Haunting in *The Possession* and *Demon*

In my presentation I would like to examine two recent horror movies – Ole Bornedal's *Possession* (2012) and Marcin Wrona's *Demon* (2015) – both of which utilize the Jewish myth of a *dybbuk* in order to discuss collective memory and transgenerational trauma. Bornedal's movie follows a typical possession narrative, in which a young prepubescent girl's curiosity is punished when she releases a demon from a dybbuk box. The young girl becomes sullen and moody and her body undergoes drastic changes, which puts *The Possession* squarely within a narrative scheme theorized by Barbara Creed (1993), in which it is a young woman's budding sexuality and unruly femininity that are the actual sources of threat to the patriarchal power (represented in *The Possession* by a rabbi and the girl's father.) Still, the malevolent spirit's connection to Jewish mythology are vague at best, and the Jewish-Orthodox exorcism and the presence of a rabbi seem mere trappings at best, a misdirection used not to discuss the Holocaust and a transgenerational haunting (Abraham and Torok, 1975), which remain a rather obvious connection to the dybbuk box. In contrast, Wrona's *Demon* cannot be neatly explained by Creed's scheme, as it is a foreign groom at a traditional Polish wedding who becomes possessed by a dead Jewish girl's spirit, but since patriarchal figures are powerless, the movie ends with the groom's disappearance and yet another collective act of forgetting. And while the movie consciously deploys classic possession horror tropes it does so in order to undermine them and prove how truly absurd they are in the face of true horror – an effective erasure of a pre-WWII Jewish community. While *The Possession* refuses to deal with the consequences of a transgenerational haunting, *Demon* delves deep into hauntological processes of remembering, reliving, imagining, and, most crucially, forgetting, censoring, and refusing to look.

Andrzej Kozłowski, University of Lodz

Russian Active Measures in 2016 Presidential Elections in the United States

In 2016 the United States were under attack. It was not military or nuclear threat but a new one – the information aggression. Surprisingly, the Internet which was designed to spread freedom and democracy was used effectively to destabilize and disrupt the oldest democracy of the modern world. American intelligence community and politicians were confused and did not know how to defend and response to this threat. However, it was not a new one. Russia used the old Cold War methods called “active measures” but this time equipped modern, digital tools to strengthen the effects.

The following paper aims to answer the question how Russia used the active measures to influence the presidential election in the United States and what was the outcome. What is more, the article will try to estimate the effectiveness of the Russian actions. The first step to answer this question is to define what the active measures during Cold War were and how Russia applied it to the 21st century and modern technologies. Next, the paper will provide the background and reasons why Russians used these methods. Last but not least, the crucial point of article would be to provide examples of certain active measures techniques used in presidential campaign. Finally, the repercussion for the security of the United States and its allies would be presented.

Karolina Krasuska, Warsaw University

Holocaust and Communist (Post) Memory in Recent Post Soviet Jewish American Writers

This presentation focuses on literary texts by Jewish North American authors writing in English who as children or teenagers arrived from the (former) Soviet Union in the 1980s and 1990s and who publishing since 2002 have successfully carved out a niche for themselves on the American literary scene. These writers, whom I tag “Post-Soviet Jewish North-American writers,” are of the same age cohort as the generation producing now already canonical third generation Holocaust narratives. Yet, the presence of Holocaust postmemory in their writing is in stark contrast to such writers as Nicole Krauss, Jonathan Safran Foer or Nathan Englander. This contrast stems from the different modes of memory and postmemory punctuating their work. First, their work – read next to recently burgeoning research on “flight survivors” evacuated deep into the Soviet Union, complicates our understanding of the “survivor” and the Holocaust itself. Boris Fishman's *Replacement Life* (2014), Lara Vapnyar's “There are Jews in my House” (2003), and Julia Alekseyeva's *Soviet Daughter* (2017) are

pertinent examples here. Second, these works interconnect the narratives of the Holocaust and narratives of the Soviet communist regime, and especially what is remembered as the Great Patriotic War. This iteration of what in a different context Max Silverstein has called “palimpsestic memory,” significantly expands – geographically, historically, conceptually – our understanding of Holocaust (post)memory in Jewish American literature. Third, in addition to indirectly challenging what is usually memorialized and how, these writers address the specific mode of Holocaust memorialization in the US and Canada explicitly, as it is the case in Bezmogis’s “An Animal to the Memory” (2004) or Anya Ulinich’s “The Nurse and the Novelist” (2008). In their often-autobiographical novels, short stories and graphic memoirs these writers produce a new mode of Holocaust postmemory that is heavily inflected by their own immigrant positioning and Soviet memory.

Ewa Łuczak, *Warsaw University*

Rebel Clowning and its Power/lessness: Eugenic Sterilizations and Tomorrow’s Children

Eugenics, envisioned as a science of genetic modification of society or simply as a science of better breeding of humans in order to produce the society of racially pure aristocrats, in the 1920 and 1930 celebrated its triumph. With the 1924 Johnson law for the control of immigration and the 1927 the Supreme Court decision that upheld the constitutionality of eugenic sterilization law in Virginia, eugenics ceased to be a speculative science and became an agent of change in the internal and social politics in the United States. As such, it entered both official American discourse and American personal lives.

In my presentation I examine on the role of what I perceive to be rebel clowning in the anti-eugenic educational film *Tomorrow’s Children* released in 1934. The script for the film was written by Wallace Thurman, one of the major intellectuals of the Harlem Renaissance. To my knowledge the film is the only Hollywood production explicitly addressing the topic of eugenic sterilizations in the United States –one of the key interests of the medical and legal world of the 1930s. The film was to draw attention to the problem of hasty and careless eugenic sterilizations, yet the eugenic reasoning it applied blunted its criticism. What I argue is that even though ambivalent about its attitude towards the science of eugenics, the film includes avenues of powerful opposition to the discourse of heredity through its use of humor.

Magdalena Marczuk-Karbownik, *University of Lodz*

NAFTA and Other Problems in the Current US-Canada Relations

The history of US and Canada shows that there were several critical moments in their bilateral relations through the years. The fact that these two countries are not only the neighbors with the longest land boundary, but also the closest economic partners and the allies has always helped to overcome the crisis.

The administration of Donald Trump is a big challenge for Canada. Justin Trudeau and his liberal government has to deal with a very controversial republican politician. Despite the ideological discrepancy, there are a lot of differences particularly in attitude towards refugees, the minorities rights, global climate warming and free trade agreements.

The paper will discuss the changes that have taken place in the US-Canada relations following Donald Trump’s ascension to the US presidency, especially the economic aspects. A particular emphasis will be put to the US stance on NAFTA and NAFTA renegotiations seen from Canadian perspective. Trump’s aggressive rhetoric towards Canadian economy will be analysed as well. The paper will present how the Washington’s decisions have determined Trudeau’s policies and influenced the Canadian economy.

Małgorzata Martynuska, *University of Rzeszów*

Mexican Challenge: Cultural Hybridity Presented in the Celebration of Day of the Dead in the USA

The term ‘hybridity’ refers to the heterogeneous aspects of cultural formation, the intermixtures of language, culture, politics and race, which emerge through contact and uneven exchange. The process has been more intense and widen in its scope as people has become more mobile. The rapid growth of the Hispanic population in the USA is leading to Latinization of many areas of American social life, producing cultural hybridity, e.g. Spanglish language or Tex-Mex food. The presentation concerns the hybridization of Mexican celebrations of Day of the Dead (*Día de los Muertos*) in the USA.

The Aztec ritual of *Día de los Muertos* centred on special food and flower offerings, grave visits with music and dance, elaborate ceremonies, and feasting. Spanish conquistadors who arrived in the 16th century tried to replace those traditions with the practices of the Roman Catholic Church. However, the Indigenous peoples did not abandon their ancient ceremonies; instead, they chose to blend the old customs with those of the Church. The pre-Colombian elements were combined with Catholic iconography such as images of important saints, Jesus, the Virgin Mary, crucifixes, rosary beads

and statuettes of angels. In the 1970s, secular Day of the Dead celebrations were introduced in the United States as a way to express the messages of the Chicano Movement. However, the character of the holiday became more pan-Latino, rather than strictly Mexican, because California became home to immigrants from different parts of Latin America. This pattern has been repeated in other parts of the USA where diverse Latino populations live in the same neighbourhoods. Moreover, Day of the Dead rituals became popular among people from a non-Latino background, thus, the ceremony has been incorporated into American mainstream culture.

Paulina Matera, *University of Lodz*

CEU-US Sanction Policy Against Iran in the 21st Century: From Cooperation to Drift

The aim of this paper is to explore the roles played by the European Union and the United States in the process of imposing sanctions against Iran. The reasons for adopting a coordinated policy on this matter, despite the initial divergences, will be examined. I will try to identify the different goals of the allies toward Tehran and to verify whether these could lead to a serious dispute between the allies and cause the renewal of the Iranian nuclear program. The question of leadership in this coalition, in terms of economic capability to influence the situation in Iran, as well as the impact on third parties will be also analyzed.

Łukasz Muniowski, *Warsaw University*

Tim Duncan: The Boredom of Excellence

The modern NBA has as much to do with Guy Debord's idea of spectacle as it does with actual basketball. In other words, for the spectators entertainment is as important as sports competition. Competition can be entertaining in its own way, but when basketball teams are more concerned with fundamentals than spectacular plays, fans may eventually lose interest in the outcome of the competition. The former San Antonio Spurs player, Tim Duncan, was the back-to-back MVP in 2002 and 2003. He won five NBA championships. He is regarded as the best power forward in league history. And yet he lacks an official biography. The question that this chapter tries to answer is: whether an athlete as consistently dominant and uncontroversial as Duncan can actually make for a compelling biographical subject? Is it possible to turn a boring professional career into an interesting story?

Duncan played for the same team for nineteen seasons and was not involved in any scandals, so it is understandable to some extent why he did not conjure up enough interest to produce a single biography. He was successful in college and in the league, was a team player who did not care about fame or money. And yet, the universal respect that Duncan enjoys does not seem honest – his achievements are praised unanimously, but his play not so much. In other words, fans feel obligated to respect him, although publicly they prefer to display loyalty to flashy players.

Małgorzata Myk, *University of Lodz*

Austerity Measures in New American Avant-Garde Poetry

My presentation is titled after the opening sequence of poet Stacy Szymaszek's 2016 *Journal of Ugly Sites & Other Journals* to investigate socially engaged poetic modes that continue to challenge the present-day economic, political, and ecological status quo in the U.S. Preoccupied with multifariousness of American negative space, poets such as, among others, Szymaszek, CA Conrad, Juliana Spahr, or K. Lorraine Graham treat poetic praxis as a necessary abandonment of the public / private dichotomy and the interplay of skepticism and affect; an intransigent form of intense engagement with the present through the entire spectrum of negative affects examined by Sianne Ngai in her 2005 book as "ugly feelings," including thought-provoking analyses of emotions such as, for instance, irritation, anxiety, paranoia, or disgust. My inquiry brings into focus these poets' use of negative emotions regarding negative space, and simultaneously traces their sense of poetic form as "austere," placing emphasis on interrogation of such qualities as plainness, simplicity, sternness, and severity, all of which are treated as ambivalent categories contingent on discourses seen as dominant in concrete instants and locations. Along these lines, I am also interested in whether their writings propose to challenge the negative poetic mode itself and destabilize negation without abandoning its critical impetus.

Urszula Niewiadomska-Flis, *The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin*

From Gastronomic Peepshows to Food Fatigue: The (Ab)uses of Food in the 21st Century

It is hard to argue that proliferation of social media at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries – themed blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or such social media platforms as Flickr and Tumblr – began to incentivize people to indulge in the “selfie culture.” Both special occasions and everyday reality became objects of the gaze, one’s private world became a spectacle for the masses. Digital media precipitated the outbreak of “narcissism epidemic.” As a form of digital narcissism many Americans started to engage in exhibitionist practices of food consumption/preparation. Food, which is the crucial marker of our identity, culture and belonging, became the object of obsessive and compulsive fetishisation. By enabling gastronomic voyeurism, digital media users created a demand for glamorized photographs or videos of food in self-obsessed individuals. As such food porn became a gastronomic peepshow of sorts. However, both food porn which feeds on the “supernormal stimuli” (a term coined by Nikolaas Tinbergen, the Dutch biologist) and instafood (Instagram #food photos) can have adverse reactions. On the one hand photographing and sharing one’s food can make it taste better (extra time to savor the experience); on the other its excessive practice can lead to sensory boredom or even to food fatigue. Whatever the outcome, the fact remains that through (ab)using the images and/or videos of food preparation/consumption, digital technologies animate problems and challenges of the times.

Anna Pochmara, *Warsaw University*

Escapes and Returns: Mobility in African American Mulatta Melodrama

In this paper, I will examine the figuring of black women’s movements in selected texts of early African American fiction (*W. W. Brown’s Clotel, Or the President’s Daughter*, Frances Harper’s *Iola Leroy*, and Pauline Hopkins’s *Hagar’s Daughter*). The focus on mobility will enable me to show how the texts enter a dialogue with both the traditional slave narrative paradigm, which follows one individual and depicts a linear journey from slavery to freedom, and hegemonic woman’s fiction, which privileges domestic spaces. All the examined novels simultaneously represent stories of two or three generations of dislocated family members, whose trajectories are circular rather than linear; they end in homecomings yet are devoid of nostalgia. Such a representation of mobility results in a chaotic and fragmentary aesthetics that confounds the reader’s literary expectations and, thus, renders the unpredictability and instability of the fate of black families and their separations. I will discuss both the issue of forced travel in the novels, which sends the heroines (back) into slavery and their self-determined action undertaken to reunite the families. All the texts showcase strong, independent black femininity, which, despite its respectable ambitions, extends beyond the contemporary bourgeois notions of “the cult of true womanhood.” I will also explore the way that the racial ambiguity of the protagonists – light-skinned mulattas – correlates with their freedom of movement and ability to assume different identities.

Marc Priewe, *University of Stuttgart*

Oceanic Exchanges: Tracing Global Media Events in Historical Newspaper Repositories

Newspapers were the first big data for mass audiences. Their dramatic expansion in the nineteenth century created a global culture of abundant, rapidly circulating information. The significance of the newspaper, however, has largely been defined in metropolitan and national terms in scholarship of the period. The recent collecting and digitization by local institutions has further situated newspapers within a national context, often making transnational work in nineteenth-century archival resources a tedious and at times impossible undertaking. The present paper emerges from the work of an international research group that seeks to make nineteenth-century newspaper collections more applicable for scholarship by interfacing national archives and by testing various means of cross-linguistic computational text analysis. In this case study I trace the news coverage on the eruption of Krakatoa in 1883, one of the most impactful natural disasters of the century, transnationally. This is done through a comparison of various news cycles on the volcanic eruption and its aftermath in six national, digital newspaper archives. In order to study the geo-temporal expansion of coverage and to compare particular elements of the reporting (natural occurrences, fatalities, navigation, etc.), automatic reprinting detection algorithms are used. After clusters of news reporting and reprinting have been identified, sentiment analysis tools and methods help to analyze the content and style of coverage across national and linguistic boundaries. Such a DH-informed approach aims to advance our understanding about the relationship between distance and sympathy and the ideological underpinnings of nineteenth-century news reporting in the United States and abroad.

Aleksandra Różalska, University of Lodz

Race and Political Correctness in American Television: The (Post)racial Politics of Scandal and How to Get Away with Murder

Drawing from intersectionality theories and African-American critiques of white, masculinist, and racist discourses still prevailing in American popular culture of the 21st century, in my paper I look critically at contemporary images of African Americans and race relations in selected television series. I examine whether these narratives are novel in portraying contemporary black experiences or, rather, they inscribe themselves in assimilationist and postracial ways of representation. In this context I will look at two popular ABC television shows produced by Shonda Rhimes: *Scandal* and *How To Get Away With Murder*.

Klara Szmańko, University of Opole

Oppressive Faces of Whiteness in Walter Mosley's *Devil in a Blue Dress*

Walter Mosley's *Devil in a Blue Dress* contributes significantly to the literary debate on the definition of whiteness. The socio-historical construction of whiteness emerging from the novel is amplified by white imagery dovetailing with the claims made about white people directly. For the African American first person narrator, Easy Rawlins, living in post-World War II Los Angeles, whiteness mostly spells terror. The oppressive faces of whiteness consist in the following trajectories: property relations, economic exploitation, labour relations, the legal system, different means of oppressive white masculinity denigrating blackness, spatial dynamics of post-World War II Los Angeles and the white apparatus of power that the narrator needs to confront throughout the novel. White imagery carried to the extreme magnifies the terrorizing aspect of whiteness in the narrative. Like many authors of colour, Mosley associates whiteness with death. Whiteness inundates Easy Rawlins from all sides, entailing insincerity, dishonesty, interestedness and hypocrisy. The following exploration of whiteness in Walter Mosley's *Devil in a Blue Dress* delves into different facets of white oppression in relation to such spheres as the law, the economy, space, white imagery and white masculinity.

Mark Tardi, University of Lodz

"Dumb Duke Death": On the Radical Anti-nostalgia Poetics of Lisa Jarnot & Jennifer Moxley

In her 2003 collection *Black Dog Songs*, renowned American poet Lisa Jarnot offers the reader a portfolio of poems entitled "My Terrorist Notebook." In this "notebook," poems such as "Swamp Formalism," "Dumb Duke Death," "Cave Poem" and others present a vision for post-9/11 America that is resolutely critical of prevailing American mythologies, institutions, and figures in power: Jarnot's recursive poetic structures both heighten the rhythmic and ludic qualities of the circumstances interrogated, but also toggle between playful humor and biting ethical confrontation. Similarly, Jennifer Moxley's 2009 collection *Clampdown* insightfully leverages voice and address, and conversational tone in poems which run counter to the optimism swirling around the election of Barack Obama, America's first black president. Instead, Moxley captures how liberal thought is implicated in the systems it critiques, producing new divisions within the country. The past Moxley contemplates in her poems provides no quarter for nostalgia and the future proves frayed.

Using the work of Cary Wolfe and others, this presentation seeks to examine in a posthumanist vein how these poets and contemporaries redirect nostalgic or idealistic inclinations during two pivotal periods in recent American history. Jarnot's poems seem consider the George W. Bush administration from the perspective of a nation's affect on the environment; Moxley's speakers voice concern with the role of citizenship within the community. Both use poetic form and lyric experimentation dynamically to enact exasperation with national discourse and wider social structures.

Jędrzej Tazbir, University of Lodz

The Phenomenon of and the Responses to War As the (Negative) Sublime in the Novels by Crane, Vonnegut, and O'Brien

The presentation will aim to explore the theme of war in the role of the sublime as depicted in select American novels. Drawing upon the notions formulated by Burke, Kant, and Lyotard, the author defines the sublime as that which overwhelms the imaginative capacity due to its incomprehensibility and immeasurability, and which, due to these very qualities, simultaneously attracts and repels the individual's mind. This in turn has the effect of causing on the one hand a proliferation

of imaginative constructs aimed at representing the source of the sublime, and on the other hand frustration at one's inability to successfully express, articulate, or intellectually grasp and contain said object or phenomenon. Since the author views the sublime as nonindependent from the subject's perception/judgment, the analysis will focus on studying the perspectives of the novels' protagonists. The presentation will trace how the events of World War II and later the Vietnam War seemed to have compelled a drastic shift in the portrayal of the individual's relation to war as the source of the sublime. What began in Crane's *Red Badge* as a relation which, while still exploitative, spurs one's creative output and allows the individual to distinguish oneself from nature/physical environment, assumes in the postwar writings the form of a process of entropy/disintegration of the self. The war becomes here a negative sublime, whose immeasurability and capacity to invoke terror is now so overbearing as to not only hinder even an attempt at representation, but also erode other pre-existing conceptualizations featuring in the individual's mind, forcing one to erect new imaginary, often phantasmagorical structures in order to retain one's sanity and mental autonomy.

Justyna Wierzchowska, Warsaw University

"My Body Is Your Vehicle": Revisiting the Past and Modifying the Present in Janine Antoni's Embodied Art

In my presentation I want to discuss American visual artist Janine Antoni's strategies of using the iconography of the past to modify the present. Born in 1964, Antoni for over thirty years has been working in performance art, sculpture and photography, oscillating between the intimate and the public to rework traditional aesthetic scripts. In "Touch" (2004), "Inhabit" (2009), "At Home with my Body" (2010), "Paper Dance" (2013), and "Honey Baby" (2016), she exploits and extends the imagism and performativity of second-wave feminist art, especially that of Louise Bourgeois, thus enlivening the questions concerning the representation and functioning of the female subject. Her artistic output lends itself to various readings that disrupts the neoliberal idea of subjectivity as self-reliant, autonomous and emotionally self-contained by reaching out into the historically silenced areas of the female experience, such as women's transgenerational connection. In my talk, I want to first present Antoni's works in their cultural context and then discuss the critical reception that, in my view, is informative of a shift in the aesthetic discourse of the 21st century. I will read Antoni's series as regenerative in their potential to enhance a critical discourse that revisits, modifies and expands the ways in which subjectivity can be theorized in the contemporary United States.

Elżbieta Wilczyńska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

Native Americans and the Challenges of Capitalist America – the Osage and the Pequot

Native Americans have been a challenge for the white settlers since the moment the latter set their foot on an American continent. They baffled the newcomers on many grounds: their cosmology, community way of life, and eventually an insistence to stick to their culture in spite of numerous manifestations of success of the western culture. They also surprised the settlers when they successfully employed some of the ways of American way of life yet perpetuated their culture based on interrelatedness, common ownership of land and resources and tribal customs. One of the areas where their success was noticeable though not frequent and frequently reported was economy, which proved adaptability of Native Americans to the capitalist system. Sometimes they achieved success but lost their culture, while other times they tried to reconcile both their tradition and demands of market economy, with sundry results for either. The latter cases however did not receive much recognition, as if supporting the hypothesis that material wealth was a challenge for Native Americans, who did not universally approved of it. Likewise, it troubled non-Indians as it undermined the prevalent image of an Indian as a chronic economic failure or victim suffering from the social ills such as alcoholism, poverty, crime, prostitution and the like, which was conducive for the thesis of inevitable assimilation and Americanization of Native Americans. There are many cases that counter this myth, many reported in a recent book of 2013 by Alexandra Harman titled *Rich Indians. Native People and the Problem of Wealth in American history*, yet none of them received a wider circulation among the general public. One of the cases has been described in a book *Killers of the Flower Moon* (2017) by David Grann,; it gives a great insight into the extraordinary financial success of the Osage Tribe in Oklahoma at the time of the boom of oil industry in the 1920s. Contemporary examples of economically successful Native Americans can be found in gaming industry and in many tribal entrepreneurial businesses set up, for example, by the Choctaw tribe. They all show that Native Americans have adopted many measures of the capitalist society, thus challenging another prevalent myth of Indian as a Noble or Ignoble savage. This paper will briefly mention the Native American nations who successfully employed the rules of market economy, and focus on the nineteenth twentieth case of the Osage tribe and the late twentieth century Pequot Tribe as examples of successful and thus wealthy Native American nations, and the consequences the wealth has incurred both for the Native

Americans and their reception by non-Indians. In short, this paper will dwell of the challenges and consequences of a forced marriage between capitalism and Native American culture.

Justyna Włodarczyk, Warsaw University

Love and Other Technologies: B.F. Skinner's Challenge to American Individualism in *Walden Two*

B.F. Skinner, the founder of American behaviorism, is not fondly remembered by both the public and the academy. Cognitivism has long since displaced behaviorism as the dominant perspective in psychology and Skinner's scorn for "mentalism" (basically, any explanations of behavior that do not focus on contingency analysis) means that he never influenced the classic humanities in the way that, for example, Noam Chomsky has. There is one community that continues to praise Skinner's techniques: dog trainers. There, he is credited with creating technologies of behavior-shaping that are compatible with the affection trainers felt for their animals: an ethical system of training that does not rely on punishment. It is most striking that behaviorism was perceived by the trainers as a technology of love; a scientifically proven method of creating mutual affective ties between trainer and trainee; a fact noted by, for example, Donna Haraway (2003, 2008). Skinner's one foray into fiction consisted of a utopian novel titled *Walden Two* (1948), which clearly tropes on Thoreau's text: the key work for elucidating American individualism. Even though *Walden Two* was meant to be a utopia, it was largely received as dystopian science fiction precisely because of its assault on the notion of individualism and free will. In *Walden Two*, the utopian society is governed by behavioral technologies, mostly through positive reinforcement. The result is a community where the darker side of human nature is eliminated and love and affection between humans are the norm. This presentation reads Skinner's behaviorism specifically as a challenge to the notion of American individualism, which is seen by Skinner as a philosophy unable to serve the nation-building function. It also aims to explore how behaviorism's suitability for the training of animals contributed to the lukewarm response Skinner's book received.

Heather Wright, Wittenberg University

"#NotMeToo": Neoliberal Anxiety, Gender, and Addiction Narratives in the United States

"#NotMeToo!" defensiveness rings loud across the American neoliberal conjuncture today in specific response to feminist efforts to expose rape and sexual harassment culture, but the truth is our denial is ubiquitous and deeply-rooted, particularly about the nature of the addiction which scaffolds our polity in the interest of neoliberalism. For addictions are a self-destructive coping strategy we use to manage the chronic and universal anxiety provoked by the generalization of market competition that is neoliberalism. American popular culture reinforces the ideology that addiction is the product of individual choices, and thus requires an individual cure, either of medicine or of moral will. Yet this diagnosis has done nothing to eradicate addiction from contemporary society. Indeed, rates of addiction are growing. I posit that neoliberalism both *creates* and *requires* high rates of addiction to function. American popular culture powerfully reinforces this dynamic when it narrates addiction as an individual's story of triumph instead of connecting his or her suffering to the broader social and political forces at work in all of our lives.

Kaja Zapędowska-Kling, University of Lodz

American Welfare State and the Challenge of Caregiving. Who Provides Care for an Aging America?

United States is experiencing dynamic demographic changes. Aging of the population impacts not only the economy and labor market, but also social welfare policies. In American liberal model of welfare state, responsibility for eldercare and long-term care has traditionally been shifted from the state to the family and to the private market. Massive aging of baby-boomers provokes to think about future provision of care. With reference to Betty Mandell's publication *The Crisis of Caregiving: Social Welfare Policy in the United States* (2010), this paper reviews current landscape of accessible eldercare services in the U.S., as well as explores the concept of "aging in place". It aims at presenting and discussing an innovative case of the American "village model" of care, which constitutes an entirely grassroots initiative and plays complementary role to the relatively modest supply of services of the public sector. The paper analyzes main assumptions of the "village model" of care and offers critical assessment of its weaknesses and strengths.

Beata Zawadka, University of Szczecin

Les Demoiselles du Sud: Beguiling Culture?

In 1907 Pablo Picasso created *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, a painting considered seminal for the subsequent development of modern art. Exhibited for the first time in 1916 (because deemed immoral), the painting portrays a group of uniformly nude women, allegedly prostitutes from a Barcelona brothel. The mannequin-like immobility of their angular bodies and their facial features resembling African masks, when cast onto the flat, two-dimensional plane of Picasso's picture, make these women not even confrontational, but out-and-out menacing and hence, unconventionally feminine. No wonder, then, that *Les Demoiselles...*, evoking outrage and shock, also led to a cultural revolution, for it revealed culture's all representational coherences to be, primarily, performative.

This paper claims that Sophia Coppola's *The Beguiled*, the 2017 remake of the 1971 Don Siegel film adaptation of the 1966 novel *The Beguiled* by Thomas P. Cullinan does for the contemporary performative culture what Picasso's painting did for the 19th century culture of representation. How does Coppola restructure cultural performativity anew?; and, consequently, how is her "new structural" approach to culture a (beguiling) challenge to the cultural architecture *per se*? — these questions I am going to approach analyzing Coppola's version of Cullinan's antebellum southern story.