

ABSTRACTS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Lecture: Racial Histories at the US-Mexico Border and Aesthetic Impasses in Chicana/x Literature

Jayson T.G. Sae-Saue (SINAS Fulbright Chair in American Studies, Uppsala University, Sweden; Southern Methodist University, USA)

This talk links three events in US history in order to examine the political and aesthetic values of Américo Paredes' foundational Chicana/x novel *George Washington Gómez* (written in the 1930s, published in 1990). Connecting the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, which formally ended the Mexican American War, to both the brutal suppression of a Mexican American uprising in Texas in 1917 and a long history of US anti-miscegenation laws, this talk demonstrates how the past both conditions the possibility for Mexican American writers to adopt particular novelistic designs while making others aesthetically impossible. As such, the talk examines history not as a background or setting for Paredes' work (and by extension Chicana/x literature generally), but rather it regards it as a form-determining principle. In this way, the presentation examines how the tension between history and art plays itself out formally in *George Washington Gómez's* aesthetic designs and thematically in the novel's political and cultural values. The presentation also highlights briefly both formal and thematic consistencies and differences between Paredes' work and contemporary fiction about Chicana/x experiences.

Lecture: America in the Counterculture 1960s and in 2019: Comparing the Divided Nation Then, and the Divided Nation Now

Jim Willis (Professor Emeritus of Journalism at Azusa Pacific University, USA)

The decade of the 1960s was one of the most turbulent ones in American society but also one that produced some profound changes that are still being felt—and challenged—today. What was it like to live through that decade, and how did the divisions in America compare to the divisions today? Professor Dr. Jim Willis, author of the new book, *The 1960s Counterculture*, will address those questions and offer first-hand memories of his own experiences as he came of age in the 1960s.

Workshop I: Low- and High-Risk Activism in the African American Community

Timothy E. Stroud (MLU Halle-Wittenberg)

The history of Africans on the American continents has been a tragic one. In its roughly 450-year timeline, blacks in America have been systematically discriminated against. Many great inventions the country holds dear have come from a time and place of pain and despair; memories of which have survived for generations. Activists from various backgrounds and ethnicities have fought diligently for black rights and equality in America. Unfortunately, the fight is ongoing.

When discussing the black experience in America, it is often with images of racial violence at the forefront. Cultural and institutional racism in America are two factors that tend to increase the likelihood of black Americans becoming active in the community. These factors are often viewed through two lenses; low-risk and high-risk activism. Low-risk activism often deals with instances of people signing petitions or voting to effect change in their communities. High-risk activism, on the other hand, encompasses protests and demonstrations.

In this workshop, we will look at instances of low- and high-risk activism from the 1960s onward; from voting and voter suppression to protests and demonstrations. We will examine teaching strategies to incorporate these themes into future lesson plans. Additionally, we will discuss methods to help teachers and students become more comfortable in the classroom when talking about race and discrimination.

Workshop II: Why Words Matter - How We Do Things with Language

Janet Russell (MLU Halle-Wittenberg)

When we teach we are often so preoccupied with what we are saying that we tend to forget how we are saying it. The fact that we do things with words is commonly forgotten because we hide behind the sayings “actions speak louder than words” or “sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me.” The other extreme seems to be the ever-elusive and daunting idea of political correctness where we might feel like we quite literally can’t say anything at all without being racist, sexist, or anything-ist. But what if the truth lies somewhere in between? Together we will explore why words matter.

Conversations on The Transatlantic Relationship—Points of Friction, Common Goals

Annamarie Bindenagel Šehović (University of Warwick) and

Markus Ziener (Hochschule für Medien, Kommunikation und Wirtschaft Campus Berlin)

The purpose of the transatlantic alliance—peace in Europe—appears to have lost its *a priori* prioritization on both sides of the Atlantic. At the same time, the value of the transatlantic relationship is arguably more important than ever before: it is vying with competing valuation options in an increasingly multi-order world. In order to navigate the 21st century, both European and US partners must re-value and re-invigorate their relationship.

As the ‘peace dividend’ payed out, it’s worth devalued. Consequently, peace in Europe lacks the personal and political pull that it once exercised on both sides of the Atlantic. The result is at once acquiescence and estrangement. This renders the relationship vulnerable at a particularly dangerous moment, characterized by three divergences: in terms of security, economy, and identity.

The US and Europe do not see eye-to-eye on security. Neither do they put the same importance into open economies. Finally, both of their identities are changing. Nonetheless, it behooves to remember that the US and Europe were never perfectly aligned even as they were (more closely) allied. They were, however, more exposed to one another.

In the European context the German-American relationship stands out. First, because Germany was a front state during the Cold War and the Western part was completely relying on the security safeguards provided by the US. Second, because Germans developed a close relationship with the US that was fostered by fellowships, exchange programs, and an orientation towards US culture. A period of cooling-off as it is the case right now can be felt more intensely in Germany than anywhere else in Europe.

This poses some unpleasant questions for Berlin: To what extent can Germany still rely on the US as a guarantor of security? As a nation that is export-heavy: What if the US market is dominated by protectionist forces and only allows restricted access to German goods? The Trump administration is a strong reminder that it is overdue for Germany to change its mindset and to adapt to the sober realities of the 21st century.

These brief talks intend to shore up that exposure and to outline—along the lines of common goals and articulated frictions—re-prioritization in and of an enduring transatlantic alliance.

Lecture and Discussion (in German): “Revolt against the Modern World”. Musik und Medien im deutschen und amerikanischen Rechtsextremismus

Yvonne Wasserlos (HMT Rostock)

Die rechtsextreme Szene vernetzt sich zunehmend national wie international über Musik. Sowohl das Networking als auch die Inszenierung der Rechtsextremen vor Jugendlichen und jungen Erwachsenen findet insbesondere auf YouTube mit musikbasierten Videos statt. Darunter zu finden ist seit 2016 das Genre „Fashwave“, das durch die Verherrlichung der 1980er Jahre und ihres musikalischen Sounds eine aktuelle, höchst bedenkliche Neuausrichtung im Hinblick auf die Glorifizierung des „weißen Mannes“ und die Abwertung der /des „Anderen“ mit sich bringt. Der Vortrag gibt dazu einen Überblick und zeigt die aktuellen Entwicklungen hin zu einer zunehmenden Radikalisierung der rechtsextremen Szene auf.

Workshop III: Learning Language through the Arts

InterACT English (Berlin)

2-Minute Movie with InterACT English / From Storyboard to Post-Production. Learn InterACT’s approach to rapidly creating short English films with students using on-hand technology and free software. The process is creative, communicative and a great motivator to get students speaking.