

RUHRCENTER of American Studies presents

2015 Ruhr PhD Forum in American Studies

Ruhr-Universität Bochum,
Universität Duisburg-Essen



2015 Ruhr PhD

Forum Schedule

Friday, 23 January 2015

Ruhr-University Bochum,
Mensabuilding, Level 01, Tagungsraum 2,
Universitätsstr. 150, 44780 Bochum

- 12:00-12:15 Welcome_Kornelia Freitag
- 12:15-15:15 **Panel 1_Transatlantic and/or Political Histories**
- 12:15-12:55 Jonas B. Anderson_The Van Rensselaers: Manorial Aristocracy in the Early American Republic
- 12:55-13:35 Courtney Moffett-Bateau_High Cultural Pluralist Authors of the Civil Rights Era: A Literary Intervention In Postwar Literary History
- 13:35-14:15 Darius Harwardt_Amerikabilder der Neuen Rechten
- 14:15-14:45 Coffee Break
- 14:45-16:45 **Panel 2_Popular Media and Inter-Culture: Sitcom, SciFi, Reality TV**
- 14:45-15:25 Sandra Danneil_'Laugh Is a Many-Splintered Thing': *The Simpsons* and Transgressive Comedy
- 15:25-16:05 Ameer Loggins_Stereotype Consolidation: A Look at Black Representation in Reality Television
- 16:05-16:45 Iris Kemmer_Problems of Intercultural Exchange in *Star Trek*
- 16:45-17:15 Coffee Break
- 17:15-18:45 **Panel 3_Sonic Diversity: Techno and Hip-Hop**
- 17:15-17:55 Sebastian Weier_*Ooh, Techno City*: Technology and (Post-)Race In 1980s Detroit Techno
- 17:55-18:45 Terence Kumpf_Towards Trans*aesthetics: Bi- and Multilingual Hip-Hop in Germany and the U.S.A.
- 19:00 Dinner at Q-West, Ruhr-Universität Bochum 44801 Bochum (opposite to the G-Buildings)

Saturday, 24 January 2015

University Duisburg-Essen, Casino - Campus Essen,
Reckhammerweg 3, 45141 Essen

- 9:15-9:30 Welcome_Barbara Buchenau
- 9:30-11:30 **Panel 1_Teaching – Blogging – Publishing**
- 9:30-10:10 Mirja Beutel_Teaching Cosmopolitanism through Transnational English Literature
- 10:10-10:50 Timo Weidner_*Spot.Us*, Local Online News, and Shifting Role Conceptions in Journalism
- 10:50-11:30 Svetlana Makeyeva_Digital Nomadism as a Cultural Phenomenon: Presentation of Results and Conclusions
- 11:30 -12:30 Lunch at Unit Café, Reckhammerweg 2, 45141 Essen
- 12:30-14:30 **Panel 2_Politics of Poetry: From Translational to Transnational**
- 12:30-13:10 Hanna Rückl_No Matter What Language: Ernst Jandl's Writing as a Springboard for the Creation of New Poetry
- 13:10-13:50 Juliet Kaszas-Hoch_Calamity in Verse: Poetry of a Warming Earth
- 13:50-14:30 Anna Natascha Bongers_Depiction of Global Structures in C.D. Wright's *Rising, Falling, Hovering*
- 14:30-15:00 Coffee | Wine
- 15:00-17:00 **Panel 3_Walking and Writing the Postmodern City**
- 15:00-15:40 Carla Selene Gierich_Keep on Walking – Los Angeles and Arrival in *The Miraculous Day of Amalia Gómez*
- 15:40-16:20 Erika Mikò_Representations of Chinatown in Hungarian Travel Writing
- 16:20-17:00 Utku Mogultay_Operative, Sleuth, Private Eye: Detective Fiction and the Urban Imagination in Pynchon's *Against the Day*
- 17:00-17:15 Final Thoughts

12:00-12:15 **Welcome_Kornelia Freitag**

12:15-14:15 **Panel 1_Transatlantic Political Histories**

14:15-14:45 **Coffee Break**

Jonas B. Anderson_The Van Rensselaers: Manorial Aristocracy in the Early American Republic

The dissertation examines the history of the Van Rensselaer family as representatives of feudal aristocracy in the Early American Republic, the period between Independence and Civil War. The Van Rensselaers were one of the old landowning families of Upstate New York and thereby played a significant role in the oligarchic democracy of the young United States. The Manor of Rensselaerswyck which was established with a charter of the West India Company by Dutch businessman Kiliaen Van Rensselaer in 1630, was undivided and family-owned until the 1840s. The huge estate near present-day Albany was the basis of the family's wealth and the place of direct exercise of power over the tenants.

Based on a broader conceived social history, the aim of my research is to draw a picture of aristocratic life-world and social positioning of pre-revolutionary elites in the Early Republic. This is done specifically with the study of a family of prominent position over several generations in the context of political, economic, and social conditions of the time. In this way, the perspective of cultural history is extended by the topic of elites and aristocracy and on the other hand, the macro-historical fixation of the social history about processes and structures is replaced by a combined consideration of individual (family) and society. The examination of the life-world and social positioning of the Van Rensselaers includes in particular their political influence and the exercise of power, the social network, and family relationships (e.g. through isogamous marriages), the economic activity and the development of the estate, as well as the aristocratic habitus discussed as a means to legitimize their own position and of social distinction. In regard to their Dutch heir and the importance of the British Empire as a point of reference for American aristocracy, it will also be looked at the family's embedding in a transatlantic cultural context.

Jonas B. Anderson is a research assistant and doctoral student at the Amerika-Institut of Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich. After completing his M.A. in American History, Modern History and Catholic Theology in 2013, he started working on a dissertation project dealing with the Van Rensselaer family as representatives of manorial aristocracy in the Early American Republic.

Courtney Moffett-Bateau_High Cultural Pluralist Authors of the Civil Rights Era: A Literary Intervention In Postwar Literary History

This paper is a part of a larger project that explores how high cultural pluralist authors challenge standardized literary periodizations of Postwar American fiction. More specifically, this paper examines the logic of systematized creativity through investigating how high cultural pluralist authors of the Civil Rights period accelerated their individual political purposes under institutional capital. This period of postwar literary history challenged the rigidity of previous literary expression but also contributed to the romanticization and simultaneous commodification of ethnic capital: The oral component of the voice became an artistic preoccupation and scholarly concern in the 1960s and 1970s – as creative writing programs continued to accelerate the writing platform, “show, don't tell” (McGurl).

Therefore, students were encouraged to step away from the third person, impersonal narrator and adopt their 'authentic' ethnic voice. This project attempts to engage with Mark McGurl's 2009 seminal work, *The Program Era: Postwar Fiction and the Rise of Creative Writing*, which has identified an essential link between the patronage of higher education institutions, the increasing popularity of creative writing programs and the systematic production of postwar U.S. American fiction and its authors. This ingenuity in form, which encompassed the literary shift from classic slave narrative to neo-narrative, unravels this inextricable link between systematicity and creativity and – as this paper will hopefully show – has transformed the way that literary scholars frame and must discuss postwar writers and the institutions out of which they came from.

Courtney Moffett-Bateau graduated with a dual bachelor's degree in Philosophy and Black Studies from Pitzer College in Claremont, California in 2008. The following year, she was awarded a Fulbright grant, which brought her to Germany, where she worked as an English Teaching Assistant from 2008-2010. Moffett-Bateau completed her master's degree in National and Transnational Studies in 2012 at the University of Muenster, Germany with the submission of her thesis entitled, “Black Beauty Aesthetics: Combating American Beauty Constructions of the Past with Art of the Present.” She is presently working as a teaching assistant in the North American Studies program in Essen. In May 2013 she began working on her dissertation at the University of Duisburg-Essen.

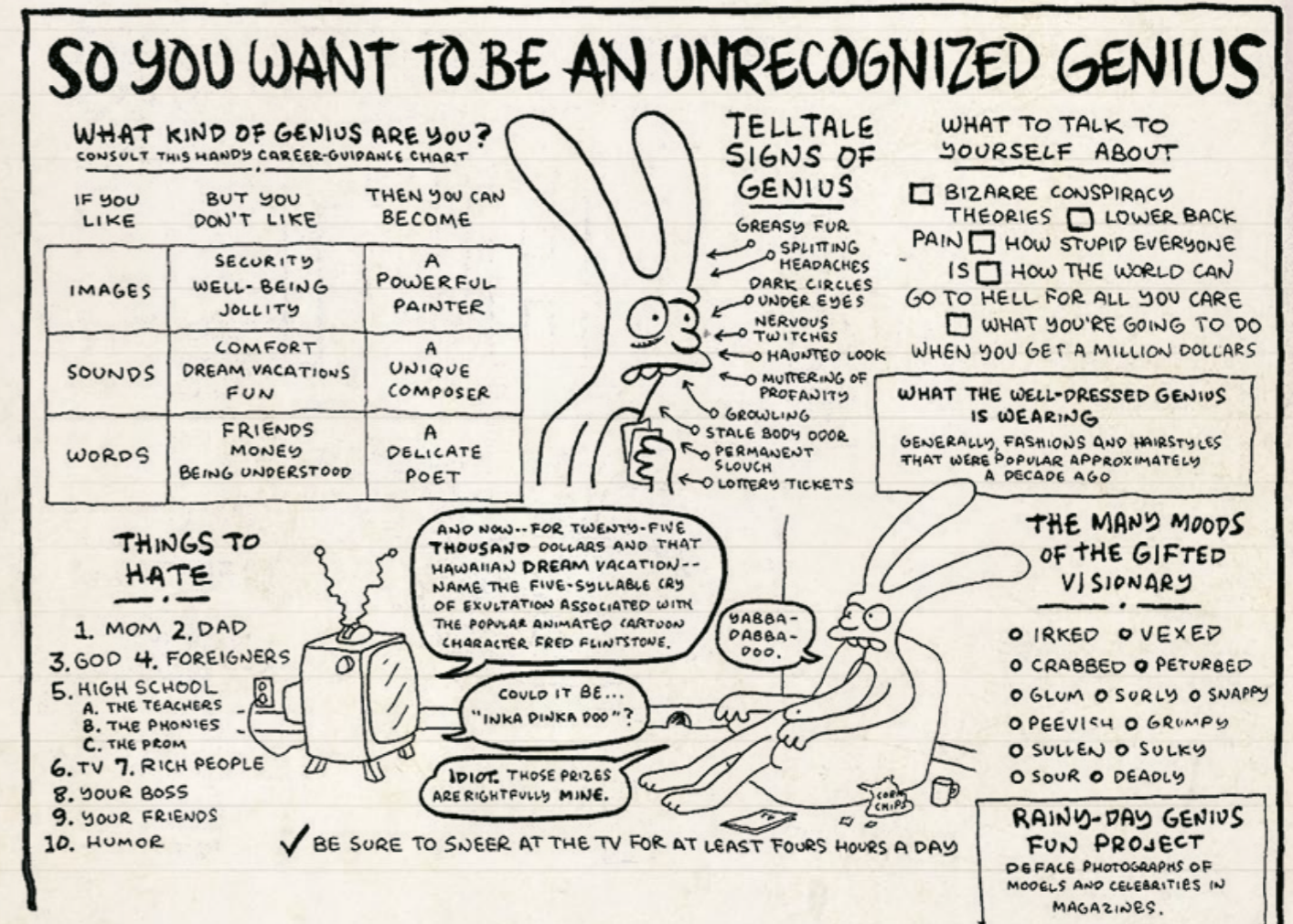
Darius Harwardt_Amerikabilder der Neuen Rechten

Das Forschungsprojekt "Politische Ideologie und diskursive Praxis von der Reagan-Ära bis zum Irakkrieg 2003" untersucht Amerikabilder der Neuen Rechten in der Bundesrepublik vom Amtsantritt Reagans 1980 bis zu dem Irakkrieg 2003. Die Instrumentalisierung von Feindbildern soll dabei in Beziehung gesetzt werden zu den Ambitionen der Neuen Rechten, eine durch den Nationalsozialismus diskreditierte Ideologie wieder stärker in gesellschaftlichen Diskursen der Mitte zu verankern. Da die Konstruktion spezifischer Fremd- und Feindbilder eine essentielle Rolle bei der kommunikativen Anschlussfähigkeit nach außen wie auch der Homogenisierung nach innen spielt, bietet sich der Forschung über eine Analyse dieser Feindbildkonstruktionen ein Spiegel als Untersuchungsinstrument an, der geeignet ist, zentrale Diskursstränge der Bewegung zu beleuchten und diese im Rahmen ihrer historischen Entwicklungsprozesse zu kontextualisieren.

Dabei stellen sich fundamentale Fragen, die bislang in der Forschung unbeantwortet geblieben sind: Gelingt es der Neuen Rechten zunächst im Kontext des Kalten Krieges und anschließend darüber hinaus, eine salonfähig ideologische Alternative zu Liberalismus und Kommunismus zu konstruieren und welche Feindbildkonstruktionen sind zu diesem Zweck instrumentalisierbar? Verabschieden sich die Akteure an der Spitze der Bewegung von einem in der deutschen Nachkriegsgesellschaft diskreditierten Antisemitismus im Austausch gegen eine effiziente politische Mimi-kry? Diesen Fragestellungen nachgehend fokussiert sich das Forschungsprojekt exemplarisch auf die Amerikabilder der Neuen Rechten, die sich in besondere Weise für eine Bündelung der Analyse eignen.

Die USA sind während des Kalten Krieges als auch danach, so wie im Konflikt mit dem islamistischen Terrorismus eine konstante Projektionsfläche, die zur Konstruktion konkurrierender Weltanschauungen instrumentalisiert werden kann. Dabei sind es Inszenierung und Imagination der USA, die ein Arsenal von nutzbaren Bildern zur Verfügung stellen, welche zur Abgrenzung oder gar Solidarisierung dienen, denn im Laufe von lediglich zwanzig Jahren von der Schlussphase des Kalten Krieges bis zum amerikanischen Kampf gegen den islamistischen Terrorismus haben sich ideologische Spannungsfelder und gesellschaftliche Diskursstränge, in deren Kontext sich die Neue Rechte zu positionieren sucht, fundamental verändert.

Darius Harwardt studied History, Biology, and Geography at Ruhr-University Bochum. In his master thesis Darius dealt with the construction of a collective identity in the World Wide Web by examining an American military forum. After his graduation, Darius worked as a research assistant in the documentation- and research center of the social insurance carrier in Bochum. Subsequently, Darius began to work on his dissertation project and is at the same time involved in a research project on the organization history of the BfV after 1945, initiated by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz).



14:45-16:45 Panel 2_Popular Media and Inter-Culture:
Sitcom, SciFi, Reality TV

16:45-17:15 Coffee Break

Sandra Danneil_'Laugh Is a Many-Splintered Thing': *The Simpsons* and Transgressive Comedy

There is no such thing as transgressive comedy. The question is, however, what makes it so hard to formulate a definition of transgressive comedy? If it were defined as a genre, transgressive comedy would only be limited to a distinct and ever recurring set of rules. But due to its manifold dimensions, I will approach transgressive comedy as a style, which worships a "cult of unreason" (Jenks 22). I will investigate how comic transgressiveness methodologically colonizes the liminal space between a (pop-)cultural dialectic of order and disorder. And I will look at it as a cyclical concept within which transgressive comedy has found a way to establish comic radicality. One of transgression's most dedicated scholars, sociologist Chris Jenks, puts it in a nutshell when he says that the point of transgression's investigation is "to demonstrate its presence in, and impact upon, contemporary life." (21) From my comic point of departure, transgressive comedy can thus best be situated in the everyday routine of America's TV sitcom that keeps up reflecting the contemporary lives of its audiences.

In my analysis, however, I will demonstrate how *The Simpsons* yet reinforce the comedic impact by constantly transferring the breaking of borders into popular primetime programming. By reading the show as animated epiphany of the American Dream undreamt, *The Simpsons* is more than family amusement. In my talk, I will deal with the show as a cultural narrative that dismantles binaries of high and low, inside and outside or restricted and permitted. With a conscious comic transgression, crossed borders and binaries are at the same maintained. With regard to concrete examples of *The Simpsons*, fertile ground will be provided to approach a definition of transgressive comedy, which will become the theoretical framework of my dissertation.

Sandra Danneil received her second university degree in 2012. She is assistant professor and a PhD candidate in the American Department for Cultural and Media Studies at TU Dortmund University. She has a master's degree in Film and Television Studies from Ruhr-University Bochum. She worked in the film and television industry for several years. Besides teaching courses at the American Studies department, she is also engaged in the organization of the annual postgraduate conference Ruhr PhD Forum in American Studies. For the coming legislative period of 2014-2016, Sandra has been elected as the equal opportunities officer of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences at TU Dortmund.

Ameer Loggins_Stereotype Consolidation: A Look at Black Representation in Reality Television

In 2014, the televisual experience has been overwhelmed by reality television shows, and some of the most popular of these shows are the celebrealty franchises such as *Black Ink*, *Basketball Wives*, and, *Love and Hip Hop Atlanta/New York*. This essay examines my conceptualization/theory of stereotype consolidation. I will be examining this phenomenon within one of its primary sites of creation and maintenance – reality television programs. Specifically, I will be focusing on the reality television shows that are housed on Viacom's VH1. Many reality-based programs rely heavily on the human drama that unfolds when people from diverse backgrounds, based on race, ethnicity, gender, age and regional origin interact with one another within pseudo-realistic spaces and conditions: This is not the case within what I will be calling Black Reality Television Programs. Within Black Reality Television Programs the allure lies within the almost exclusive interactions between Black folks in televisually segregated spaces that adhere to stereo/stigmatypical depictions of African Americans in America. It is within these conditions (and shows) that the stereotype consolidation takes place, that lead to hyper-packed distortions of Blackness, thus creating neo-minstrel like stock characters.

Ameer Loggins is a 6th year doctoral candidate at the University of California, Berkeley in the African Diaspora Program. His research interests include reality television, stereotype construction, stigma theory and public performances of "Rachet Blackness" on social networking websites. Ameer's dissertation project focuses on the manner by which African Americans are represented in reality television and how these televisual displays of "Rachet Blackness" effect the perception of African Americans in contemporary society. He is concerned with the construction and promotion of Blackness as represented within pseudo-reality television programs and how these modernized minstrels contribute to the stacked stigmatized stereotypes of African Americans.

Iris Kemmer_Problems of Intercultural Exchange in *Star Trek*

Star Trek deals with all kinds of intercultural problems. How, then, can these problems be addressed analytically? I will bring together interpersonal conflicts and genres in the series by analyzing the functions of the Holodeck. As a diegetic medium of the science fiction world, it exemplifies how *Star Trek* personalizes and subjectifies greater conflicts within a generic framework.

Iris Kemmer received her bachelor's degree in Applied Linguistics and Applied Literary and Cultural Studies and Philosophy and continued to focus on Applied Linguistics in her master's degree at TU Dortmund University. Her dissertation project deals interdisciplinarily with intercultural communication in *Star Trek*.

17:15–18:45 Panel 3_Sonic Diversity in Techno and Hip-Hop
19:00 Dinner at Q-West

Sebastian Weier_Ooh, Techno City: Technology and (Post-)Race In 1980s Detroit Techno

Based in the field of African American Studies, my dissertation research focuses on the impact of technological change on the constitution of Blackness. It diagnoses an insufficiency within the field to deal with technology-based modes of racialization and proposes a new methodology called Cyborg Black Studies to overcome this insufficiency. In my paper, I will draw from one chapter of my dissertation. Starting from the modern-colonial narration of technology as inherently White, and of Black people as inherently luddite, the paper will look at Detroit Techno as a specific instance in which a productive complication of this moderncolonial matrix occurs. Maturing in parts of Detroit's African American community at the beginning of the 1980s, Detroit Techno music relied heavily on technology and explicitly rejected earlier paradigms of what was considered Black Music such as soul and authenticity (as exemplified by jazz music or in the catalogue of the long time Detroit-based Motown Records).

Often described as post-soul, Detroit Techno artists such as Juan Atkins or Drexciya drew heavily from futurology as well as afro-futurist philosophy and mythology to propose post-race visions that were both beyond the black-white paradigm, yet firmly rooted in the history of the Black Atlantic. In doing so, not only their thought, but also their art itself defied common formal stereotypes and modes of racialization. The paper will engage parts of the discourse surrounding Detroit Techno in order to trace how it advanced both thinking on the intersection of race and technology and a non-humanist concept of post-race as transcendence that is at odds with much of contemporary thought on post-race as a historical phase of reconciliation in the *longue durée* of (post-)modernity.

Sebastian Weier is currently writing his PhD thesis at the University of Bremen. Under the preliminary title of "The Glitch. Thinking towards Cyborg Black Studies," the thesis proposes a critique of northwestern political theory from a Black Studies perspective and analyzes the impact of technological change on the political constitution of Blackness. Sebastian Weier is cofounder of the "Research Group Black Knowledges" (formerly "Bremen Black Studies") and founder and speaker of the doctoral network "Postcolonial and Black Studies Perspectives in Cultural Analysis" (PCBS).

Terence Kumpf_Towards Trans*aesthetics: Bi- and Multilingual Hip-Hop in Germany and the U.S.A.

Even though Germany has played a crucial role in hip-hop's global success—both in its consumption as a cultural commodity, but more in reaffirming a new set of artistic aesthetics and transcultural practices—no one to date has undertaken a serious, booklength study comparing America's latest pop cultural phenomenon in both countries. Perhaps more a question of why (or why not) is how: How can hip-hop in Germany and the U.S. be meaningfully compared? In what ways is it similar, and how does it differ? What themes and subjects do artists in each country take up, and how do they connect across borders, cultures, and languages? To what extent have artists in Germany extended hip-hop aesthetics, and in what ways is their work unique, especially with regard to sociopolitical and cultural specificities?

My research to date shows that hip-hop constitutes a unique, transcultural aesthetic object whose practitioners occupy national, transnational, and transcultural axes simultaneously. This paper and presentation provides an overview of my dissertation's macro- and micro-level questions, but also its approach and methodology. By focusing on bi- and multilingualism, and deploying the intersectional method in an interdisciplinary transatlantic/transnational American Studies project, this study aims to ascertain, assess, and describe the linkages and divergences in hip-hop in Germany and the United States today to explicate what I argue constitutes the emergence of a new trans*aesthetics.

Terence Kumpf is a PhD candidate at the RuhrCenter of American Studies. His research deals with bi- and multilingual hip-hop in the U.S. and Germany in a comparative perspective. His work concerns itself with transculturation, postnationalism, ethnicity, aesthetic experience, trans* issues, gender and sexual diversity, and the ways in which identity formation and political and social activism play out in the production and consumption of cultural materials.

My thesis is written in



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9:15-9:30 **Welcome_Barbara Buchenau**

9:30-11:30 **Panel 1_Teaching/Blogging/Publishing**

11:30-12:30 **Lunch at Unit Café**

Mirja Beutel_Teaching Cosmopolitanism through Transnational English Literature

According to Laurenz Volkmann (2010), the three major challenges of teaching English as a foreign language today are globalization, the digital revolution and the role of English as a global language. This situation calls for an adaptation of teaching approaches and a theoretical basis, which legitimizes teachers' choices of texts and objectives. The role of English as a lingua franca is associated with the process of globalization. Due to this it is a language, which facilitates communication between speakers who embody a wide variety of sociocultural backgrounds. In this situation competent speakers need to be aware of the sociocultural 'situatedness' of their communicative partners, their own identities and the communicative situation. To theorize the abilities required to master this challenge, the concept of cosmopolitan communicative competence is a suitable tool. In my study this concept is developed on the basis of a philosophical critique of intercultural communicative competence and transcultural competence.

Cosmopolitan communicative competence has significant overlaps with Wolfgang Delanoy's (Delanoy/Volkmann 2008) concept of dialogic communicative competence, but differs in emphasizing the importance of the general educational aim of advancing cosmopolitan attitudes. On the basis of psychological models of development I will show that adolescence is a critical phase for developing cosmopolitan attitudes. I argue that a life-writing approach to teaching transnational initiation stories is especially suitable for achieving this goal since it requires personal involvement. By linking the discussion of students' fictional representations of personal experience and literature, the influence of individual dispositions on the process of constructing meaning becomes visible and audible.

Mirja Beutel is a PhD candidate at the Ruhr-University Bochum. After graduating from university and completing her teacher's training in 2004, she worked as a teacher in secondary education. In 2013 she returned to her alma mater as a member of the Professional School of Education. She now participates in the education of future teachers.

Timo Weidner_Spot.U.s, Local Online News, and Shifting Role Conceptions in Journalism

In my talk I want to explore some of the research questions and hypotheses of my dissertation project, which deals with the role and importance of the local in the U.S. online news industry. I will show how one of the outlets I examine in my thesis successfully integrates localism into its operational concept and how the site's focus on the local is key to its lasting success (by standard of the online news industry).

The news outlet *Spot.U.s* is a prime example for today's demand for local journalism in the United States. Founded in 2008 with regional offices in the Bay Area and Los Angeles, it uses crowdfunding in a way that transforms both the role of the reporters and the audience during the process of content creation. *Spot.U.s* is particularly interesting as it does not merely try to replicate or emulate the model of the community newspaper on the web. Instead it addresses the aspect of localism in multiple ways: the site's content often, although not exclusively, has a local focus; the topics of the articles are chosen from pitches by the reporters or the audience; furthermore it has altered the usual chain-of-events by installing the audience as the first filter in the content creation process.

Using one article from this online news outlet that operates locally I intend to show how it can engage actors and audiences in various forms and how the aspect of the local is significant from its initial idea to its publication.

Timo Weidner received his bachelor's degree in Japanese Studies and English from the University of Düsseldorf. Prior to that, he earned his master's degree in North American Studies at the University of Bonn. His master's thesis "Alternative vs. Mainstream Formats: Does the Dichotomy Hold on the Web?" was nominated for the Ambassador's Award, awarded annually by the Embassy of the United States and the University of Bonn. Since October 2014 he is a PhD candidate at the TU Dortmund University and the RuhrCenter of American Studies. His dissertation project deals with the role and importance of the local in the U.S. online news industry.

Svetlana Makeyeva_Digital Nomadism as a Cultural Phenomenon: Presentation of Results and Conclusions

The major research question addressed in my dissertation is: How do digital nomads—the English-speaking location independent entrepreneurs without stationary offices who started or moved their businesses online—interpret the metaphor of ‘nomadism’ in their personal narratives about leaving nine-to-five jobs? (English) Texts and images on the topic of digital nomadism were collected (1997-2014), persistent themes and metaphors were identified, the lists of themes and metaphors were organized into two codebooks and analyzed. Paragraphs and images served as the units for qualitative content analysis. The purpose of this analysis was not generating statistics; rather, pointing out major themes, extracting images and metaphors, and presenting those within the context.

According to Makimoto and Manners (1997), this new style of working emerged around the second half of the 1990s. With the help of digital technologies, some CEOs and employees did not need to stay at the designated offices in order to work for their companies. Now on, they could move around the cities or travel long distances, and be productive on the road. A corporate phenomenon at first, eventually, digital nomadism became adopted by entrepreneurs who, among other things, wanted to leave office jobs, become self-employed and location-independent. Some of them wanted to push themselves to the limits and travel the world in their twenties, while sustaining their lives with the online businesses. This phenomenon transformed itself within the course of history: a ‘style of working’ became a ‘lifestyle’ and ‘life design’. In 2014, digital nomadism was not merely about working; this metaphor was used to describe living life in a specific ‘nomadic’ way. My dissertation project heads towards its finish line, and I want to take the opportunity to present and discuss some of my results and conclusions.

Svetlana Makeyeva is a PhD candidate at TU Dortmund University. She is interested in how digital nomads interpret the metaphor of nomadism in their personal narratives about leaving nine-to-five jobs. Svetlana obtained her B.A. from the American University-Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan, in 2006, and her master's degree from the Heidelberg Center for American Studies at the Ruprecht-Karls-University, Germany, in 2007. Her other current research interests include gender and online communities as well as pro wrestling as body genre. Her recent publication “Women Milbloggers: Narratives of Military Life” was published in the essay collection Educational, Psychological, and Behavioral Considerations in Niche Online Communities (IGI Global, 2014).



graduate school: it's like
looking directly into the
bulb of a high-powered
flashlight for two years,
only more expensive

12:30-14:30 **Panel 2_Politics of Poetry:
From Translational to Transnational**
14:30-15:00 **Coffee/Wine**

**Hanna Rückl_No Matter What Language: Ernst Jandl's Writing as a Springboard for the
Creation of New Poetry**

Literary translations can be viewed as inferior derivatives of their source texts or as texts equal in value, with translating as an activity similar to creative writing, both placed at different points on a continuum. This paper compares work by the poet Ernst Jandl, translations of his poems, and fragments of his poems completed by other writers. In doing so, one can gain insight into the relationship between these different kinds of writing. Several American poets have translated a selection of Jandl's poems from German into English, collected in *Reft and Light*.

Remarkable for a book of translations, it provides several translations, each written by a different translator, for a source text. Apart from finished poems that can be translated into another language, Jandl provided the public with unfinished poems declared as poems pending completion ("Gedichte zum Fertigstellen"), which have been completed by various poets. These poems are not necessarily written in any other language apart from German, which distinguishes them from translations. In addition to this comparative analysis of poems, I examine what Jandl and other poets say about the process of creating a poem and how translators describe the work they do. The results of the study are that poets and literary translators face similar challenges in their work with language and literature, and that the difference lies in having to deal with fewer or more restrictions.

Hanna Rückl received her master's degree at Karl-Franzens-University in Graz, Austria in 2012. She has been a doctoral student at TU Dortmund University since 2013. In her dissertation project, Hanna deals with the connection between creative writing and literary translation in German and American literature.

Juliet Kaszas-Hoch_Calamity in Verse: Poetry of a Warming Earth

My presentation will slice into my investigation of the link between creative writing, climate change, and natural disasters, exploring what role poetry/poets in particular take in addressing and explicating the matter of global warming and the violent storms and otherwise capricious weather born of it, and if verse is – or could be – an effective means for inspiring further, layered contemplation and scrutiny of this issue, or for even, possibly, enacting environmental change in public and political spheres. In short, how does poetry work with and for the dire global issue of global warming? The erratic and errant disposition of climate change has precipitated an increase in international anxieties (and dispute) in step with – or, perhaps more accurately, lagging behind – the rise in storm severity, storm surge, sea level, and temperatures.

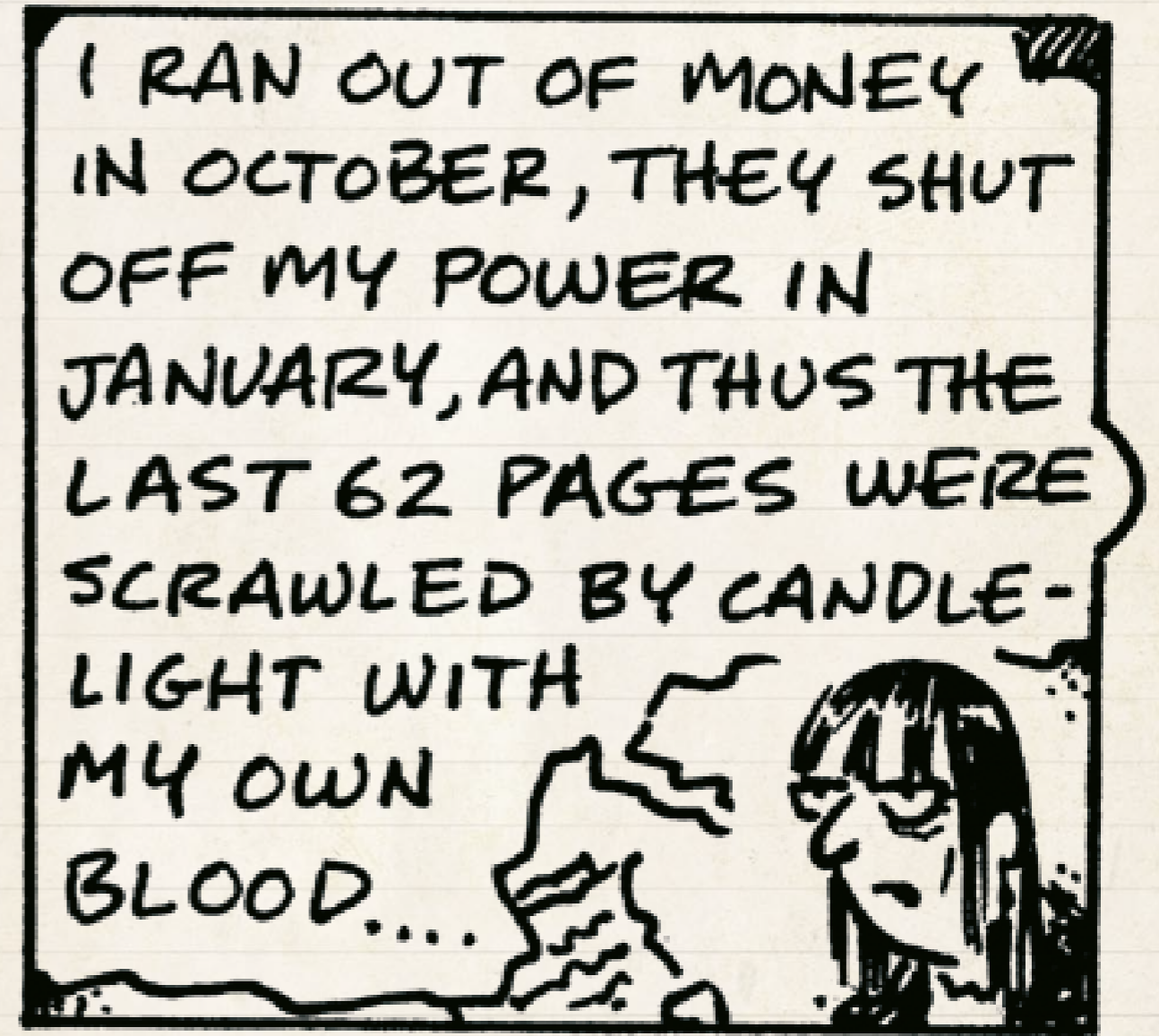
Many, beyond the detractors of global warming, worry to some degree about the next big bad thing: What warming-born large-scale natural disaster is next, and where, and what will be the aftermath? Scientists, journalists, politicians, and students regularly discuss consequences and costs of climate-driven catastrophes in texts of all types, offering projections and predictions, warnings, instructions. The environment now is so much more than where we live; it is a concern and a cause, something we fear ruining and yet ruin more each day. What place does poetry play in the conversation? In particular, for this presentation, I plan to briefly discuss a few poems from Yusef Komunyakaa, Kimiko Hahn, and/or Gary Snyder, as well as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report distilled into illustrated haiku by oceanographer Greg Johnson.

Juliet Kaszas-Hoch is a writer from Long Beach Island, off the coast of New Jersey, USA. She has been accepted as a PhD candidate at the RuhrCenter of American Studies.

Anna Bongers *Depiction of Global Structures in C.D. Wright's *Rising, Falling, Hovering**

This paper ties in with my dissertation project, preliminarily titled "Mappings of Postmodern Global Structures in Contemporary American Poetry." In my dissertation, I plan to analyze how experimental poets such as Rosmarie Waldrop, C.D. Wright and Jena Osman present global structures in their poetry. Making use of the liberties experimental writing offers, these texts employ a variety of strategies to map complex global realities and demonstrate the intertwined and unresolvable interplay between different spheres (such as the private, the political, the economical and the social) in a globalized world. In this paper, I will first set out to define what I understand to be global structures. I will then proceed to show how these structures are present in C. D. Wright's 2008 collection *Rising, Falling, Hovering*. I will illustrate that the locatedness of her U.S. American speaker within global structures is illustrated in a number of poems, which conflate spheres of the private and the political. The private sphere of the speaker is shown as embedded in the international war on terror, US foreign politics and US economical interests in various poems of the collection. As a consequence, the location and position of the speaker becomes increasingly unstable as places fragment and dissolve into unmanageable networks. I argue that the incorporation of global structures into poems can be traced in a number of recent poetic works that attempt to come to terms with a postmodern globalized world by locating their subjects in a context that is rapidly and frequently transforming. The successful mapping of such global structures in experimental writing is precisely dependent upon experimental approaches to representation, which are self-reflexive, deconstructive, adaptable, flexible, and acutely aware of the inherent unmappability of global structures per se.

Anna Bongers graduated from the University of South Carolina in May 2013 with an M.A. in German Studies and received her master's degree in American/English Studies and Comparative Literature Studies from the Ruhr-University Bochum in November 2013. She is currently enrolled at the Ruhr-University Bochum as a PhD student working on her dissertation with the title "Mappings of Postmodern Global Structures in Contemporary American Poetry." Her research interests include contemporary American poetry and literature, transnational criticism and gender studies.



15:00–17:00 Panel 3_Walking and Writing the Postmodern City

17:00–17:15 Final Thoughts

Carla Selene Gierich_Keep on Walking – Los Angeles and Arrival in *The Miraculous Day of Amalia Gómez*

In my presentation, I examine whether Los Angeles can be an Arrival City for the protagonist of *The Miraculous Day of Amalia Gómez* (1991), a novel by renowned Chicano author John Rechy. The novel follows one day in the life of Chicana woman Amalia, telling her life in flashbacks and tracing her way through a city of haunting Santa Ana winds, violence, racism and the overall decay and despair of late-1980s L.A.. Only at the end she seems able to overcome her inner and outer hauntings through an epiphany of la virgen. Critics have interpreted this ending mostly in the veins of redemption, resistance, and struggle of a Chicana against mainstream society (see León 1999, Giles 2000).

Although these notions certainly have a right of its own, the present study wants to focus more on the way to Amalia's epiphany rather than only the epiphany in itself. Her way through the city interweaves place-making practices with hybrid cultural dealings. This connection can be analyzed through the concept of arrival, an in-between state which follows movement, but precedes staying, and which allows the creation of something new with a foreign origin (see Kunow 2003). It will be seen whether Amalia is able to develop spatial practices that allow her to counter the hegemonic city space of Los Angeles and re-create and re-imagine "dominant urban *space* as community-enabling *place*" (Villa 6, emphasis orig.). Main points of focus for this will be her search for a home in dilapidating stucco bungalows, her relationship to a barrio between garage sales and gang shootings, and a city that grows roses out of concrete, but is also haunted by earthquakes, hot winds and violence.

Carla Gierich studied Cultural Management, B.A. at the University Duisburg-Essen. In 2012, she finished her master thesis on "The Americas–Las Americas–Les Ameriques" at the Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf. Her PhD project at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, explores whether Los Angeles is considered an Arrival City within contemporary Mexican American literature. She works as a project assistant for fellow support at the Centre for Global Cooperation Research, Duisburg.

Erika Mikó_Representations of Chinatown in Hungarian Travel Writing

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, New York has been a popular tourist destination for Hungarian travelers, and information about the United States had become part of everyday life in Hungary. As the city became an increasingly popular travel destination for Hungarians, some of them decided to write about their experiences upon their return. The city had become the largest metropolis by the 1910s, and, as a result of large-scale immigration, ethnic enclaves began to emerge. These ethnically coded places brought new immigrants together, and they soon became distinctive and unique sites in the city. A good example of New York's extraordinary diversity is Manhattan's Chinatown, which has a long history of neighborhood tourism. In my presentation, I will talk about representations of New York's Chinatown in Hungarian travel accounts with regard to the spatial and community transformation of the enclave and the historical context in which it occurred.

I have selected books from the early 1900s, and from the communist era to illustrate the transformation of Chinatown. At the turn of the century, Hungarian travel accounts about Chinatown followed the tropes of slumming literature in describing key sites of the neighborhood's tourist terrain. Later, in the communist period, an anti-American rhetoric had to be adopted, which gradually disappeared as the regime lost its control over publishing. Accordingly, more reliable journalistic accounts were published about America in the late 1980s, which strived to give an accurate report on the neighborhood that was widely considered a symbol for cultural diversity in New York. Of course, when it comes to interpreting a culture, the perspective is in the eye of the beholder, whose account says just as much about his own cultural and historical background as it does about the cultural environment he gazes upon.

Erika Mikó is currently working on her dissertation dealing with "The Urban Transformation of New York City from Ethnic Perspectives" at TU Dortmund University. She holds a scholarship in the research program "Spaces–Communities–Representations: Urban Transformations in the USA" financed by the Mercator Foundation's Research Center Ruhr (MERCUR). Erika graduated from the University of Debrecen, Hungary, in 2010 and worked as an English teacher. Her research interests include urban narratives, the literatures of minorities, ethnic stereotypes in American literature and culture, and American iconography.

Utku Mogultay *Operative, Sleuth, Private Eye: Detective Fiction and the Urban Imagination in Pynchon's Against the Day*

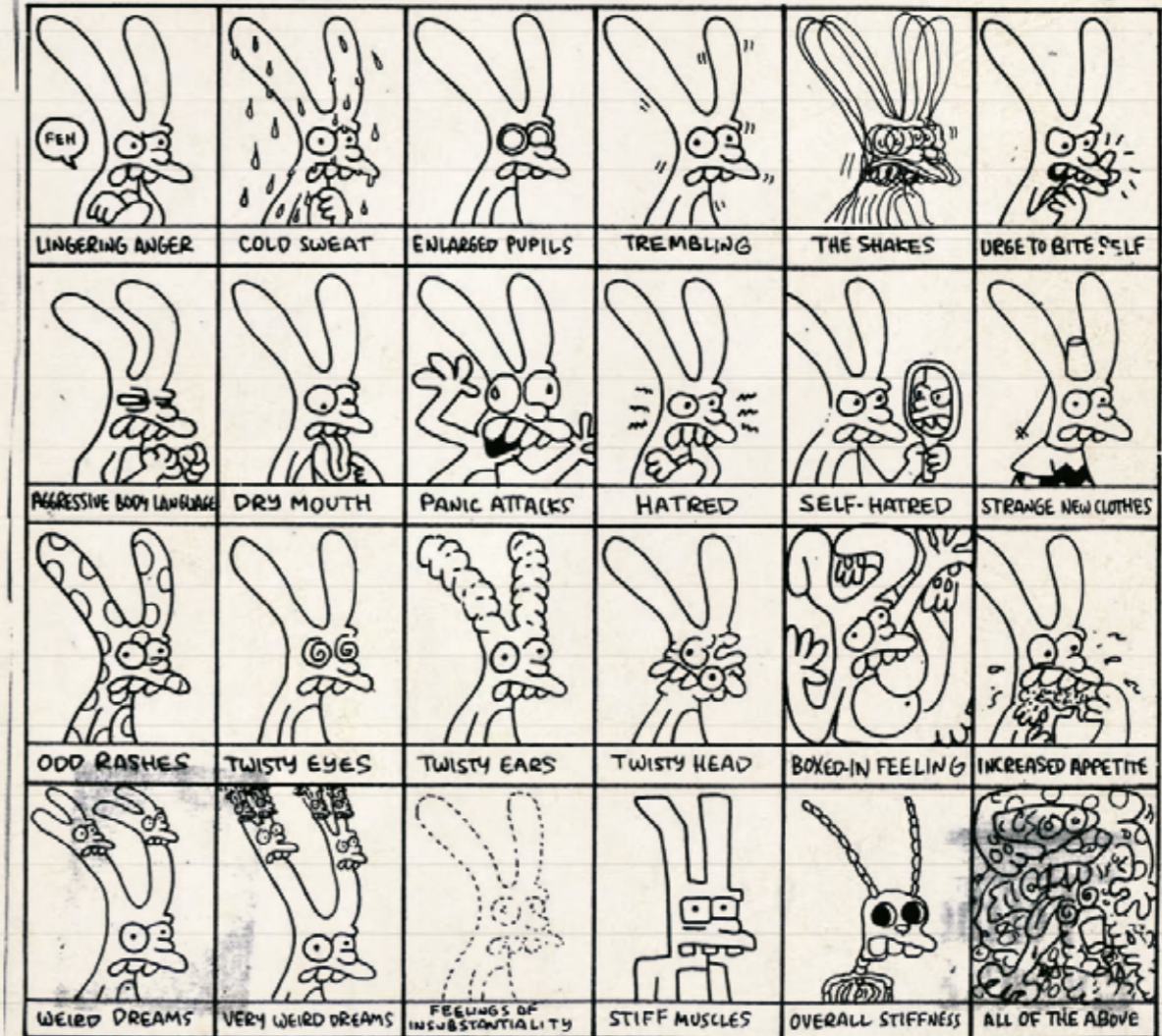
Detective fiction is a popular outgrowth of 19th century urban modernity. "The original social content of the detective story focused on the obliteration of the individual's traces in the big city crowd," as Walter Benjamin notes. In this sense, the crowd figures as an amorphous mass in which personal identity is rendered largely opaque. Hence the crowd is frequently imagined as an urban wilderness, as a hiding place for criminals and lowlifes. Through astute observation and reasoning, the detective then imposes order on the crowd and carries the light of knowledge into the wilderness. As "the epistemological genre *par excellence*" (McHale), detective fiction thus reasserts a sense of heroic individuality. Postmodern detective (or 'anti-detective') fiction, by contrast, undermines such rationalist underpinnings, as it ultimately frustrates the search for certainty. Involving a shift towards ontology, it emphasizes not so much the production of knowledge as the construction of multiple worlds.

In this paper, I explore these conceptualizations of detective fiction in *Against the Day*. First, I sketch how Pynchon's text plots a narrative itinerary that taps into three sub-genres of detective fiction (namely dime novel, Victorian and hardboiled detective fiction). Second, I illustrate how, in doing so, the narrative projects three corresponding urban worlds (Chicago in the 1890s, London in the 1900s and Los Angeles in the 1920s), thus highlighting the role of the urban imagination as an active constituent of detective fiction. Finally, I outline how *Against the Day* negotiates the relationship between the individual and urban society through canvassing these generic modes. In this context, the novel indicates, as I argue, that the detective's will to know the city unwittingly fosters the placeless logic of an information economy.

Utku Mogultay studied English and Social Sciences at the University of Cologne and the University Duisburg-Essen. He is a doctoral candidate in the international PhD program "Advanced Research in Urban Systems" (ARUS) of the University of Duisburg-Essen and a member of the research project "Spaces-Representations-Communities: Urban Transformations in the USA" of the RuhrCenter of American Studies. His research interests include modern and post-modern American literature, literary and cultural theory, film and media studies, critical spatial theory, urban studies and visual culture.

LIFE IN HELL, BY MATT GROENING

THE 24 WARNING SIGNS OF STRESS



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Venues

Ruhr-University Bochum

Mensabuilding, Level 01, Tagungsraum 2, Veranstaltungszentrum
Universitätsstr. 150
44780 Bochum

University Duisburg-Essen

Casino – Campus Essen
Reckhammerweg 3
45141 Dortmund

How To Get There

Bochum by car:

The RUB is best reached via the A43. Just take the exit 19 (Bochum-Querenburg), follow the signs for “Ruhr-Universität” and, once there, look for the (electronic) information boards. We recommend to look for parking on Parkplatz P 9.

Bochum by public transport:

Once you reach Bochum main station, just take the U35 headed towards “Bochum Hustadt.” After a 10 min ride, exit at “Ruhr-Universität” and, upon leaving the station, head to the right. Passing the „Universitätsbibliothek“ on your left and facing the “Audimax,” you will see the Mensa. The Veranstaltungszentrum is located in the Mensabuilding.

Essen by local public transport (recommended):

Once you arrive at the Essen train station, walk down to the lower floor, where you’ll find the subway and tramline tracks. Take the tramline 101 or 105 from track 1, direction Borbeck or Frintrop. Get off at Rheinische Platz, which is the second stop. When you get off the tram, you’ll see an escalator on your left side. At the end of the escalator turn left again into Rheinische Platz and walk a couple of minutes along Gladbecker Str. (the large road with possibly a lot of traffic). You will cross Universitätsstraße and pass the main University building to your left. Continue for one minute until you find Reckhammerweg – the next street on your left-hand side. Turn left into Reckhammerweg and then left again into the university area. You’ll find yourself in a little internal “square.” The Casino is right there.

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Senior Experts

Laura Bieger is Professor at the Department of English and North American Studies at the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg with a focus on American literature and culture of the 19th, 20th, and 21st century. She studied at FU Berlin and UNC Chapel Hill and held teaching and research positions at FU Berlin, UC Berkeley, and Universität Wien. Among her many publications, the most recent are *The Imaginary and its Worlds: American Studies after the Transnational Turn* (New England UP 2013) and *No Place Like Home. A Narrative Theory of Belonging* (forthcoming 2015). Her main areas of research are theories of narrative and aesthetic experience, theories of culture and modernity, visual and media studies, American art and architecture, and American popular culture.

Heike Bungert is a Full Professor for “Neuere und Neueste Geschichte unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Nord-amerikanischen Geschichte” at the University of Muenster. After studying History, English, and American Studies as well as Romance Studies at the University of Regensburg, Freiburg, and at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, she obtained her doctorate in 1995 at the University Tuebingen on “Das Nationalkomitee und der Westen: Das NKFD und die Freien Deutschen Bewegungen aus der Sicht der Westalliierten, 1934-1948.” In 2004, she completed her habilitation treatise at the University of Cologne on the topic of “Festkultur und Gedächtnis: Die Konstruktion einer deutschamerikanischen Ethnizität, 1848-1914,” which was published in 2015. Her research interests include ethnic-, international-, and cultural history. In addition, Prof. Bungert also published on the history of secret services, native American ethno-history, on history and film, history of the university and and transnational history. Currently, she is part of the “Exzellenzcluster on Religion and Politics” at the University of Muenster focusing on “Zivilreligion in US-amerikanischen patriotischen Feiertagen und Inaugurationsfeierlichkeiten” and is working on a historiography of native Americans in the United States.

Notes

Barbara Buchenau

dok Forum

Kornelia Freitag

Walter Grünzweig

Randi Gunzenhäuser

Jens Gurr

Josef Raab

Isabelle Steiner

Michael Wala

and all the other
helping hands...



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dortmund



Thanks (in alphabetical order)...