

10th Biennial Conference of
The Swedish Association for American Studies (SAAS)

OPEN COVENANTS: PASTS AND FUTURES OF GLOBAL AMERICA

**Friday September 28th – Sunday September 30th 2018
Stockholm, Sweden**

PROGRAM



MAGNUS BERGVALLS STIFTELSE



Welcome

to the 10th biennial conference of the Swedish Association for American Studies (SAAS)
Stockholm, September 28–30, 2018

Keynote speakers: Prof. David R. Roediger (University of Kansas), Prof. Sylvia Mayer (University of Bayreuth), and Dr. Frida Stranne (Halmstad University)

Open Covenants: Pasts and Futures of Global America

The year 2018 marks the one hundredth anniversary of president Woodrow Wilson's famous "Fourteen Point Speech," where he described his vision for a world of peace and unity. Wilson's first "point" was a call for "Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at." Nine months after the US entrance in World War I, the principles of free trade, democracy, and national autonomy formed the foundation for the postwar peace negotiations and the establishment of the League of Nations. Although Thorstein Veblen noted just one year later that "the President's proud words have gone whistling down the winds," Wilson's internationalism stand in sharp contrast to the current president Donald Trump's agenda of "America First." As Russian-American journalist Masha Gessen has pointed out, these changes are not only political but also aesthetic, ultimately affecting the public discourse through manipulations of language and culture. Notions of United States internationalism or isolationism are intimately connected to American exceptionalism, to immigration, race, and ethnicity, and fundamentally to the perception of America at home and abroad. The theme of this year's SAAS conference invites participants to engage both with a national American and a global horizon in exploring notions of "Open Covenants" in history, politics, literature, film, cultural studies, and other areas of American Studies.

The organizing committee and SAAS wish to acknowledge the generous funding and support from the City of Stockholm, the Magnus Bergvall foundation, ABF Stockholm, the Department of English at Stockholm University, and the US Embassy.

Organizing Committée

Bo G. Ekelund, Stockholm University
Adam Hjorthén, Stockholm University/Free University of Berlin
Oskar Nordell, Uppsala University
Alice Sundman, Stockholm University

Friday September 28th

Stockholm University

8:30–9:15

Registration

- F building, third floor by the stairs

9:15–10:30

Welcome and Opening Keynote Lecture

- Hörsal 9 (D9)

What Is This White in “White Working Class”? Cautions on Easy Explanations of Trump’s Victory
David R. Roediger, University of Kansas

10:30–11:00

Coffee

- F building, third floor by the stairs

11:00–12:30

Panel Sessions 1, 2, 3, & 4

Panel 1. Modernity and the Market

- E397

Railroad System Made “Safety First Movement”: From the Experiences of Both Railroad Companies and Its Laborers

Shunsuke Munakata, Hitotsubashi University

Adjusting to Modernity: Self-Help in the Early 20th Century

Kristina Graaf, Humboldt University of Berlin

Tourism Promotion and Advertising in the Deep South under The Carter Presidency: An Analysis of Regional Destination Image through Visual and Textual Advertising in Domestic and International Markets

Giuliano Santangeli Valenzani, University of RomaTre

Panel 2. Swedish-American Borderlands (I): Architecture and Design

- E413

A Postwar Italian Kitchen Shining in the Swedish-American Borderlands

Franco Minganti, University of Bologna

The Role of Design in the 1960s Swedish-American Landscape
Frida Rosenberg, Royal Institute of Technology

The Kansas City Connection: An Actor-Network of Sports Architecture within Swedish-American Borderlands
Oskar Nordell, Uppsala University

Panel 3. Experience, Imagination, and Literary Form

E420

In Our Time, by Ernest Hemingway: The Silent Covenant of Experience
Nathalie Cochoy, University of Toulouse

Imagination and the Wild: Reading Marilynne Robinson's Housekeeping through Richard Kearney's Poetics of Imagining and John Fowles' The Tree
Elisabet Dellming, Stockholm University

From "E Pluribus Unum" to "E Pluribus Plura": Ortiz's Native American Testimony
Panteleimon Tsiokos, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Panel 4. Sites of Contestation: Ethno-Racial Tensions in American Culture

F420

Yellow Kid, Yellow Peril: Immigrants and the Birth of the American Comic Strip
Joshua A. Kopin, University of Texas at Austin

Letter to the World: Sheila Hicks and Abstraction in Mexico
Grant Johnson, University of Southern California

Ethnic Choice and Positioning in Nuevomexicano Mixed Heritage Writing
Judit Ágnes Kádár, University of Sport Science, Budapest

12:45–13:45

Lunch

Restaurant Lantis
Sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Stockholm

14:00–15:30

Panel Sessions 5, 6, 7, & 8

Panel 5. Swedish-American Heritage: Nostalgia, Amnesia, and the Meanings of Place

○ E371

A Folk United: The Swedish-American Genealogy and Nostalgia in the 1960s and 1970s

Adam Hjorthén, Stockholm University/Free University of Berlin

Back in the Days: Selective Reenacting of the American Civil War in Sweden

Marie Bennedahl, Linnaeus University

Forgetting and Remembering Bishop Hill: History, Amnesia, and Nostalgia in a Rural American Tourist Destination

Adam Kaul, Augustana College

Panel 6. Race in US History: Ideas and Practices

○ E387

An Illegal Violence: Property Confiscation in the Confederate South

Rodney J. Steward, University of South Carolina Salkehatchie

“Colonies of Erotic Bacilli”: Tennessee Williams on Post-War European Stages

Dirk Gindt, Stockholm University

Afro-Pessimism, Black Radicalism, and the Unbearable Whiteness of Western Radical Thought

Antoni Górny, University of Warsaw

Panel 7. American Horror and Gothic across Borders

○ F3154

Intermediality in A Nightmare on Elm Street

Morten Feldtfos Thomsen, Karlstad University

Backwoods Horror in Swedish and American Fiction

Sofia Wijkmark, Karlstad University

Placing the Gothic in American Adaptations of Nordic Texts

Maria Holmgren Troy, Karlstad University

Panel 8. Place, Space, and Landscape

○ F497

Absent Places in Toni Morrison’s Novel Tar Baby

Alice Sundman, Stockholm University

From the Cityscape to the Rural Landscape: Annie Proulx's Bird Cloud
Tanja Cvetković, University of Niš

Trauma and Heterotopia in Don DeLillo's The Body Artist
Sinem Yazıcıoğlu, Istanbul University

15:30–16:00

Coffee

○ F building, third floor, by the stairs

16:00–17:30

Panel Sessions 9, 10, 11, & 12

Panel 9. Swedish-American Borderlands (II): On Stage and Screen

○ E371

The Diva Dream of the American Tour
Hélène Ohlsson, Stockholm University

Charlie Chan in No Man's Land: Towards a Borderlands History of Werner Oland
Kim Khavar Fahlstedt, Uppsala University

Celebrated, Contested, Criticized: Anita Ekberg, a Swedish Sex Goddess in Hollywood
Ann-Kristin Wallengren, Lund University

Panel 10. Universalism and American Literature

○ E387

"Too Much of a Cosmopolitan": Melville's Cultural Geography of American Universalism
Richard Hardack, Independent scholar

Synechdoche and Power: Rethinking the Universalism of the Encyclopedic Novel
Lucille Hagège, University of the Sorbonne

"Partialist" and "Universalist": Figurations of U.S. Exceptionalism in Antebellum Writing
Iulian Cananau, University of Gävle

Panel 11. The Territoriality of Global America: The U.S.–Mexico Border in Contemporary Cultural Production

○ F3154

Mobility Welcome? Art and Recreation Zones at the US–Mexico Border

Markus Heide, Uppsala University

A Mexican Icon Transgressing the Border: The Queen of Selfies in Visual Art

Eva Zetterman, University of Gothenburg

Sounding Global Divides: Precarious Borders in Guillermo Galindo’s Recent Installation Art

Birgit Spengler, University of Wuppertal

Panel 12. Children and Childhood

○ F497

“Brightening the Lives of Children”: The Sixth Fleet and its Impact on the American Politics of Childhood in Early Francoist Spain

David Corrales Morales, Institute of History, CCHS-CSIC

The Global Subjects of Korean-American Adoptee Narratives

Lena Ahlin, Kristianstad University

Making Babies, Making Home in an All-Female World: Reproduction, Sexuality, and Belonging in Nicola Griffith’s Ammonite

Jenny Bonnevier, Örebro University

19:00

Reception

○ Stockholm City Hall

Hosted by the City of Stockholm

Saturday September 29th

Stockholm University

9:00–10:00

Keynote Lecture

○ Hörsal 9 (D9)

Environmental Risk Narratives: Uncertainty, Anticipation, and Speculation in the American Climate Change Novel

Sylvia Mayer, University of Bayreuth

10:00–10:30

Coffee

○ F building, third floor, by the stairs

10:30–12:00

Panel Sessions 13, 14, 15 & 16

Panel 13. Musical Flows: Across and Beyond America

○ E413

Kantele, Jazz and Heavy Metal: Music and Transcultural Finnish American Identities in a Selection of Finnish American Fiction

Roman Kushnir, University of Jyväskylä

Dump Them in China: On the Prolonged Lifespan of America's Musical Waste

Chang Liu, Heidelberg University

Boundaries of Sisterhood: A Comparative Approach to US- and Latin American Hip-hop Feminism

Susan Lindholm, Malmö University

Panel 14. Poetics, Worlding, and Theory: American Literature

○ E420

The Demands of History: American Superpower and the Vocation of Poetry in the 1980s.

The Poetics of Michael Palmer

Robert Österbergh, Uppsala University

The Worlds Philip K. Dick Made: Literary Worlding and Metadiegetic Objects

Bo G. Ekelund, Stockholm University

On Second Thought...: American Theory after Form and Suspicion

Chris Holmes, Ithaca College

Panel 15. Trans-Atlantic Crossings: Athletic and Journalistic Exchanges between Europe and North America

○ F315

Placing North America in Global Communication Networks, c. 1750–1815

Troy Bickham, Texas A&M University at Qatar

Professional Wrestling as a Transatlantic Spectacle: Race, Ethnicity, Class and Empire in Gilded Age America and Belle Epoque Europe

Mark van de Logt, Texas A&M University at Qatar

A Challenge to Exceptionalism: Reading the American Press in the Civil War Era

Josefin Holmström, King's College, Cambridge

Panel 16. American Surrealism

○ F320

Metaphors and Things: Surrealising Robert Rauschenberg, 1959–69

Gavin Parkinson, The Courtauld Institute of Art

"This Place of Total Ambiguity": Dorothea Tanning's Chasm

Anna Watz, Linköping University

Possessed by Bugs Bunny: Animals and Ecology in Chicago Surrealism

Kristoffer Noheden, Stockholm University & Film University Babelsberg

12:00–13:00

Lunch

○ E and F building, third floor, by the stairs

13:00–14:00

Keynote Lecture 3

○ Hörsal 9 (D9)

Is There a Strategy Somewhere? American Foreign Policy during the Trump Presidency

Frida Stranne, Halmstad University

14:00–14:30

Coffee

○ F building, third floor, by the stairs

14:30–16:30

Panel Sessions 17, 18, 19 & 20

Panel 17. International Relations and Cultural Diplomacy

○ E413

Finland Between Isolationism and Internationalism

Henry Oinas-Kukkonen, University of Oulu

Transnational Dissent: Case Studies in Cold War Cultural Containment, 1947–60

Jodie Childers, University of Massachusetts–Amherst

Securing US Internationalism: The Role of Public-Private Elite Networks in (Re)Establishing Post-War Transatlantic Relations

Anne Zetsche, Free University Berlin

The University of Iowa International Writing Program as a “Covenant of Peace,” 1967–2017

Janusz Kaźmierczak, Adam Mickiewicz University

Panel 18. American Politics: Ideas and Ideologies

○ E420

John Dewey’s Democratic Way of Life: Radical Liberalism and Religious Humanism

Bruno Hamnell, Lund University

Attacking Complacency: American Cultural Pluralism and the Social Settlement Experience

David Östlund, Södertörn University/University of Michigan

The Origins of “Political Correctness”: PC and the Lesbian Sex Mafia

Magnus Ullén, Stockholm University

Radical Yearning: Populism and the Politics of Nostalgia

Simone Knewitz, University of Bonn

Panel 19. American Indians and Settlers

○ F315

American Indian Treaties: One-sided Agreements

Roger L. Nichols, University of Arizona

Swedish Female Settlers on Reservation Lands in South Dakota

Johanna Andersson Raeder, Stockholm University

Connections and Encounters on the U.S. Frontiers, 1876–1916: Hugh Lenox Scott and the Role of U.S. Army Officers in Imperial Expansion

Stefan Amirell, Linnaeus University

Inclusion, Exclusion, and the Construction of Nationhood in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda

Debra Hanson, Virginia Commonwealth University

Panel 20. American Media: TV and Film

○ F320

Freedom from Disease: The War on Cancer and the Cancer Myth as Tacit Global Covenant in American Television

Manuela Neuwirth, University of Graz

Digital Death: The American City, Nostalgia, and Computer-Generated Imagery in the Apocalyptic Short Films of Patrick Jean

Johan Nilsson, Örebro University

Over Their Dead Bodies: Gender, Politics, and the Fabled Future in House of Cards

Yuwei Ge, Philipps University of Marburg

Beyond Simulacrum: Western in Westworld

Stevan Bradić, University of Novi Sad

19:00

Conference Dinner

○ Restaurant Hasselbacken

Hazeliusbacken 20, Djurgården, Stockholm

Sunday September 30th

ABF-huset

○ Sveavägen 41, Stockholm

10:00–11:00

SAAS General Meeting

○ Brantingrummet

12:00–13:30

Panel Discussion

○ Z-salen

The End of the American Century? A Panel on Politics, History, and the U.S. Role in the World

The United States is a global superpower in transformation. In 1941, the journalist Henry Luce famously wrote that the 20th century was “the American century,” shaped by American political, ideological, and moral leadership. There are indications that this era is coming to an end. What international role does the United States play during the presidency of Donald J. Trump? How has it changed historically? And why do we care so much about U.S. politics in Sweden?

In this roundtable – which is open to the general public – three prominent scholars discuss American politics from an international and historical perspective.

Discussants: **David R. Roediger, University of Kansas**
Frida Stranne, Halmstad University
Dag Blanck, Uppsala University

Moderator: **Frida Beckman, Stockholm University**

Keynote Abstracts

David Roediger, University of Kansas

What Is This White in “White Working Class”? Cautions on Easy Explanations of Trump’s Victory

Following Stuart Hall’s injunction that we need to take seriously the complexities of racial modifiers that become too easily and automatically attached to certain class or cultural locations, this lecture troubles the term “white working class” in the United States context. It especially considers the sudden rise to prominence of that term as a kind of all-purpose explanation for the election of Donald Trump as U.S. president in 2016. It analyzes the empirical problems associated with such an explanation for Trump’s victory and the more general difficulties of trying to quickly read large truths about race and class in the U.S. from election results. Professor Roediger situates this discussion historically, especially in the discussion of the emergence of a working class movement among so-called whites in the U.S. following upon the self-emancipation of enslaved people. At the same time the lecture attends to the dangers of the current moment, especially for example in the use of anti-immigrant racism as a leading way to make broader appeals to white supremacy, a phenomenon hardly confined to the U.S. The ways in which current appeals by scholars and pollsters to “take the white working class seriously” as a way to combat right-wing successes are critically considered not only in terms of their unproductive and disorienting past but also of their perhaps inevitable tendency to accent paying attention to “white” at the expense of paying attention to “working class.”

Frida Stranne, Halmstad University

Is There a Strategy Somewhere? American Foreign Policy during the Trump Presidency

Amidst the turmoil and drama surrounding President Trump it is crucial to take a closer look at the foreign policy strategy of the Administration, and where that strategy will lead us in the near future. It is also important to place the current administration in an historical context in order to understand an often-ignored pattern. Each time in modern history when the US has experienced a period of social upheaval, economic or military decline, or have been morally questioned, neoconservatives and liberal interventionists have proposed a more aggressive foreign policy, echoing the notion that America is the world leader. After a period of restraint, which always follow as a consequence of costly wars, influential groups have been using the sense of concern among Americans as a mobilizing force for a more aggressive international approach. Trump’s specific answer to what many considered a failure of President Obama—that Obama lost US initiative in world politics—is not to put troops on the ground, as President Bush did after 9/11, but rather to re-build the world order in favor of the United States through other means. It is noteworthy that Trump connects his business-oriented practice with foreign policy strategies to adjust his idea of how the United States will keep its global standing. He does so through other means than his predecessors: by provoking both friends and foes abroad, as well as the democrats at home. However, a vast majority within the Republican Party shares his basic points and embrace his actions, some of which have been anticipated for years by the Republicans. Behind the chaotic scenes playing out in public, influential groups are working on transforming Trump’s rhetoric into policies that are anything but isolationists. Rather, their intention is to administer old goals through a new strategy.

Sylvia Mayer, University of Bayreuth

Environmental Risk Narratives: Uncertainty, Anticipation, and Speculation in the American Climate Change Novel

Over the last few decades, the accumulation of risks – ecological, financial, biomedical, or informational – has become a shaping force that permeates contemporary societies on a global scale and challenges them to deal with a present and a future increasingly marked by uncertainty, contingency, and insecurity. One of the major global risks we are confronted with today is the risk of climate change. After decades of research into – and controversial debate about – the causes of global warming, climate science overwhelmingly agrees that contemporary climate change has anthropogenic causes, that it is predominantly human-made. The scenarios put forth in the successive reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change specify the threats to ecosystems and thus to current economic, political, and cultural orders that sustain societies across the planet. Climate change has become the key signature of the Anthropocene, a new geological period which recognizes the impact that humanity as a species has had on the planet. And yet, despite the robustness of scientific findings, despite ongoing corroboration of results of climate modelling, the climate risk remains a controversial issue, especially in the realm of global politics which has not yet sufficiently met the challenge to devise and implement measures that would curb greenhouse-gas emissions and adapt to changes already underway. Uncertainty still permeates the global climate discourse, signaling the unprecedented complexity and scale of the risk, but also the challenges to communicate its causes and possible effects.

Against the backdrop of more recent developments in US environmental politics, the talk will discuss the fictional contribution of a growing number of US American climate change novels to the risk discourse of global climate change. It will address how these novels engage with the anticipation of global climate catastrophe, how they address the multiplicity and diversity of risk realities and vulnerabilities that characterize individual and collective climate risk experiences, and how they speculate about possible planetary futures. Reading the novels as environmental risk narratives, it will engage with questions of genre and explore the relationship of fact, fiction, and narrative in order to demonstrate that fictional risk narratives participate in the climate discourse in a unique and indispensable way.

Abstracts

Individual abstracts in alphabetical order. Panel abstracts on p. 40.

Lena Ahlin, Kristianstad University

The Global Subjects of Korean-American Adoptee Narratives

In the first decades of the 21st century, a range of autobiographical narratives dealing with adoption from South Korea to the U.S. have been published, such as Katy Robinson's *A Single Square Picture* (2002), Jane Jeong Trenka's *The Language of Blood* (2003) and *Fugitive Visions* (2009), and Soojung Jo's *Ghost of Sangju* (2015). Embodying two cultures and two races, the transnational/transracial adoptee can be seen as an example of globalization from within U. S. culture. This paper focuses on how issues of identity, race and belonging are negotiated in the life writing of transnational/transracial adoptees. Eng and Han (2000) suggest that the Asian adoptee suffers from "racial melancholia," which stems from having to navigate Asianness and whiteness without the support of an immigrant community. The relationship between affect and belonging is further probed through the use of Sara Ahmed's discussion of the *melancholic migrant* ("Multiculturalism and the Promise of Happiness," 2007), and the arguments concerning anger made by critical race theorists, such as bell hooks (*Killing Rage*, 1996). Yet another aspect of the global scope of the literature are the similar types of narratives that are now being written in Scandinavia. The paper concludes by drawing parallels between the works of Danish Maja Lee Langvad and Swedish Astrid Trotzig, and the American adoptee narratives.

Stefan Amirell, Linnaeus University

Connections and Encounters on the U.S. Frontiers, 1876–1916: Hugh Lenox Scott and the Role of U.S. Army Officers in Imperial Expansion

The paper presents an ongoing research project financed by the Swedish Research Council. The project focuses on the imperial career of a U.S. Cavalry officer, Hugh Lenox Scott (1853–1934), who served on the American Plains (Dakota and Indian Territory/Oklahoma), in Cuba, in the Southern Philippines and on the Mexican border. Renowned for his negotiating skills, Scott established friendly relations with, among others, members of the Apache, Kiowa, Comanche, Sioux, Nez Percé and other Native American Nations, as well as with Cubans, Mexicans and Chinese and Muslims in the Southern Philippines.

The sources to Scott's life and career contain the concurrent voices and perspectives of many leading agents who represented non-U.S. groups in the frontier zones of the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In highlighting these voices the project challenges received binary oppositions between colonizer and colonized and provides a new understanding of the connected, contested, undetermined and mutually constitutive character of U.S. imperial expansion around the turn of the twentieth century.

Some of the key question pursued in the project are: How did the encounters and relations involving Scott in the frontier zones shape U.S. policies and the course of U.S. expansionism? How were conflicts handled in the frontier zones and to what extent were personal relations crucial for imperial expansion and for the implementation of imperial policies, including 'civilizing' measures?

Johanna Andersson Raeder, Stockholm University

Swedish Female Settlers on Reservation Lands in South Dakota

In the summer of 1904, the US government held a land lottery in South Dakota. Vast acres of land from the Rosebud reservation had been labeled by the government as "surplus land" and were now up for sale to prospective settlers. The interest from the public was immense, more than 100 000 men and women filed applications to enter the lottery, hoping to win the opportunity to buy 160 acres of fertile land at an affordable price to build their future on. Only a handful of lucky people, 2 500, were drawn as winners in this raffle. The majority of these people were West European immigrants, which was not a coincidence. It

was an important part of the Government's project aimed at populating and the nation's western territories to attract West European immigrants. The vast array of weekly newspapers directed towards different immigration groups informed about the availability of land and upcoming land lotteries, how to participate and the requirements and the costs for buying government-owned land. In these newspapers, companies of land brokers offered their services such as scouting and estimating the value of land coming up for sale. West European settlers were expected to form west European styled communities, implementing western ideas and way of life in the area, marginalizing the indigenous people, the Lakotas, their communities and their way of life.

In this project the interactions and coexistence of female homesteaders of Swedish descent and the indigenous Lakota people on the Rosebud reservation land will be studied. Some of these homestead women were lottery winners i.e. they had applied for the lottery in their own name, as head of their household, and some of them were part of a male headed household. Either way, they had to provide for themselves and their dependents in new and unfamiliar environment. And the indigenous people were forced to live on much reduced areas, thus abandoning their traditional way of life.

In this paper I will present the project, the available source materials and discuss the research questions that can be identified.

Marie Bennedahl, Linnaeus University

Back in the Days: Selective Reenacting of the American Civil War in Sweden

The battle-cries of the American Civil War does not only echo on the ancient battle fields of the United States, but also in the deep woods of Scandinavia. Associations from different parts of Sweden gather at events throughout the year, reenacting the battles and camp life of the American Civil War. Historical reenactment is used as a way of creating identity and meaning in present day life, through a nostalgic interpretation of the past. A purpose to life that is now lost is perceived to be potentially found through reenactment. The distance in time allows the Swedish reenactors to select a seemingly more meaningful past than the one in the home country, thus creating a place for themselves in the American history. Distance in space on the other hand gives the Swedish reenactors a freedom from present-day politics, allowing them to forget certain aspects of the Civil War and to enhance others. A freedom not equally granted Civil War reenactors in the USA. Through autoethnographic research and interviews I explore the selective remembering and adaptation of the American Civil War in Swedish reenactment, focusing mainly on aspects of gender and ethnicity in relation to distance in time and place

Troy Bickham, Texas A&M University at Qatar

Placing North America in Global Communication Networks, c. 1750–1815

This paper explores how North America entered into the global public communications networks created by newspapers in mid-eighteenth century and how these networks evolved as the colonies developed and, in the case of thirteen colonies, became the United States. The paper seeks to visually map the connections between newspaper-producing towns in North America with each other, as well as towns and cities across the globe. Rather than representing traditional physical geographic distances, the maps resulting from this project re-conceptualize space as frequency of communication and the amount of time a communication took to travel between points A and B. What emerges is the world in which literate, newspaper readers lived – a world in which London was closer to Boston than Savannah and New York was more important to Upper Canada than any British city.

Jenny Bonnevier, Örebro University

Making Babies and Making Home in an All-Female World: Reproduction, Sexuality and Belonging in Nicola Griffith's Ammonite

All-female worlds, often utopian, are part of the feminist sf-tradition. In constructing these worlds, one vital aspect that by necessity needs to be re-thought is reproduction. How this has been done varies widely. Examining both “reproductive solutions” and how these are represented as part of cultural, social and political contexts allows us to explore feminist reproductive futurities; that is, we can explore ways in which feminism can reformulate both reproduction and kinship per se, and, more importantly, the connection between these and a future free from gender-based oppression.

This paper focuses on Nicola Griffith's novel *Ammonite* (1992), set on the all-female planet of Jeep and featuring Earth-born anthropologist, and newcomer to Jeep, Marghe Taishan. Three thematic concerns are analyzed. First, I look at how the novel represents reproduction as not only a biological but also a mental process; secondly, sexuality and its connection to reproduction will be discussed. Finally, the idea of belonging, of being or becoming part of a world or a community and the ways in which the novel connects this experience to reproduction will be explored. The emphasis on belonging in the novel, and in particular belonging represented as part of a biological/genetic process comes across as highly topical in a time where we increasingly talk about identity and kinship in terms of DNA. On a more general note, *Ammonite* also raises equally topical questions of assimilation and integration, of power and powerlessness in meetings between cultures.

Stevan, Bradić, University of Novi Sad

Beyond Simulacrum: West in Westworld

As an atypical product of mass culture the acclaimed HBO series *Westworld* (2016-) presents us with a layered narrative formed around a number of concepts relevant for contemporary American society. Being a blend of science fiction and western, it can be read as a discussion on the production of mass culture itself, staged through this very generic split. It is a pastiche (F. Jameson) on the American history, staged as a Wild West themed amusement park, presented as a technological simulacrum (J. Baudrillard), in which the distinction between reality and fiction ceases to be relevant. A reference with no referent, it is still constructed as region of the American frontier briefly after the Civil War, bordering Mexico, which serves as a playground for the externalisation of fantasies of its clients, simultaneously being a source of surplus enjoyment for them (J. Lacan), and of surplus value for the owners of the park (Marx). Finally, it is an allegory of the master-slave dialectics, which is set in the very heart of hyperreality, presenting us with a way for the re-emergence of the real. Along the lines of Hegelian thought it is the attainment of self-consciousness that can disrupt the functioning of the simulacrum and potentially reintroduce history into the postmodern condition. The contradictions and implications of such *aufhebung* for contemporary American society will be at the centre of this essay

Iulian Cananau, University of Gävle

“Partialist” and “Universalist”: Figurations of U.S. Exceptionalism in Antebellum Writing

In this paper, I investigate the tension between particularism and universalism at the core of antebellum American exceptionalism. “Particularism” is herein understood as a broader term encompassing “nationalism”, “jingoism”, “sectarianism”, as well as “individualism” and “self-interest”. As for “universalism”, it is conceived neither in theological terms as the doctrine that all people will be eventually saved, nor as a kind of foreign policy, but as virtually synonymous to “universality”, or the condition and quality of being universal. Taking my cues from one of Emerson's famous paradoxes, namely that “every man is a partialist... and... every man is a universalist also” (in the essay “Nominalist and Realist”), I proceed to identify and compare representations of particularism and universalism in antebellum writings on U.S. national identity by Emerson, Fuller, Simms, Douglass, and Delany.

Jodie Childers, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Transnational Dissent: Case Studies in Cold War Cultural Containment, 1947–1960

This paper examines aesthetic and political dissent as expressed through cultural production during the Cold War. During a period of political and cultural containment, artists such as Josephine Baker, Charlie Chaplin, and Paul Robeson employed a variety of strategies of resistance when directly confronted with the repressive state apparatus: by performing and disseminating their works abroad; by forging artistic and political alliances around the world and by critiquing and satirizing U.S. domestic and foreign policies. In her 2004 presidential address to the ASA, Shelley Fisher Fishkin urged American studies scholars to pay more attention to the “multidirectional flows of people, ideas, and goods and the social, political, linguistic, cultural, and economic crossroads generated in the process”. Looking at McCarthyism as a transnational phenomenon reveals both the expansive reach and the limitations of the state, offering a less claustrophobic look at this period of political and cultural history. By decentering America from the conversation and highlighting, for example, the reception of Baker’s work around the world; Chaplin’s film work after he left America; or Robeson’s internationalist projects during the eight years in which he was denied his passport, this project recovers sites of artistic agency and autonomy. Furthermore, positioning McCarthyism within a global context exposes how cultural containment was not entirely feasible within an increasingly interconnected world.

Nathalie Cochoy, University of Toulouse

In Our Time, by Ernest Hemingway: The Silent Covenant of Experience

In his famous essay, “The Storyteller”, Walter Benjamin associates the silence of the soldiers when they returned from the battlefield, unable to name the horrors of the war, with the disappearance of the art of storytelling, as a means of conveying some practical knowledge, some common sense of morality. According to him, only the narrator has the necessary authority for an intuitive “grasping” of the ungraspable meaning of life and for the transmission of this experience. However, after the war, the narrator can no longer transform the raw quality of his experience into a continuous narrative aiming at enlightening the community. Analyzing Hemingway’s collection of vignettes and short stories, in *In Our Time*, I would like to contend that the novelist still succeeds in unveiling the incommunicable yet common wounds of war while revealing the value of the most minute experiences of life. Far from highlighting the exemplary, unique or even heroic dimension of experience, Hemingway’s art of storytelling consists in exploring the hesitations and emendations of discourse, the style and substance of sentences, and thus eventually rediscovering the value of the commonplace events of everyday life. Transmitted from one solitude to another, experience, in *In Our Time*, is *next to nothing*. But it is precisely by verging on insignificance that it sketches out the precious, *poetic* value of the *prosaic*. In this early collection, Hemingway thus seems to reveal how fiction partakes in the creation of a new covenant, paradoxically based on silence, and on the reinvention of minute, yet essential, “sensitive coexistences” (Rancière).

David Corrales-Morales, Institute of History, The Centre for Human and Social Sciences (CCHS) of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)

Brightening the Lives of Children. The U.S. Sixth Fleet and its Impact on the American Politics of Childhood in Early Francoist Spain

After the signing of the military agreements with the Franco regime in 1953, a wide range of initiatives related to childhood were advocated to demonstrate to Spaniards the benefits of a close association with the United States and to enhance local acceptance of the U.S. military presence. From this perspective, this research seeks to shed light on different child welfare activities carried out by the U.S. Sixth Fleet in Barcelona and Valencia during the 1950s. Distributing goods, supporting orphanages and organizing fund-raising events were only some examples which contributed to portray America as a benevolent protector capable of providing care for minors. Beyond this, this paper pays special attention to the

long-standing relationship between the crew of the U.S.S. *Aucilla* and the Stella Maris School, which lasted until the early 1960s.

The analysis of the U.S. Marine Corps' humanitarian efforts in Spain provides a valuable opportunity to explore whether these personal contacts and initiatives succeeded in creating a climate of opinion favorable to the United States. Furthermore, this case study makes it possible to assess the profound connections between the public and private spheres in the opening decades of the Cold War, which is a key element for understanding the emergence and development of the People-to-People Program during the Eisenhower administration.

Tanja Cvetković, University of Niš

From the Cityscape to the Rural Landscape: Annie Proulx's Bird Cloud

The paper focuses on Annie Proulx's non-fiction work *Bird Cloud* and explores some of the ideas Proulx has postulated in her fiction work, novels and short stories: a sense of place, home-ness, the history and archaeology of place, the sense of (non)-belonging, or conjunction and disjunction to use Slovic's terms.

The paper proves that Proulx's movement from urban cityscape to the rural landscape of Wyoming of 640 acres of wetlands and prairie which she named Bird Cloud, marks the beginning of the change of place along the self and ideological transformations, opening up the issues of her re-connection to nature and land, the issue of ownership (as the appreciation of the land leads to ownership), the confrontation with her rootlessness, the ancestors and the archaeology of the first settlements, when she inquires into the past of the land, which all increase her growing sense of place, home and belonging. The landscape becomes the repository of the narrator's mental strength and beliefs, a reflection of her needs and drives. Travel and relocation, prominent features of Proulx's work, are what Barry Lopez describes as means of overcoming disjunction in remote locations and of cultivating intimacy with nature and land; eventually they give rise to a fictional representation of landscape.

Elisabet Dellming, Stockholm University

Imagination and the Wild: Reading Marilynne Robinson's Housekeeping through Richard Kearney's Poetics of Imagining and John Fowles' The Tree

In *Housekeeping*, the narrator Ruth describes one of her grandfather's paintings and how it was impossible to say if his "genius" was due to "ignorance or fancy". Ruth's grandfather never travelled far from the Midwest but his imagination of foreign lands, sparked by illustrated magazines, inspired him to conjure up fantasy animals and landscapes in strange colours and shapes. In this paper, I examine how Robinson develops and explores this apt metaphor for the workings of imagination and I do so by employing the double lens of Richard Kearney's definition of imagination as "the human power to convert absence into presence, actuality into possibility" and John Fowles' idea of "the irreducible 'wild' component" of human consciousness as imagination's primary source. Drawing on these different yet complementary perspectives, I show how *Housekeeping* turns to the 'wild' in its exploration and concomitant expansion of the boundaries of what makes imagination possible and what it is possible to imagine. Additionally, my reading of *Housekeeping* attends to a hitherto overlooked aspect of Robinson's fiction insofar as it demonstrates how ignorance is used as a trope not simply to indicate a lack of knowledge but as a means of resistance to an unjust and inadequate episteme. This very specific type of ignorance, I argue, works as a prompt for imagination as well as its ultimate condition of possibility. Finally, expanding on Kearney's claim that one key principle of ethics is to be able to "imagine otherwise", I suggest that *Housekeeping* highlights how epistemic authority and justice in Robinson's narratives come less from knowledge as such but from an ability to imagine "wildly" and "otherwise".

Bo G. Ekelund, Stockholm University

The Worlds Philip K. Dick Made: Literary Worlding and Metadiegetic Objects

The notion of a type of world that can be termed phildickian (the term is found in Wiktionary and the Urban Dictionary) is gaining plausibility at the same time that literary scholars are increasingly engaged in debates over the concept of “world” and “worlding.” This conjuncture invites a renewed attempt to grasp the specificity of Dick’s world-making and to see how current theories of literary worlds can take the measure of that enterprise.

In this paper I will argue that phildickian worlds can be read as registering, from Philip K. Dick’s specific West Coast perspective, what the Warwick Research Collective has termed “combined and uneven development.” As one key element in Dick’s typical building of incomplete and incoherent worlds I will focus on the central role of metadiegetic objects. The concept of metadiegetic significance was introduced by Eric Hayot as one of his proposed variables for the study of aesthetic world-spaces: metadiegetic moments in a narrative world “signify intensely” and the relative density of such moments can be used to compare different types of literary worlds, in Hayot’s model. In Dick’s fictional worlds, a special burden is carried by particular artefacts, such as the “Perky Pat” doll in *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, the antique Colt pistol in *The Man in the High Castle*, the buffalo nickel in *UBIK*. In some cases they directly generate worldedness, but more importantly, they consistently figure as tokens of world incoherence or unevenness. Special attention will be paid to the transnational nature of key phildickian objects.

Morten Feldtfos Thomsen, Karlstad University

Intermediality in A Nightmare on Elm Street

This paper investigates a range of medial references, imitations and projections in the *A Nightmare on Elm Street* film series produced between 1984 and 1994. As has been argued by, among others, Bruhn (2016) and Elleström (2010, 2014), all media contain traces of, and references to, other media. Such intermedial phenomena do not only make any strict distinction between media difficult but often also serve different aesthetic and political purposes. Intermediality in this sense concerns not only the border crossings between media conventionally thought of as distinct from one another, but also the aesthetic and political implications of such crossings. From references to William Shakespeare and Edgar Allen Poe to medial projections of videogames, music videos and comic books, the *Nightmare* films present the viewer with a complicated web of various intermedial strategies. This paper investigates such strategies, arguing that they function as an exploration of the ideological underpinnings of filmmaking in general and horror cinema in particular. More specifically, this paper will argue that the intermedial strategies found in the *Nightmare* series articulate a profound unease with the coalescence of commodification and authority associated with the cultural mainstream of 1980s America. Even while exploring the possibility of subversive creative resistance to the dehumanizing and disempowering effects of this coalescence, the films ultimately remain distinctly ambivalent in regards to the culturally subversive potential of the *Nightmare* series itself and horror cinema more generally.

Maria Freij, Kristianstad University

Fertile Ground for Alienation: Utopia and Dystopia in Lars Gustafsson’s American Poems

During his 20-year long expatriation from Sweden to America, Lars Gustafsson wrote several poems that dealt with the contrasting American- and Swedish (childhood) landscapes – poems dealing with utopian ideas and ideals of homeland, and, as a necessity thereof, poems concerned with idealistic constructions of place and self that often end up proving not to live up to such illusions. Gustafsson’s problematisation of space, place, and time creates effects of acceptance and resistance simultaneously, and it is in the space of the poem – within the poetic landscape – that Gustafsson’s homelands are able to coexist, and his manner of interchanging the significance of centre and periphery allows what may superficially appear to be juxtapositions to be interdependent elements. This allows the scope of the poem to encompass the

many realisations of homeland with which the expatriate poet is concerned. The paper compares images of childhood in two of Gustafsson's most 'American' poems: "Austin, Texas" and "Where the Alphabet has Two-hundred Letters" function to expand the poetic space, and their effect on creating an imaginary homeland within the poetic landscape

Dirk Gindt, Stockholm University

"Colonies of Erotic Bacilli": Tennessee Williams on Post-War European Stages

This paper offers a critical study of the processes of production and reception of American playwright Tennessee Williams' works on Swedish and French stages at the height of his commercial popularity between 1945 and 1965. The two decades immediately following World War II mark a pivotal moment in the internationalisation of American theatre when Williams' plays became some of Broadway's most critically acclaimed and financially lucrative exports. The paper charts and analyses the patterns of migration and cultural translation of Williams' plays in two specific European countries to produce a rich and nuanced understanding of the transnational impact of one of the twentieth century's most influential playwrights. Informed by gender, sexuality and postcolonial studies, my argument zooms in on the sexual anxieties and racial fantasies that Williams' characters, settings and themes engendered. The overwhelming evidence, I posit, points to how his plays constituted cultural products that made possible the articulation and exploration of domestic insecurities and national phobias, which, in turn, could be deflected and safely diverted back to the eroticized and exoticized American Deep South. Directors and actors in Sweden and France blatantly sexualized and racialized Williams' characters and settings, in turn providing critics with ammunition to incite public scandal and outrage or dismiss the plays as products of an American imagination.

Antoni Górný, University of Warsaw

Afro-Pessimism, Black Radicalism, and the Unbearable Whiteness of Western Radical Thought

We Were Eight Years in Power, Ta-Nehisi Coates' recent disquisition of the logics of racism in the wake of Donald J. Trump's 2016 electoral triumph, drew much criticism from radical Black intellectuals, such as Cornel West, for Coates' apparent defeatism with regard to the question of "race." In their view, acceptance of "racial" distinctions as an indelible part of Western social systems amounts to endorsing the racist's idea of "race" as an ahistorical, essential category, rather than a contingent product of specific historical formations. From this Afro-pessimist perspective, the role "racial" distinctions continue to play in defining one's social and political status in the West invalidates any philosophy of radical change that does not stem from the recognition thereof. Meanwhile, "traditional" radicals tend to put class over "race", viewing the latter as a subordinate site of the economic dance of capital and labor (in the words of Stuart Hall, "a modality in which class is lived"). Trump's rise and the attendant revival of White Americanism seem to justify the Afro-pessimist argument; at the same time, however, actual "racial" struggles are clearly inseparable from the class struggle, Black Americans being "privileged" as both the most conspicuous victims of capitalism and potentially its most dangerous enemies. The crudeness and repetitiveness of the "new racism" suggests that, rather than being perceived as mutually exclusive, the two Black radical traditions should be read against one another, the apparent defeatism of the one overcoming the Marxian dogmatism of the other.

Kristina Graaff, Humboldt University of Berlin

Adjusting to Modernity: Self-Help in the Early 20th Century

In the early 20th century, U.S. society was marked by a variety of changes that required profound adjustment from its citizens: a Fordist economic order followed by a Great Depression; urbanization; secularization and the nationwide dissemination of discourses via mass media were some of them. Mass-mediated self-help was a major tool to support people in adjusting to the many new demands. Bestselling self-help guides, call-in radio shows as well as advice columns in magazines and newspapers provided

step-by-step instructions on how to ‘optimize’ one’s professional and private lives in line with the new social order.

My paper opens with a discussion of the era’s changes, how they led to shifting conceptualizations of the self and required human adjustment on a massive scale. In the following, I will conduct close readings of selected forms of self-help. The aim of my paper is twofold. First, it illustrates how self-help had the potential to initiate new behavioral standards and to function as a tool of self-optimization due to its specific rhetorical form. Second, it shows how self-help advice was aimed at adjusting the self (in body and mind) to fit the new economic order of automated mass production and consumption.

Lucille Hagège, University of the Sorbonne

Synecdoche and Power: Rethinking the Encyclopedic Novel

Since the 1970s, regular attempts have been made to categorize the sprawling, “encyclopedic” novels of contemporary American writers such as Thomas Pynchon or David Foster Wallace. Alternatively dubbed “encyclopedic narratives”, “systems novels” or “maximalist fictions”, novels like *Gravity’s Rainbow* or *Infinite Jest* have been touted as finally offering a truly global form for a globalized world, one reflecting the tentacular networks and ecosystemic awareness of the contemporary experience. Yet a closer look at the texts themselves reveals that, however ambitious in scope and size, however intent on incorporating specialized scientific discourse into their prose, these monster novels can only ever be specious synecdoches of American life, a part masquerading as the whole, a monologism rewritten by critical reception as a universal tongue. Tellingly, the novels selected in the various classifications are almost always written by white, educated men, and often struggle to integrate female characters, or characters of color, at any level more quotidian or humane than those of archetype or myth. Rather than being representations of the nation, or even the world, many of these novels are in fact rich meditations on masculinity itself, or on the uncomfortable anxieties associated with the loss of privilege in an ever-diversifying American canon. The universalization of the white, educated male perspective, its presentation as the default neutral of American letters, remains an unaddressed methodological bias in generic studies as recent as 2016. This paper will seek to historicize the discourse surrounding the ideal of a universal art form, and show how claims of scientific universalism in “encyclopedic” novels often eclipse more national concerns of literacy legitimacy and canon creation.

Bruno Hamnell, Lund University

John Dewey’s Democratic Way of Life: Radical Liberalism & Religious Humanism

This presentation explores John Dewey’s democratic ideal and his attempt to rethink liberalism during (primarily) the interwar period. For Dewey, democracy is more than a form of government. It is a way of life. It is also connected to religious ideals such as tolerance, liberation, the absolute value of the individual, and rejection of self-centered individualism. These values were central to Dewey’s conception of radical democracy, which was supposed to remove the obstacles to self-realization, growth and social harmony. Religion, politics, and philosophy forms a unity in Dewey’s thought, and he often speaks of the need for “democratic faith.”

I argue that Dewey’s political thought should be understood against the notion of “crisis” common to many European intellectuals contemporary to Dewey, but seldom taken to have much importance in his thought. This interpretation provides an explanation as to why Dewey thought that the faith of mankind needed to direct itself towards the possibility of deepening human relations, cooperation, and communication in order to create a freer and more humane world. In a multicultural globalized world suffering from declining faith in democracy and increasing isolationism, we seem to have every reason to explore Dewey’s social liberalism and conception of radical democracy.

Debra Hanson, Virginia Commonwealth University

Inclusion, Exclusion, and the Construction of Nationhood in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda

Above the south door of the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. – a soaring interior expanse that functions as the ceremonial core of the building, and is among its most publically visible spaces – a large sandstone bas-relief pictures the *Conflict of Daniel Boone and the Indians* (1826–1827). Showing the frontiersman in hand-to-hand combat with an Indian opponent whose facial features and bodily proportions are exaggerated to the point of caricature, it is among the first works of art commissioned as the Capitol was rebuilt following its partial destruction in the War of 1812. The prominence of rifle, knife, and tomahawk underscore the violence of the confrontation, while the figure of a dead Native American in the lower section of the composition signals its outcome.

This paper examines *Conflict of Daniel Boone* and related works in relation to the architectural and pictorial context of the Rotunda and its visual constructions of nationhood in the Early Republic. Connecting past and present, it identifies the sculpture as a “site of contestation” that speaks not only to artistic practice, politics, and patronage at the early Capitol, but to issues of inclusion, exclusion, racism, and violence that galvanized nineteenth-century America and still divide the nation today. Sculpted by an Italian immigrant in a “provincial neoclassical” mode for an American audience, *Conflict of Daniel Boone* also embodies the tensions of nationalism and internationalism manifest in the decorative program of the Capitol, and in the cultural, social and political histories of the United States from the eighteenth century to the present.

Richard Hardack, Independent Scholar

“Too Much of a Cosmopolitan”; Melville’s Cultural Geography of American Universalism

In this paper, I argue that transcendental depictions of American cosmopolitanism began with a premise of universal commensurability. According to Emerson, for example, “All changes pass without violence, by reason of the two cardinal conditions of boundless space and boundless time.” As Emerson asserts, we may travel “vast distances, but we never go into a foreign system.” Or as Emerson unself-consciously and emblematically proposes, “The war proa of the Malays in the Japanese water struck Commodore Perry by its close resemblance to the yacht ‘America.’” Such a view is both provincial – denying difference – and cosmopolitan, for it assumes difference can always be translated and understood. Emerson claimed that for the transcendentalist, “the belt of wampum and the commerce of America are alike.” Even Melville, at least in *Mardi*, playfully echoes Emerson’s optimistic sentiments about the “cosmopolitan” universality of custom and commerce: “The New Zealander’s tattooing is not a prodigy, nor the Chinaman’s ways an enigma. No *custom* is strange, no creed is absurd. No foe but he who will prove a friend. Your aboriginal tar is too much of a cosmopolitan. You sink your clan; down goes your nation; you speak a world’s language.” These formulations often invoke a native Other as proof and guarantor of the transcendent universality of American civic and economic precepts.

In other words, transcendentalists chart the first global free-trade zone, guaranteed by a U.S. vision of nature as a system of exchange whose end is the universal franchise, a “cosmopolitan” space without borders that transcends histories and nations, that is everywhere the same, and that has subsumed uniform nature. This vision of nature bolsters American law *as* natural law.

Imagining a pure, universal commerce, Emerson preaches that “All languages are alike in their structure--can be translated into each other, and all customs. [T]he kingdom of nature is not a government of partial and manifold provinces, but hath one constitution.” America is “cosmopolitan” in assuming universal natural law. No wonder Moby Dick was sighted at opposite ends of the earth simultaneously, becoming an early emblem of what Philip K. Dick situated as exceptionalist/globalized American ubiquity. In the second part of my paper, I trace how these nineteenth-century ideas regarding American cosmopolitanism have led to a corporatized notion of universality, in which the corporation has supplanted the transcendental force of nature, and imposed a false form of cosmopolitanism based not on the universal franchise of democracy, but the universal franchise of corporate outlets. I also briefly address how the assumptions of a nativist isolationism unexpectedly can dovetail with “cosmopolitan” American exceptionalism and Trumpist rhetoric.

Markus Heide, Uppsala University

Mobility Welcome?: Art and Recreation Zones at the US–Mexico Border

I will introduce sites at the US-Mexico borderline that provide space for the performance of activities of social privilege, such as tourism, international trade, sports, and the arts. The sites discussed are each located at the border between California and Baja California. These places, in their distinct ways, create an atmosphere of being removed from the immediate perils and evils of the borderlands: illegal trade and undocumented immigration. At the same time the three places are shaped by the militarization of the U.S.' Southern border since the 1990s and the post-9/11 security regime: The closed and guarded fence and border patrol agents are visible and mark the places as part of the border blockade. Although the three distinct places contribute to cross-border contacts and exchange, they, as well as their use by border people and visitors, contribute to bordering practices and to normalizing the militarized border. How are forms of mobility constructed in the borderlands? What kind of mobilities are welcome by the border regimes? What kind of hierarchies of mobility do the controlled borderlands create?

Adam Hjorthén, Stockholm University/Free University of Berlin

A Folk United: Swedish-American Genealogy and Nostalgia in the 1960s and -70s

The mass migration of 1.3 million Swedes to the United States between the 1840s and 1920s established ancestral connections across the Atlantic. This paper deals with the ways in which connections were institutionalized as a cultural heritage in the postwar era. Focusing on the creation of a transatlantic genealogical infrastructure, it discusses the period when genealogy emerged as a popular movement in the 1960s and 1970s.

The genealogical search for “roots” and “homelands” often takes the form of nostalgia. The very etymology of the word *nostalgia* indeed denotes a sense of homesickness. I will use this paper to think through ways in which nostalgia has been adopted by professionals and organizations – not by the individual genealogist – to motivate the meaning of Swedish-American genealogy. This question will be explored through studies of the Swedish Emigrant Institute, established in Växjö in 1965, which soon became a local hub for Swedish-American genealogy, as well as the work of two influential individuals in the field: Nils William Olsson (1909–2007) and Ulf Beijbom (1935–). During the 1960s, nostalgia became an increasingly important framework for describing the meaning and value of Swedish-American genealogy. If the nineteenth century emigration was a history of what historian H. Arnold Barton called “a folk divided”, one could argue that its twentieth century memory has been shaped by the pursuit of a folk united

Maria Holmgren Troy, Karlstad University

Placing the Gothic in American Adaptations of Nordic Texts

Adaptations are often examples of border crossings in terms of media, culture, and/or place. This paper will draw on Linda Hutcheon's account in *A Theory of Adaptation* (2013) of “transculturating” and “trans-cultural adaptations” in examining two American adaptations of Nordic Gothic texts: Stephen King's TV series *Kingdom Hospital* (ABC 2004) and Matt Reeves's movie *Let Me In* (2010). As Hutcheon observes, ‘An adaptation, like the work it adapts, is always framed in a context – a time and a place, a society and a culture’. So, when King adapts Lars von Trier's Danish TV series *Riget/The Kingdom* (DR 1994, 1997) for an American audience the setting is moved from Copenhagen to Lewistown, Maine; and there is a similar change of setting from a suburb outside Stockholm to Los Alamos, New Mexico, in Reeves's adaptation of John Ajvide Lindqvist's Swedish vampire novel *Låt den rätta komma in/Let the Right One In* (2004) and the Swedish film adaptation (2008). This change of place, this paper will argue, is intimately connected not only to differences in ideologies between the adapted and adapting texts but also to specific manifestations of the Gothic and the uncanny. These manifestations may be regarded as area- or culture-specific and can provide further insights into the production of American Gothic.

Chris Holmes, Ithaca College

On Second Thought...: American Theory after Form and Suspicion

A recent work on the history and future of literary criticism by Joseph North suggests that Fredric Jameson's dictum "Always historicize!" "will no longer serve" criticism's onus to reach beyond the mere proliferation of further criticism. North suggests, indeed, that the decades spent on fighting over ground occupied by either the Textualist or Materialist wing of literary criticism has produced little more than a factory for replicating those same intellectual disputes, and what is needed in its place are "new methods for cultivating subjectivities and collectivities" (2017). In this paper, I will reconsider the ways that contemporary American theory appears to have broached a departure from precisely this impasse by leaving behind the long-standing critical apparatus that reads, decodes, and extracts information in the literary text, as atomized politics or form. I read a new manifesto in the American tradition as making room for critical methodologies that preference the developing thought and thinking process of the literary object prior to its categorization as "meaning".

After too long a period of being bracketed according to a logic of surface or depth, aesthetics or politics, textuality or materiality, American criticism and theory appears to have arrived at a moment of self-conscious rejection of information in favor of the event, the affect, and thinking-as-process. My reading of this slow turn in the last decade of American theoretical work, attempts to re-conceptualize the literary not as a form, but as a logic and a mode of thought, what Tim Bewes locates as the "possibility to think of the materiality of the work separately from its ideational qualities." By looking at work in the last decade in the subfields of affect (Ngai), event (Levine/Bewes), queer negativity (Berlant), and studies of "the contemporary", I look to position the future of American theory as promoting the circular, repetitive, untranslatable discourse of the literary as that which does not claim a singular meaning, but which instead performs meaning-making as an act of thinking.

Josefin Holmström, University of Cambridge

Challenging American Exceptionalism in the Civil War Era: The Case of The Atlantic Monthly

This paper challenges the idea of American exceptionalism in the Civil War era through close readings of contemporary newspaper and periodicals such as *The Atlantic Monthly* and the *Springfield Daily Republican*. While American periodicals are often studied in isolation, this paper argues that we need to situate them in their 'full' context - which often means a transatlantic one, taking account of US-UK relations. Situated in the 'transnational turn' of periodical scholarship, the paper challenges the received notions of the periodical field - perhaps first and foremost the 'Benedict Anderson reading' of print culture (for other scholars working in the same vein, see ex. Gross 2010; BAAS December 2017 Symposium). Anderson has famously argued that the printing press facilitated the production of 'imagined communities', with the periodical a prime site of the formation and affirmation of national identity (Anderson 1983). This paper, departing from my doctoral research, argues that while both the periodical and the newspaper are sites of cultural production and identification, they are also sites of complication. They are not necessarily exclusively national in the mid-nineteenth century - that is to say, they do not always affirm American exceptionalism

Grant Johnson, University of Southern California

Letter to the World: Sheila Hicks and Abstraction in Mexico

Recent exhibitions and scholarship has revised dominant histories of postwar abstraction as a transnational aesthetic project, recovering a transnational history of abstract art that united the American hemisphere in an international search for significant forms. This paper examines weavings produced by the prolific American artist Sheila Hicks (b. 1934; Hastings, Nebraska) in Mexico in the early 1960s, particularly White Letter and Blue Letter (both accessioned by the Museum of Modern Art in New York shortly after they were made), to articulate how these 'epistolary' compositions connected rural Taxco el Viejo and modernizing Mexico City to the art world's apparent center in New York. Drawing on language theory and confronting

the significant body of scholarship that likens art to linguistic translation, I articulate the disruptive dialogue these epistolary hybrids generated with functional domestic objects, modernist painting and the material culture of communication and translation. After a year teaching in Chile and traveling throughout South America in 1958, Hicks returned to Latin America after completing her MFA at Yale University with Josef Albers to begin her artistic career. Informed by Latin American art historian Georges Kubler's reconciliation of prehistoric American material culture with European art history in the *Shape of Time* (1964), I argue that Hicks's weavings unite 20th century abstraction with the Pre-Columbian archeological legacy by theorizing abstraction as akin to hieroglyphic writing. I evaluate Hicks's abstract painterly weavings to articulate the productive interface of these distinct sites of production, and the morphological sympathies Hicks's work materialized between them.

Judit Ágnes Kádár, University of Sport Science, Budapest

Ethnic Choice and Positioning in Nuevomexicano Mixed Heritage Writing

This paper addresses openness and closure, migration and borders in the context of indigenization in recent Southwestern US fiction written by mixed heritage authors, who utilize their multiple ethnic knowledge archives, experiences and sensibilities. I am to present how novels by North-American novelists like James Welch, Paula Gunn Allen, Leslie M. Silko, Louis Owens in the past and more recently Joy Harjo, Thomson Highway, Richard Wagamese and Thomas King explore the problem of being born to a mixed heritage. Their novels also discuss how the individuals reveal their opportunity to turn a presumably stigmatized identity into a self-conscious holder of valuable assets, a unique set of cultural attitudes, memories and knowledge that the fictional characters can activate and in a broader sense select and adjust into a personal narrative/fluid sense of hybrid identity. Leaving the individual comfort zone is never comfortable, however, these characters take the challenge of internal border crossing and open, undefined notions of identity and all arrive at a more complex and engaging concept of themselves. I am to refer to Owen's *Bone Games* (1994) and *The Sharpest Sight* (1995), Wagamese's *Ragged Company* (2008) and *Medicine Walk* (2014) in particular for a close up on indigenization. The process of ethnic positioning and choice resulting in re-negotiated identities will be discussed. These processes are worth to be studied in view of acculturation sociology, cultural anthropology, cross-cultural and narrative psychology as well as ethnic studies, and I am calling for an interdisciplinary approach that enables us to understand the complexity of these cultural appropriation processes within and beyond the scope of literature

Adam Kaul, Augustana College

Forgetting and Remembering Bishop Hill: History, Amnesia, and Nostalgia in a Rural American Tourist Destination

Bishop Hill, Illinois looms large in Swedish-American history. Its establishment in 1846 marked a massive wave of immigration from Sweden. Founded as a utopian religious colony by an authoritarian Messianic leader, Erik Jansson, the early history of the village was marred by tensions with neighboring communities who were suspicious of their religious beliefs, the murder of Erik Jansson, and financial corruption. Partly as a result, by the turn of the century, Swedishness was largely downplayed in favor of an assimilated (white) American identity. More recently though, entrepreneurs and preservationists established a heritage tourism economy there that places a renewed emphasis on nostalgic notions of Swedishness and immigration. Drawing on ethnographic and archival research conducted since 2010, we ask what has been remembered, and what has been forgotten about the Swedishness of Bishop Hill, and how Swedish-American identities are performed in the village today.

Janusz Kazmierczak, Adam Mickiewicz University

The University of Iowa International Writing Program as a “Covenant of Peace”, 1967–2017

The University of Iowa International Writing Program was started in the year 1967 by the American poet Paul Engle and the writer Hualing Nieh. Between 1967 and 2017, in the fifty years of its operation, it brought to the USA over 1400 writers from all over the world. Being the first program of this kind globally, it continues to operate today. It can be looked at, metaphorically, as a “covenant of peace” that enabled writers from various parts of the world to acquire a measure of first-hand knowledge of the USA, meet fellow writers from other countries, and also helped many Americans to come in touch with foreign writers and cultures. As attested to by many accounts, the Program, while being an instrument of American cultural diplomacy, has indeed provided an opportunity for individuals to build new, and more comprehensive understandings of others and their cultures. The paper, based in part on original research carried out in the archives of the International Program in Iowa City, discusses the proposal for the Program from the year 1966, and then, using the Program’s Annual Reports and other sources, examines the Program’s development in response to the changing political, cultural and technological contexts.

Kim Khavar Fahlstedt, Uppsala University

Charlie Chan in No Man’s Land: Towards a Borderlands History of Warner Oland

“Charlie Chan is missing”, read the headlines in one of Stockholm’s leading newspapers on the morning of January 19, 1938. During the shoot of the 18th installment of the popular Charlie Chan-series, Warner Oland, a middle-aged Swedish-American actor who had become world famous as the burly and brainy Chinese-American detective, had walked off the set and vanished into thin air. Newspapers and fan magazines across the world began reporting Oland’s disappearance in terms of an ironic, real-life Charlie Chan mystery. Soon, Oland was found and given time off by the studio. But the mystery continued. A few months later, the man who everyone knew as Charlie Chan wound up dead in a Stockholm hospital.

This paper investigates the transnational persona of Warner Oland, one of Sweden’s first internationally known, but today largely forgotten, Hollywood film stars. Drawing on a wide range of American, Swedish, and Swedish-American writings on the actor between 1937 and 1938, I map the transcultural interplay in the mediation of the death of Warner Oland and the events leading up to it. Further, I trace the coordinates of Oland’s public identity and its relationship to the fictional Charlie Chan-character, as it was publicly challenged and renegotiated in the period of his disappearance and death.

Departing from scholarly observations of the ethnically “undefinable” characteristics of Scandinavian actors in Classical Hollywood cinema, I argue that Oland was a potent and unruly cultural hybrid of contradictory yet distinct characteristics, whose spatial adherences and manifestations of ethnicity can be located in the transnational reception of his public persona. Through this perspective, the story surrounding the actor’s disappearance and death appear synecdochic for his career-long operation in the Swedish-American borderlands, but also of Oland himself as a form of transcultural contact zone.

Simone Knewitz, University of Bonn

Radical Yearning: Populism and the Politics of Nostalgia

In the wake of Brexit, the US presidential elections of 2016, and the global rise of populism, political commentators have identified a “politics of nostalgia”. Thus, political scholars Cas Mudde (*Newsweek*) and E.J. Dionne (*Washington Post*) both have asserted that (right-wing) populism promotes nostalgic ideas of an (imagined) better past which resonates particularly with audiences that feel “left behind.” In this kind of liberal discourse, nostalgia is framed in mainly negative terms and delegitimized as a form of sentiment and affect which has no place in reasonable political debates. Such a view, however, occludes the fact that nostalgia is a significant feature of political rhetoric in general which remains underexplored so far. The United States, specifically, is a country committed to progress, innovation, and modernization, but, in its political culture, also nostalgically invokes the past, e.g. by referencing

the origins of the nation, the founding documents, or the ideas and ideals of the framers of the Constitution.

Recent scholarship within cultural studies has become interested in nostalgia as a productive mode of memory and remembering, and as a utopian concept in which the memory of the past informs the present and the future. However, while investigations focusing on media representations are abundant, more work needs to be done on how nostalgia functions in political discourse. This talk aims to reevaluate the “politics of nostalgia” by analyzing nostalgia as a technology of emotion and affect at work in populist rhetoric both in the past and the present in the United States. Historicizing contemporary populism in the US with that of the turn of the twentieth century and the 1960s, I will explore nostalgia in the rhetoric of Donald Trump as well as the historical presidential candidates Williams Jennings Bryan and George Wallace. In which ways make these populist figures (selective) use of the past in order to produce nostalgic affects in their audiences? How does populist nostalgia at these historical moments interact and intersect with anti-nostalgic critiques? And in which ways does nostalgia find its way into mainstream political rhetoric.

Joshua Abraham Kopin, University of Texas at Austin

Yellow Kid, Yellow Peril: Immigrants and the Birth of the American Comic Strip

This talk considers the early American comic strip, which often featured immigrants and their children, like R.F. Outcault’s Irish-American Yellow Kid, in the terms of political cartoons from the periods of the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882) and the Spanish-American War (1898). Although the chromatic element in his nickname was drawn from the way his smock was colored, “yellow” in this context evokes racist anti-Chinese and anti-Japanese images of yellow peril; comics historians have long argued that there was no relationship between Outcault’s character and such depictions, but the Kid’s design includes elements, like his smock and his bald head, that resonate with those earlier cartoons. Similarly, the Kid has long been acknowledged as the origin of the label given to the period’s sensationalist “yellow journalism,” and he must be examined in the terms of both the expansionist and anti-expansionist cartoons of the Spanish-American War. The cartoonists responsible for these often drew the territories into which the US was ultimately to expand as children in need of American education and discipline. Just as the Kid has long been understood as emerging out of traditions of anti-Irish cartooning, then, he must also be considered in terms of other contemporary vocabularies racist caricature. Examining R.F. Outcault’s Yellow Kid with these cartoons in mind demonstrates how this period’s comics and cartoons supported notions of imperial time and expansion and how these ideas were related to notions of progress within the borders of the continental United States.

Roman Kushnir, University of Jyväskylä

Kantele, Jazz and Heavy Metal: Music and Transcultural Finnish American Identities in a Selection of Finnish American Fiction

My current study explores the position of music in constructing the identities of Finnish American migrants in a selection of fiction by second- or third-generation Finnish American authors: the collections of short stories *Heikki Heikkinen* (1995), *Misery Bay* (2002) and *Back to Misery Bay* (2007) Lauri Anderson, and the novels *A Finntown of the Heart* (1998) and *A Finntown of the Soul* (2008) by Patricia Eilola, and *Welcome to Shadow Lake* (1996) by Martin Koskela. They focus on the daily experiences of Finnish Americans of different generation in the USA in the 20th century, and pay a great deal of attention to the musical practices of the characters. The aim of my study is to analyze the roles that music plays in constructing the identities of the characters. The concept of the connection between music, ethnicity and identity as developed by Martin Stokes (1994) and Simon Frith (1996) as well as Mary Louise Pratt’s (1992) concept of transculturation will be used as a theoretical framework of my analysis. My paper demonstrates that music plays the role of the characters’ shared marker of Finnishness and is instrumental in bringing Finnish American community together. At the same time, their musical activities demonstrate a great deal of changes in the new country in the form of inventing new symbols of Finnishness and obtaining new meanings, adaptation to the USA,

and incorporation of the traits of the US and Finnish cultures. My study reveals how the musical activities of the characters construct their identities as transcultural, drawing on affiliation with both Finland and the USA.

Susan Lindholm, Malmö University

Boundaries of Sisterhood: A Comparative Approach to US- and Latin American Hip-hop Feminism

My paper engages in a comparative reading of anti-racist and feminist identities created by hip-hop activists or fans in the United States and Latin America in the context of social media. The United States is one of the centers of global power, which also means that it has become a global referent, not only for anti-racist and anti-oppression movements, but also for their (digital) dissemination through popular culture. Hip-hop feminism, a concept that emerged within the framework of hip-hop activism in the mid 1990s, is one of these glocal movements that today can be found in many regions outside of the US, among them Latin America. In both the US and different Latin American countries, hip-hop feminists, that is, artists and activists who identify themselves as Black or Latino, create oppositional identities that are based on narratives of resistance against racism, sexism, and forgetting repressed and violent pasts. However, the dominance of a brand of US-American hip-hop feminism can, in many cases, serve to render invisible the realities of women outside of the US, and thereby further enforce rather than abolish the historical oppression of their marginalized identities and historical narratives. Against such a background, my project engages in a comparative reading of anti-racist and feminist identities and narratives created by activists or fans in the US and Latin America. It traces these identities on social media by combining oral history interviews with netnography, a research methodology that adapts traditional ethnographic techniques to the study of social media.

Chang Liu, Heidelberg University

Dump Them in China: On the Prolonged Lifespan of America's Musical Waste

Starting from the 1990s, the sales of cassettes and CDs in America's music industry dramatically decreased due to the rise of illegal online downloading. The unsalable copies thus became musical waste and were exported to China as plastic garbage for recycling. Drawing on Chinese language sources published in music magazines from mainland China, I will first outline how these musical wastes entered China and accidentally became valuable and were widely resold in China. I then move to Chinese author Sun Rui's 2004 young adult fiction *Caoyang Nianhua*. By close reading and textual analysis, and focusing on the representation of American musical wastes, I will elaborate on how the protagonist of the novel – a Beijing based Chinese male college student – employs American musical wastes as a tool to construct his identity as a rebellious male youth from China's political center in post-reform China.

The action of dumping in China deserves a closer examination in the context of the globalization of environmental justice movement; yet, the prolonged lifespan these musical wastes had achieved and their empowering effect in China calls the conventional understanding of the social and environmental implications of the unequal distribution of waste between rich and poor nations into question. Taking the above mentioned observations into consideration, I will argue, current critique of the transnational distribution of waste in the globalized environmental justice discourse tends to deny agency to the poor and forge new stereotype of the poor as the environmentally underprivileged Other.

Mark van de Logt, Texas A&M University at Qatar

Professional Wrestling as a Transatlantic Spectacle: The Different Fates of Pro-Wrestling in the Netherlands and the United States

While it is common to see pro-wrestling as an exclusively American phenomenon that made its way to Europe, this view is wrong. Professional wrestling crossed the Atlantic back and forth throughout history and the roots of pro-wrestling are as much in Europe as in the United States, if not more so. Clearly,

professional wrestling would end up following very different paths on each continent. To understand this divergence, this presentation will focus on the Netherlands where the sport faltered and ceased to exist as a popular spectator sport. The reason for this downfall was the peculiar “Calvinist ethos” (for lack of a better term) in Dutch culture that made the sport unwelcome and caused it to falter in the 1910s and 20s, and indeed fail again in the 1970s.

How different the cultural context in the United States where American evangelicalism saw making money (even by turning religion into a “business”) as entirely respectable and even as evidence of divine favor. In addition, the response from American evangelicals was not as determined as Dutch Calvinists, in part because American evangelicalism itself embraced capitalism, commercialism, and showmanship.

Franco Minganti, University of Bologna

A Postwar Italian Kitchen Shining in the Swedish-American Borderlands

In the European-American set of relations, a number of exchanges, both ideas and artefacts, have developed along complex routes, travelling back and forth across the Atlantic as well as across the borders between European countries. Framed within the “cold war modern” and the “cold war kitchen” themes, this paper annotates the peculiar character of a 1958 Italian kitchen, relating it to postwar Italy’s booming production of modern kitchenware, to the influence of Swedish design, and to the advertised dream of American modernization. It defines such a kitchen as a chronotope and maps its continuity with early Italian design and European interior designers and social thinkers that flirted with the Tayloristic ethos (in Germany, France, the Netherlands, Scandinavia). Also, it exposes its interferences with the notion of “passing” for either American and/or Swedish, while acknowledging the influence of such “countries-of-evocation” and the reality of such new borderlands of the infosphere. Was my own childhood’s 1958 new modular kitchen Italian? American? Swedish? Or just Modern? Was the Swedish Modern an inspiration, or else – after the successful exhibition “Design in Scandinavia” (travelling the US for three years, 1954-1957) – the American-made Swedish Modern was it? Swedish-American borderlands may influence other spaces, when no longer confined to binaries: by deploying triangulations of commodities, “passing” effects, and imaginative exchanges across borders, the paper provides new food for thought adding on the model for postwar Americanization in Europe.

Shunsuke Munakata, Hitotsubashi University

Railroad System Made “Safety First Movement”, From the Experiences of Both Railroad Companies and Its Laborers

Scholars specializing in the Progressive Era have argued that the “Safety First Movement” was derived from the steel industry, where managers were eager to prevent laborers from injuries and even death through boosting their morality. However, based on an in-depth analysis of documents published by railroad companies, it seems clear that it was in fact the railroad system in the United States that established a prototype of the so-called “Safety First Movement”.

Analyzing the “rules and regulations” issued by companies, along with journals published by Railroad Brotherhoods, I will emphasize that although companies made laborers obey orders of operation, laborers were eager to improve the morality of those rules. Companies and brotherhood members believed that the workers’ attitude and devotion to their job played a key role in avoiding railroad accidents and protecting passengers’ lives as well as freights.

The federal government also made strenuous efforts to introduce railway safety bills in the early twentieth century. The Interstate Commerce Committee was involved in implementing a new safety strategy and introduced the “Safety Appliance Act,” the “Hours of Service Act.” These laws attempted to incorporate companies’ and laborers’ demand for federal safety policy from the viewpoint of morality.

My research shows how railroad companies, workers, and the federal government struggled to establish and

maintain track safety, and how their efforts essentially gave birth to the “Safety First Movement,” emphasizing laborers’ moral attitude and work ethic.

Manuela Neuwirth, University of Graz

Freedom from Disease: The War on Cancer and the Cancer Myth as Tacit Global Covenant in American Television

The pandemic rise of cancer is a global phenomenon that has, after the disease having long been treated as a taboo, increasingly found its way into media representations in recent decades. In its ubiquity and transcendence of cultures, cancer is paralleled by the medium of television, both phenomena having entered public discourse in the middle of the previous century, spreading from the U.S. to the entire world.

In his State of the Union Address in 1971, President Nixon proclaimed a ‘war on cancer’ that is waged until this very day, on a global scale. Stanford professor Lochlann Jain even speaks of a ‘cancer culture’ that we nowadays live in, in her critique of the same very much echoing Susan Sontag’s groundbreaking work *Illness as Metaphor* that unmasks a cancer myth at work in contemporary society. The way Jain and Sontag understand this cancer myth, it acts as an ideology that magnifies and obscures the disease, denies the uncertainty surrounding it and disavows it as a horrible death in favor of a simplistic, stigmatizing, universalist approach to health and illness.

Merging the global phenomena of TV and cancer, my analysis of the depictions of cancer patients in Showtime’s *The Big C*, AMC’s *Breaking Bad* and ABC Family’s *Chasing Life* will show that American television ultimately perpetuates this cancer myth and turns it into a tacit global covenant between cancerophobic societies. I argue that it adds a fifth to Franklin D. Roosevelt’s famous essential human freedoms, once again turning an American exceptionalism into a global universalism.

Roger L. Nichols, University of Arizona

American Indian Treaties: One-sided Agreements

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries imperial powers negotiated treaties with indigenous people that were anything but open agreements. This paper will analyze how that occurred in the agreements between the United States and the tribes. From the 1778 until 1868 American negotiators concluded 367 treaties with tribal leaders. Those dealt with peace, prisoner exchange, trade alliances, land cessions, and minor local issues. During the meetings the two sides rarely met as equals. American diplomats did not recognize Indian tribes as independent, even though they continued the British and France negotiating practices with tribal leaders. True, they accepted that Indians had a right to use the land they occupied, but assumed that they had no valid title to it. Those ideas appeared in statements by national leaders, in federal court decisions, and in Congressional actions.

To a modern eye, treaty negotiations between such unequal groups appear peculiar, and Paul Prucha labeled them a political anomaly. During negotiations the US used a variety of tactics. It claimed land reparations after military victory. It worked to get tribal leaders in debt so they would agree to surrender land to pay their bills. It used bribery of chiefs and created divisions within village societies to weaken resistance to land surrenders or removal. At times American negotiators ignored provisions of existing treaties to achieve new goals. This paper will analyze how these methods prevented American-Indian negotiations from concluding open covenants between the two sides

Johan Nilsson, Örebro University

Digital Death: The American City, Nostalgia, and Computer-Generated Imagery in the Apocalyptic Short Films of Patrick Jean

American cities play major roles in the short films by French filmmaker Patrick Jean. Specifically they are constructed settings in which the end of the world takes place, or they actually cause it to end. In *Pixels*

(2010) New York City is invaded by classic 8-bit video game characters who pixelate the city bit by bit, and finally turn the entire world into a giant pixel floating in space. In *Motorville* (2013) a fictional American Google Maps city runs out of oil, comes to life, and starts looking for new sources – first visiting Texas (where the oil fields are dry) and finally invading the Middle East only to overdose on oil in an explosion that covers the entire world in the stuff. The apocalyptic scenarios in these two films are backdrops for cultural and political critiques involving place, nostalgia, and computer-generated imagery. This paper investigates the films' approach to these matters and frames the study within a discussion of how the digital technology in and of these films represent the city as something of the past (cf. Trifanova 2013) and problematizes the previously physical and spatial existence of the film medium, which has become virtual rather than analog and indexical (cf. Rodowick 2007).

Kristoffer Noheden, Stockholm University

Possessed by Bugs Bunny: Animals and Ecology in Chicago Surrealism

Soon after its foundation in 1965, the Surrealist Group of Chicago adopted Bugs Bunny as its trickster-avtar. In 1968, the group inaugurated their Gallery Bugs Bunny with an exhibition manifesting the continued life of surrealism. In the immense 1976 exhibition *Marvelous Freedom, Vigilance of Desire*, one of eleven mythological domains was devoted to the cartoon rabbit, who was endowed with the capacity to possess “in the voodoo sense.” In the catalogue, Franklin Rosemont, co-founder of the group, described Bugs Bunny as an embodiment of class struggle and a promise of future victory over all the repressive Elmer Fudds in the world. But beyond such symbolism, Tex Avery's rabbit also speaks to the prevalent place afforded to a radical politics of animals and ecology in the Chicago group's activities, art, and writings. Continuing a long lineage of interest in, and concern for, the nonhuman world within international surrealism, the Chicago group added appeals to wilderness, rooted in an American tradition of nature writing, alongside their appropriation of Bugs Bunny as a mediator between the human and animal kingdoms. In this paper I explore how the Chicago surrealists, possessed by the spirit of Bugs Bunny, took stands for animal rights and articulated ecological positions. Drawing on journals, collective tracts, and visual art, I demonstrate that as they undermined anthropocentrism and human exceptionalism, the group never lost sight of the importance of imagination, humour, and myth in their development of an “ecology of the marvelous”.

Oskar Nordell, Uppsala University

The Kansas City Connection: An Actor-Network of Sports Architecture within Swedish-American Borderlands

In my work studying Swedish stadiums, continuous traces lead to a number of architectural firms located in Kansas City, Missouri, that have dominated the global market in stadium design for approximately the last 30 years. Looking closer at their histories most of them seem to be connected in different ways: through mergers, acquisitions and buyouts; on an individual level; and in design concepts. The main aim of this paper is to map and follow the network of these firms in order to understand why and how they amass such influence over stadium design in Sweden (and other parts of the world). How come Kansas City became the sports architecture center of the world? How are the firms connected? What kind of impact on stadium design can be discerned from this network?

The material studied is on one hand architectural, consisting of the venues the firms have designed, in the US, Sweden, and other parts of the world. On the other hand it is historical, consisting of texts, images and data describing the history of the architectural firms. The theoretical and methodological complex behind the study is Actor-Network Theory, allowing the analysis to step beyond traditional disciplinary borders and theoretical constraints. The paper is part of describing an actor-network that is topologically connecting Sweden and the US. The main analytical tool for defining the relations within this network is *borderlands*, describing the flows of influence and connected negotiations taking place within it. The study sheds light on the connectivity of global sports architecture, as well as describing US-Sweden relations within a relatively uncharted field of study.

Hélène Ohlsson, Stockholm University

The Diva Dream of the American Tour

This paper addresses nineteenth-century European divas, and their obsessive endeavors of making a North American tour. Opera singer Jenny Lind, nicknamed the Swedish Nightingale, was the first European performer to make such a tour of the USA in 1850-1852. Her success ushered in a new era of divas to cross the Atlantic like Rachel Félix, Christina Nilsson, Adalaide Ristori and Sarah Bernhardt.

The first part of the century had seen the rise of the female international superstar - women that often came from poor and humble backgrounds but achieved fame and fortune through, as Tracy C. Davis puts it, “exceptional skill, marketed with uncommon personality and an incalculable measure of ego”. Inspired by Wayne Koestenbaum’s mapping of diva codes, I will analyze some divas endeavors for the American tour and how these women set out to embody such stuff as what dreams are made of.

Divas dreamt about conquering the New World. What was the attraction with the tour except making money? How did divas fashion their celebrity in order to seduce the North American audience and why did they sometimes fail? The sources used are mainly biographies and memoirs of some divas and letters in archives. I will argue that the dream of the American tour is associated with the myth of the American dream in combination with divas identification with queens. The American tour meant the coronation of the ultimate diva crown. These divas laid the foundation of the modern celebrity culture

Henry Oinas-Kukkonen, University of Oulu

Finalaska Between Isolationism and Internationalism

Just before the beginning of the World War II in Europe, the development of the territory of Alaska was in the focus of intense attention. Alaska was seen as a possible safe haven of European refugees, mainly persecuted Jews. Many strictly rejected aiming to develop Alaska with the help of refugee resettlements. Their anti-immigrant claims and allegations summed up an idea that it was the Americans first, Alaska only for the Americans and the US Borders to be closed.

During the Russo-Finnish winter war nearly a half million Finnish civilians fled the theatre of operations. Many Americans proposed that an ideal refuge for the Finns would be Alaska, which they would make to flourish as “Finalaska”. This did not only depend on turns in the fighting in the Russo-Finnish front but also in the US domestic policy including isolationism and internationalism, party politics and immigration policy, not to forget public opinion. This paper explains how Finalaska was seen as a solution to the problem of Alaskan development but stalled due to struggle between isolationism and internationalism

Gavin Parkinson, The Courtauld Institute of Art

Metaphors and Things: Surrealising Robert Rauschenberg, 1959–69

Robert Rauschenberg is not usually thought to have had anything like a trajectory through Surrealism. He was never close to the Parisian or Chicago Surrealist groups of the postwar period and his friendship with (and attraction to the work of) Marcel Duchamp along with his innate artistic sympathy with the art of Kurt Schwitters helped legitimize the label of “Neo-Dada” that was initially attached to his work. Yet Rauschenberg had a very favourable reception among Surrealists in the 1960s as I will be showing in this paper. This assessment began with the reproduction in 1959 of his Combine painting *Monogram* (1955–59) in the Surrealist-friendly review *Front unique* and was continued in the group exhibitions that followed in Paris and New York, *EROS* (1959–60) and *Surrealist Intrusion in the Enchanters’ Domain* (1960–61). The eccentric presence of *Bed* (1955) at these manifestations is now well documented but the Surrealist debate on its poetic efficacy and political meaning remains entirely unnarrated. This discussion included contributions from Robert Benayoun, André Breton, Nicolas Calas, Alain Jouffroy, Jean-Jacques Lebel, José Pierre and others that went against the grain of the one initiated by John Cage, which is now dominant in art history. I look at its beginning and end here, concluding with Pierre’s appraisal of 1969, disappointed by the path taken by

Rauschenberg's work, which hoped that he would "once again unleash in the morose hell of contemporary art his herds of crazy goats and his convoys of drunken wheelbarrows."

Frida Rosenberg, KTH Royal Institute of Technology

The Role of Design in the 1960s Swedish-American Landscape

This paper illuminates how a mutual design agenda nurtured transatlantic relationships between architects and designers in Sweden and the United States. The focus will be on personal relationships, but also on the use of design for political positioning, the early development of industrial design, and the search for key strategies in urban development. Together, these areas brought Sweden and America closer together. Using the notion of borderlands to study specific cases where design served to align Sweden with America, or vice versa, will contribute to the reading of postwar development at various scales from industrial design to urbanism. For example, the need for housing workers in vital areas of war-production facilities in the 1940s produced such incomplete housing areas as Linda Vista northeast of San Diego – 3000 dwellings without schools, commercial and community facilities or transportation. At the same time, architect Sven Markelius introduced the ABC city (Arbete=work, Bostad=dwelling, Centrum=center), which gave shape to successful suburbs such as Vällingby and Farsta. Bringing American urban development closer to Swedish ideals, public housing advocate Catherine Bauer Wurster successfully changed and influenced housing developments as an advisor to national and state housing agencies in America during her lifetime. The notion of borderlands signifying a mutual outlook in both Sweden and America including the urgency for housing, lifestyle improvement through home appliances, and developing urban structure will deepen the complexity of Modernism and the role of design beyond the nation state.

Giuliano Santangeli Valenzani, University of RomaTre

Tourism Promotion and Advertising in the Deep South under The Carter Presidency: An Analysis of Regional Destination Image through Visual and Textual Advertising in Domestic and International Markets

This paper aims to analyze the advertising material used by the state tourism bureaus of four southern states (Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina) to lure visitors between 1977 and 1981. Being the Carter-era usually referred as a period of "southern fashion" in the U.S culture, as well as a time of economic prosperity in the Sunbelt, it seems relevant to analyze the strategies, images and themes used by the States Travel Offices to promote themselves both in the USA and abroad. While it may be expected a worry to push away the problematic past of the region (slavery, resistance to Civil Rights) it will be shown how tourism was hardly affected by these questions. This reflected a more nostalgic and romance-oriented type of promotion deeply rooted in the historical context of the seventies. In the decade known for its "crisis of confidence", the mythical image of the South played an important symbolic function for the American culture at large. In the 70s and early 80s, however, the South was still known outside the US mainly for its part in the desegregation process. Scenes of violence occurred in Alabama and Mississippi was what the rest of the world knew about the region, along with the myth of the Civil War and the antebellum imaginary (*Gone with the Wind*, ecc). Thus, the questions addressed by this paper can be summarized in: a) What images, words, themes and attractions did these states use to sell themselves as a desirable destination both to local and international visitors? b) How did they deal with their tarnished images, particularly in regard to matters such as racism and backwardness? c) What point of view did they hold on problematic aspects of the region history? d) What can be said about the tourists that chose the Deep South as their destination? Where did they come from and what kind of attractions did they visit the most?

Birgit Spengler, University of Wuppertal

Sounding Global Divides: Precarious Borders in Guillermo Galindo's Recent Installation Art

Stephen Greenblatt has recently emphasized the “management of movement” as a central point of interest for literary and cultural analysis. In the contemporary world such a focus is timely indeed, shaped as it is by the tension between forms of virtual and physical mobility that appear to shrink distances and seem to offer the possibility for more or less immediate connection at any time and in (almost) any place on the one hand, and borders, precarious movement, and the inhibition of movement on the other. Such arrangements create Agambian forms of inclusive exclusion at the thresholds of the so-called global North, where human beings are reduced to bare life and liminal existences at the borders of our attention. In my paper, I will focus on Mexican experimental composer and performance artist Guillermo Galindo's aesthetic reflection on and intervention into such processes of managing movement through the medium of sonic installation art. If, according to Agamben, the coming-into-being of the polis is linked from the transition from voice to language, and if discursive omission, according to Judith Butler, plays an important role in perpetuating the violence of “de-realization,” Galindo's strategy of presentiating global divides and their consequences through the physical remnants of crossings which his art makes reverberate acoustically is not just aesthetically impressive but also particularly theoretically enticing. I want to explore the implications of Galindo's art by drawing on the work of Giorgio Agamben, Judith Butler, and Mladen Dolar in order to reconsider his works as attempts at reconstituting the time-space of the border, and, thereby, possibly, a global community by means of embodiment and traveling sound that makes the border “speak”.

Rodney J. Steward, University of South Carolina Salkehatchie

An Illegal Violence: Property Confiscation in the Confederate South

There are many windows through which a glimpse of the American character might be gained, but none provide the scope and penetrating view so well as the window on the American Civil War and the disaster that befell the young republic in the middle of the nineteenth century. As Confederate armies fought mightily to wrest the South from the grip of the Union, Confederate officials waged another war on the home front to stamp out what they deemed disloyalty and to squelch political dissent. “An Illegal Violence: Property Confiscation in the Confederate South” seeks to unmask the tyranny of confiscation under the Confederate Act of Sequestration; corruption of sequestration officials, and the treatment of those deemed alien enemies of the Confederacy. The sequestration law unleashed a menacing presence on the Southern home front that turned neighbor against neighbor and revealed Confederate officials' determination to coerce obedience and compliance from ordinary folk. In this regard, this paper challenges much of the current scholarship on the topic of the home front and the depth of Confederate nationalism. Viewed through the lens of the Act of Sequestration, an unexamined side of the Confederacy's *Realpolitik* is laid bare revealing much about its fundamental ethos. Corruption, the fate of civil liberties, and the terms of loyalty lay at the heart of this examination of a dark chapter in the American story.

Alice Sundman, Stockholm University

Absent Places in Toni Morrison's Novel Tar Baby

Experience of place plays a crucial role in Toni Morrison's novel *Tar Baby*. When we first meet the character Son, he is working his way through the waves in an attempt at reaching the island Isle des Chevaliers. Features of the natural world, such as the trees, the river, and the clouds, perceive the brutal transformation of a place they once thought was permanently pristine. Jadine gets stuck in the swamp, desperately struggling against the swamp women trying to drag her down in the quicksand. And Son, finally, becomes part of the mythology of the island as he joins the riding chevaliers.

Less frequently noticed in analyses of *Tar Baby* is the role of places that are, in one way or another, absent. Often, these places appear in tensions where characters' immediate experiences of place are contrasted with places never appearing as concretely present, but rather as conceptions of geographically remote places.

The aim of this paper is to explore the ways in which absent places are suggested and presented in conjunction with and in contrast to concrete, present places. It is, I believe, on the borderline between the present and the absent that the significance of place in the novel can be discerned.

Panteleimon Tsiokos, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

From "E Pluribus Unum" to "E Pluribus Plura": Ortiz's Native American Testimony

In the 5th century B.C. ancient Greek historian Thucydides claims in his history book, *Historiae*, that he writes history because "the human nature does not change" (3.82.2). In his view, knowledge of history may ensure the avoidance of past mistakes, hence significantly contribute to the creation of "open covenants of peace," in President Wilson's words. This is what Native American poet Simon J. Ortiz also attempts to underline in one of his most overtly political works, *From Sand Creek: Rising in this Heart which is our America* (1981), which won the 1981 Pushcart Prize for poetry. In specific, his poetic collection reminds its audience of the massacre of 133 Cheyenne and Arapaho Natives at Sand Creek, Colorado by U.S. soldiers in 1864. Simple in its diction and rhythms, yet with a significant statement, Ortiz's poetry rediscusses past American history in contemporary U.S.A. context. In my paper I will, thus, attempt to present how national U.S. History comprises personal histories, and how poetic creativity can voice them while triggering an inward journey. Moreover, I will focus on how Ortiz's work establishes the necessity that American national identity is reconsidered in more flexible terms, from the 1980s onwards, and how it signifies a transitional period from "e pluribus unum" towards "e pluribus plura," that is an era of acceptance of one's ethnic identity as distinct, equal, and integral to the American society. Besides, as Ortiz puts it in the preface of his poetry volume, his work comments on "[himself] as an American, which is hemispheric, a U.S. citizen, which is national, and as an Indian, which is spiritual and human." Lastly, my argument will be developed within the broader discourse of the second wave of Native American Renaissance movement, which Ortiz's work serves.

Magnus Ullén, Stockholm University

The Origins of "Political Correctness": PC and the Lesbian Sex Mafia

When 'political correctness', or 'PC' for short, became a public concern in the US in the early 1990s, it was almost immediately suggested that the term had long been something of a self-ironic slur in left-wing circles. While a number of people testified to this, the evidence advanced was almost entirely anecdotal, and to this date no systematic attempt to gauge the reliability of these testimonies have been made. The present paper questions these early reports, and argues that the modern understanding of 'political correctness' can in fact be precisely dated: it begins with the controversy around the ninth Scholar and the Feminist Conference, entitled "Towards a Politics of Sexuality," held at the women's center at Barnard College on 24 April 1982. By revisiting this controversy, I hope not only to shed some light on the origins of PC, but help to explain why this highly problematic concept eventually developed into a mainstay of everyday political discourse in the US and Europe alike.

Ann-Kristin Wallengren, Lund University

Celebrated, Contested, Criticized: Anita Ekberg, a Swedish Sex Goddess in Hollywood

Anita Ekberg, foremost known for her role in Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (1960), arrived already in 1951 to USA and Hollywood. She came to a Hollywood imbued with a fascination of the hyper-feminine body and a vivid interest in films where a more or less explicit eroticism was portrayed. At the same time, a new kind of celebrity emerged in Hollywood, a celebrity that not necessarily was connected to significant accomplishment as a film actor. With her generous body and beautiful face, and admittedly with no experience in acting, Ekberg fitted perfectly in this new era in Hollywood and managed to profit enormously by her assets. She was the first Swedish sex goddess in Hollywood and became one of the most written about celebrities.

In this presentation, I will discuss how Anita Ekberg grew to be a celebrity and how her “star image,” to use Richard Dyer’s term, was created. (Dyer, *Stars*, 1979, p. 36). I do so by exploring and analyzing the writings about her in the American press and media to see how she was apprehended and constructed as a new Swedish star in Hollywood. I will also explore how notions and ideas about Sweden, sexuality, and gender were negotiated and reproduced through Ekberg and in connection with that discuss her, formerly not observed, contribution to the conception of the Swedish sin. Finally, I will compare how she, as a celebrity, was valued differently in the USA and Sweden.

Anna Watz, Linköping University

“This Place of Total Ambiguity”: Dorothea Tanning’s Chasm

In an article in *New Literary History* (2010), Griselda Pollock suggests that the 1970s, when experimental art practice (and, I would add, literary practices) intersected with psychoanalytic/poststructuralist feminism, ought to be considered a distinctly *feminist* avant-garde moment – one which “resum[es] the broken thread of earlier avant-garde moments” (801). The key characteristic of this moment, for Pollock, is its political-aesthetic project of representing or theorising “the feminine” (or in Kristeva’s terminology, *le féminin*), which can be understood as “the haunting excess of a limiting phallocentrism” (Pollock 801).

Taking my cue from Pollock, I read Dorothea Tanning’s novel *Chasm* as part of such a feminist avant-garde, concerned with feminine difference or excess. Chronicling the passions, obsessions, and fetishistic desires of a handful of characters during a weekend visit to the Arizona desert, *Chasm* turns on the tension between curiosity and the secret. The titular chasm, suggestive of the seductive but deadly setting of the novel as well as the magical, interior childhood world of the protagonist Destina, encapsulates this tension. I will show that the chasm, in its unresolved contradictoriness, is aligned with “the feminine”: the ungraspable otherness within all speaking subjects. Drawing on Catriona McAra’s recent excavation of the overlapping layers of Tanning’s texts (from short story in 1949, via the novel-length *Abyss* in 1977, to the re-edited *Chasm: A Weekend* in 2004), I will read the addition of the Preface to the final 2004 version – a genealogy of the 7-year-old Destina, revealing a line of eponymous foremothers dating back to the 17th century – as Tanning’s meta-commentary on the novel’s preoccupation with feminine dif

Sofia Wijkmark, Karlstad University

In the Backwoods: American Rural Gothic and Swedish Troll Gothic

This paper explores examples of contemporary Swedish Gothic fiction in relation to the typically American genre of backwoods horror, focusing on stories about trolls. From the early beginnings, American fiction has used the wilderness as a place of horror and chaos where the limits between the human and the inhuman are dissolved. Berenice M. Murphy has demonstrated how canonical authors such as Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland* and Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “Young Goodman Brown” can be regarded as precursors to the backwoods horror film tradition from John Boorman’s *Deliverance* (1972) and onwards. Similarly, in Sweden, the depictions of a Gothic wilderness in the work of for example Selma Lagerlöf has inspired contemporary Swedish fiction that has a lot in common with American backwoods horror. In Stefan Spjut’s novels *Stallo* (2012) and *Stalpi* (2016), isolated families in the north of Sweden hide a dangerous and terrible secret, and in Henrik Björn’s TV-series *Jordskott* (2014-) the sins of the past haunt the present, and the backwoods is a place where mythological creatures mix with regular outcasts, the one difficult to separate from the other.

Sinem Yazıcıoğlu, Istanbul University

Spatial Tactics for Overcoming Trauma in Don DeLillo’s The Body Artist

The Body Artist (2001) has a unique place among Don DeLillo’s works, which persistently address the question of subjectivity through open and closed spaces. Although the author has composed characters who fail to establish a new life in open spaces after they leave closed urban spaces (as in the contrast between

the desert and the city from *Americana* onwards), this novel presents a performance artist who retreats from public life due to her trauma of losing her husband but leaves her domestic containment by transforming her experience into an artistic performance. Here, it is the immediate defensive response to the trauma's threatening effects on the self's integrity which leads the artist to seclusion; however, because of the house's heterotopic quality and the artist's spatial tactics, the trauma contained in the closed space and the artist's body are transformed into art and shared with an audience. The closedness associated with isolation and domesticity finds an escape through the artist's extreme stretching exercises, her encounter with the ghost-like Mr. Tuttle and her observations from outside her house, namely her alternative uses of her body and home. Besides its spatial openness, the novel has two symmetrical pairs of brackets which function as a critique of narrative closure, instead of being markers for the beginning and the end. By integrating the theories of space and trauma, this paper will argue that *The Body Artist* prioritizes trauma's spatial dynamics, and will examine the ways in which it resists narrative and spatial closure.

Yuwei Ge, Philipps-Universität Marburg

Over Their Dead Bodies: Gender, Politics, and the Fabled Future in House of Cards

In its bleak, dystopian political world, the American political thriller *House of Cards* (Netflix, 2013-present) not only portrays a grand landscape of national and international politics and the political games played among the Washington elites, but also provides its viewers with a reverse perspective with many inconspicuous details and minor roles, constructing a political fable about gender and politics from two binaries to envision the future of American politics. The present paper aims at investigating the different representations of the female protagonist, Claire Underwood, and other supporting female characters such as Gillian Cole and Zoe Barnes.

The focus of the analysis is drawn upon these female characters' involvement and in different political crises both at home and abroad, especially women's roles with respect to NGO development, national media, legal initiatives, the UN, and diplomatic relations. Firstly, the paper will interpret how Claire Underwood has stepped up to the center of the political arena and engaged with her husband Frank Underwood's big schemes as well as other female politicians' small tricks. Meanwhile, this paper also seeks to explore the minor female characters' resistances and sacrifices resulted by political manipulation and discrimination, specifically on what information their dead bodies entail and manifest. The contrasting representations of the upper-ranking female political leader and the lower-ranking women reveal the contradicted stances in perceiving the United States' domestic and global mission and responsibility. Eventually, this paper intends to connect the diverse representations of women to the most recent political reality as a way to understand the future of women's status as well as the significance of stressing equality and diversity in the changing and polarizing sociopolitical circumstance.

Anne Zetsche, Free University of Berlin

Securing US Internationalism: The Role of Public-Private Elite Networks in (Re)Establishing Post-War Transatlantic Relations; The German-American Case

The 20th Century has been labelled the 'American Century' by Henry Luce already in 1941. What we have come to associate with the term, however, fully unfolded only in the post-1945 era: the US joining international organisations such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, NATO, and maintaining a military presence around the globe and especially in Western Europe. With hindsight the United State's international engagement and the established close relations with Germany oftentimes appear as a natural consequence of her war effort. Yet the power and longevity of isolationist ideas as well as strong resentments against Germans should not be underestimated. They were a force to be reckoned with. Hence, my paper aims at shedding light on dense transatlantic state-private networks with a special focus on German-American relationship that played a crucial role at establishing internationalism, and particularly a strong West German-American relationship as bipartisan consensus among US foreign policy elite circles and beyond. The roles of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Ford Foundation have sufficiently been

studied. Two organisations – the American Council on Germany (ACG) and the Atlantik-Brücke – intimately entangled with the former in terms of personnel and funding have hitherto been neglected, however. The paper therefore gives a brief overview of these two organisations' intertwined histories (1950s to 1970s). In doing so, it also addresses questions of how such informal elite networks – bringing together state as well as non-state actors – contributed to framing and shaping foreign policy debates and how they engaged in transnational coordination and consensus building

Eva Zetterman, Gothenburg University

A Mexican Icon Transgressing the Border: The Queen of Selfies in Visual Art

In contemporary cultural production, the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo is a recurrent cultural referent. Her personal style and individual aesthetic can be seen recycled globally, in popular culture, high fashion and street art, and for professional visual artists around the world she continually serves as an important inspirational source. In the USA, Frida Kahlo has been particularly referred to among certain sociocultural groups, such as feminists, Chicanas/os and street artists. The abundance of references made to Frida Kahlo in different visual media and among different sociocultural groups raises questions on how this phenomenon with references to Frida Kahlo can be understood. This paper examines references in visual art and tries different methodological approaches to analyze the material. Questions asked are: what is the most fruitful way to organize the vast amount of references to Frida Kahlo that can be found in visual art and which organizing principles should be chosen? Depending on the selection of organizing principles, which methodological approaches and/or theoretical perspectives can be considered most rewarding in analyzing the material? Which significances are mediated through Frida Kahlo as a visual sign and how do references and significances change over time? And finally, what purposes do references to Frida Kahlo serve and how can Frida Kahlo be understood as a cultural icon of the borderlands?

Robert Österbergh, Uppsala University

The Demands of History: American Superpower and the Vocation of Poetry in the 1980s. The Poetics of Michael Palmer

This paper revisits the situation of American 1980s poetry, arguing that it marked a critical confluence of cultural and political circumstances which subjected the expressive space of poetic writing to heightened challenges. In political terms, the decade saw the amplification of American exceptionalism coupled with the aggressive foreign policy of the Reagan administration, while memories of the Vietnam War and its tribulations were revived, all of which provoked a heated national debate about the role of the United States as a hegemonic power. Many poets responded by returning to history and politics, enlisting poetry to grapple with these issues as vital concerns. The turn is also legible as a response to the slide in cultural influence that poetry witnessed in the period. Both trends prompted a vexed interrogation of its cultural and ideological function. At the same time, the engagement with the historical present as a means to reinvigorate poetry's cultural force was made difficult both by the entrenched positions in the literary "space of possibilities" and the circulation of poststructuralist thought in the cultural economy, whose effect was to destabilize claims to representational capability by damaging the security of the linkage between signifier and signified. Negotiating this interface between aesthetics and politics, poets confronted a fraught predicament. I submit the 1980s work of poet Michael Palmer as a paradigmatic instance of that negotiation, arguing that it performs highly innovative, contestatory representational work. The work is construed as a vital index of the aesthetic demands confronting poetry in the face of the pressures of historical reality at this juncture.

Attacking Complacency: American Cultural Pluralism and the Social Settlement Experience

“The Progressive Era” comprised phenomena that expressed and reinforced complacency within a well-off elite of WASPs. Formed by colonialism, the US established itself as a colonial power, precisely when the old “frontier” was closed. Thanks to the judiciary’s interpretation of the Constitution, employers were able to resist an ethnically complex workforce’s attempts to gain influence in the burgeoning industrial sector. Many remedies to “the social question” aimed for “Americanization” of “hyphen” immigrants (if not developed at the biological level in the form of eugenics). As elaborated racism culminated, “Jim Crow” apartheid was cemented with federal blessing in the South, while spreading rapidly in an informal way in the North. But cultural complacency among the elites encountered intellectual challenges, linked to criticism of socio-economic hierarchies that were claimed to turn democracy into a formal illusion rather than a social reality. One such strain of thought was the “cultural pluralism” developed by Horace Kallen, Randolph Bourne, and Alain Locke. Another was the intercultural antiracism of Franz Boas’s school of anthropology, with followers like Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and Zora Neale Hurston. This paper ascribes a crucial role among such critical discourses to experience from the social settlement movement, and its hands-on attempts to create egalitarian meeting grounds beyond divides in terms of class, ethnicity, “race”, and gender. An intellectual nexus is brought out, illustrated by e.g. the *Wahlverwandtschaft* between Jane Addams and John Dewey, W.E.B. Du Bois’s settlement connections and invocations of the movement’s ethos, and the role of settlement activists in creating the NAACP, 1909.

Panel Abstracts

American Horror and Gothic across Borders

Intermediality in A Nightmare on Elm Street

Morten Feldtfos Thomsen, Karlstad University

Placing the Gothic in American Adaptations of Nordic Texts

Maria Holmgren Troy (chair), Karlstad University

In the Backwoods: American Rural Gothic and Swedish Troll Gothic

Sofia Wijkmark, Karlstad University

This panel deals with American horror and Gothic in terms of the crossing of borders of different kinds. It can be said to relate to the theme of the conference in the general sense that it shows that there are always interchanges, negotiations, adaptations, and cross-fertilizations going on between and within media and between cultural expressions of different regions or nations. Isolationism is not an option for cultural workers and critics, or at least an extremely reductive approach.

The papers explore intermediality in American horror films as well as different relationships between American and Nordic horror and Gothic in different media: TV series, movies, and literature. American horror and Gothic have had a large impact on Nordic productions, but at the same time Nordic Gothic – as well as Nordic Noir – has become extremely popular in the US. Among other things, this panel demonstrates how a comparative approach with a focus on the setting can shed further light on American Gothic and how intermediality is central to an aesthetics of horror.

Trans-Atlantic Crossings: Athletic and Journalistic Exchanges between Europe and North America

Placing North America in Global Communication Networks, c. 1750–1815

Troy Bickham (chair), Texas A&M University at Qatar

Professional Wrestling as a Transatlantic Spectacle: The Different Fates of Pro-Wrestling in the Netherlands and the United States

Mark van de Logt, Texas A&M University at Qatar

A Challenge to Exceptionalism: Reading The American Press in the Civil War Era

Josefin Holmström, King's College, Cambridge

Though the United States under President Trump's "America First" doctrine seems to have once again turned the country towards isolationism, history shows that American unilateralism never turned out quite so definite in practice. Throughout the centuries, American and European citizens continued to keep up lively interactions between the two continents even in times of war and national withdrawal. This panel investigates transatlantic exchanges from the mid-1700s to the present by looking at how news spread between the continents in the colonial era, how the supposedly American tradition of "professional wrestling" had a European counterpart in the early 1900s, and how present-day Indigenous peoples in North American and Northern Europe pursue similar strategies to achieve political recognition of their rights.

Swedish-American Heritage: Nostalgic Remembering, Selective Amnesia, and the Meanings of Place

A Folk United: Swedish-American Genealogy and Nostalgia in the 1960s and -70s
Adam Hjorthén (chair), Stockholm University/Free University of Berlin

Forgetting and Remembering Bishop Hill: History, Amnesia, and Nostalgia in a Rural American Tourist Destination
Adam Kaul, Augustana College

Back in the Days: Selective Reenacting of the American Civil War in Sweden
Marie Bennedahl, Linnaeus University

Ethnic stories and histories are central to the construction of (white) American identities, ranging from pioneer experiences on Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier to family immigration tales set in the halls of Ellis Island. In different ways and through different means, people on both sides of the Atlantic have been involved in making narratives of immigration useful and meaningful as cultural heritage. Engaging with the concepts of nostalgia and amnesia as two central dimensions in the creation and maintenance of cultural heritage, this session explores twentieth- and twenty-first century memories of Swedish emigration and ethnicity.

As all processes of memory, the making of Swedish cultural heritage is not only conditioned on certain modes of remembrance, but also on amnesia. "Every act of founding is also an act of losing," as W.J.T. Mitchell has put it. Taking a cue from transnational studies, we explore how movements of people, ideas, images, and goods across national and cultural borders, have contributed to shaping Swedish-American heritage. In the words of historian Orm Øverland, nineteenth- and twentieth-century ethnic celebrations in the United States were described as "unabashedly American." Yet, cultures and nations are not hermetically sealed containers, and do not simply exist "in situ"—they are hybrid and constantly in flux. To understand how ideas about Swedish-American heritage have been created and maintained during the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, it is therefore important to investigate how nostalgia, amnesia, "placefulness" and "placelessness," have interacted. Proceeding from these observations, we ask: How have nostalgic modes of remembering and selective amnesia combined in the transnational creation of Swedish-American heritage?

Swedish-American Borderlands

Dag Blanck, Uppsala University (co-chair)
Adam Hjorthén, Stockholm University/Free University of Berlin (co-chair)

Charlie Chan in No Man's Land: Towards a Borderlands History of Warner Oland
Kim Khavar Fahlstedt, Uppsala University

A Postwar Italian Kitchen Shining in the Swedish-American Borderlands
Franco Minganti, University of Bologna

The Kansas City Connection: An Actor-Network of Sports Architecture within Swedish-American Borderlands
Oskar Nordell, Uppsala University

The Role of Design in the 1960s Swedish-American Landscape
Frida Rosenberg, KTH Royal Institute of Technology

The Diva Dream of the American Tour
Hélène Ohlsson, Stockholm University

Celebrated, Contested, Criticized: Anita Ekberg, a Swedish Sex Goddess in Hollywood
Ann-Kristin Wallengren, Lund University

The concept of “borderlands” is central to American Studies, shaped by scholars such as Euegen Herbert Bolton, Jeremy Adelman, Stephen Aron, and Gloría Anzaldúa. By adopting the notion of “Swedish-American Borderlands,” this panel seeks to combine the American borderlands tradition with studies on Swedish-American relations. There is a twofold aim to this project. Empirically, the panel seeks to broaden the study of Swedish-American history, a field that is often strongly associated with studies of immigration and ethnicity. Theoretically, we seek to analyze the flows of goods, ideas, and persons back and forth across the Atlantic in ways that do not prescribe national frameworks of interpretation.

To talk about Swedish-American borderlands might seem counterintuitive as Sweden and the United States lack geographical borders. By adopting the borderlands concept, however, we want to call attention to the non-geographical proximity that exists between the two countries. We are interested in both examining real and imaginary relationships that cross, challenge, and redefine different notions of Swedish-American relations, and on the effects that these notions have had on both countries. By doing so, we build on borderlands studies scholarship influenced by transnational studies. This non-geographical conceptualization adopts borderlands as a metaphor for studying cross-border relations, cultural encounters, hybridities, and ideological exchanges. We will explore this notion of borderlands through two prominent themes in twentieth-century Swedish-American relations: design and architecture, and film and television. The first session, “Building Swedish-American Borderlands,” includes papers on stadium architecture, kitchen design, industrial design, and urban development, while the second session, “Screening Swedish-American Borderlands,” discusses Hollywood movie stars and Swedish television personalities.

American Surrealism

Possessed by Bugs Bunny: Animals and Ecology in Chicago Surrealism
Kristoffer Noheden (chair), Stockholm University

Metaphors and Things: Surrealising Robert Rauschenberg, 1959–69
Gavin Parkinson, The Courtauld Institute of Art

This Place of Total Ambiguity”: Dorothea Tanning’s Chasm
Anna Watz, Linköping University

Surrealism has been a major influence on American visual and intellectual culture. In the 1930s, Alfred H. Barr’s MoMA exhibition *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* (1936) introduced the movement broadly, while Julien Levy’s gallery exhibited many European surrealists, and Salvador Dalí cannily crafted a flamboyant public persona upon his arrival in the US. During World War II, exiled surrealists in New York staged the exhibition *First Papers of Surrealism* (1942) and published the journal *VVV* (1942–44). Surrealist painting influenced Hollywood’s depictions of dream sequences, and the surrealists’ presence provided the impetus for the formation of abstract expressionism. That much is reasonably well known. However, less attention has been drawn to the fact that major American artists such as Alexander Calder, Robert Rauschenberg, and Jasper Johns participated in surrealist exhibitions in France from the late 1930s to the 1960s, where they

were received as elective affinities of the movement. Meanwhile, from the early 1940s and onward Dorothea Tanning's paintings and writings transformed American landscapes and sceneries through the work of an imagination riddled with uncanny desire. And starting in the 1960s, American writers, artists, and activists have formed surrealist groups modelled on the more famous Paris group, most notably in Chicago, which brought surrealism's revolutionary politics of desire and imagination to bear on questions of gender, race, and animal rights. This panel presents new scholarship on transnational exchanges between American artists and surrealism, American surrealist writings, and surrealist activism in the USA.

The Territoriality of Global America: The U.S.–Mexico Border in Contemporary Cultural Production

Sounding Global Divides: Precarious Borders in Guillermo Galindo's Recent Installation Art
Birgit Spengler (co-chair), University of Wuppertal

Mobility Welcome?: Art and Recreation Zones at the US–Mexico Border
Markus Heide (co-chair), Uppsala University

A Mexican Icon Transgressing the Border: The Queen of Selfies in Visual Art
Eva Zetterman (co-chair), University of Gothenburg

The U.S.-Mexican border is a place where the territoriality of law (Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer*) and ideas of state sovereignty intersect with the push and pull factors of globalization – and, thus, a site where structural and systemic problems that underlie processes of inclusion and exclusion violently come to the fore. It is an area where neoliberalist practices (cf. Aihwa Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception*), the militarization of policing forces (cf. Reece Jones, *Violent Borders*), and the suspension of civil liberties (cf. Todd Miller, *Border Patrol Nation*) threaten to create Agambian “states of exception” on both sides of the national divide and where security technologies not only materialize as a new boom industry but also provide a taste of possible futures. At the same time, the borderlands have always and continue to be a contact zone, a place where the continual exchange of people, objects, and ideas not only manifests the futility of attempts to render the border impermeable, but also the fruitfulness of the complex interrelations, interdependencies, and interactions that result from its permeability. As such, it is a terrain that has – and continues – to challenge us to move beyond conceived patterns of political and academic compartmentalization and to view our existence and cultural production as “relational” and “globally embedded” (Judith Butler, *Precarious Life*) rather than sovereign – an approach exemplified, for example, in inter-American, transnational, and hemispheric studies. Following the SAAS's 10th Biennial Conference's thematic emphasis, we are looking for proposals that focus the ways in which recent border art, broadly conceived, addresses the United States's course between “isolationism and internationalism, openness and closure, migration and borders, exceptionalism and universalism” by exploring, problematizing, and negotiating the state and status of the U.S.-Mexico border

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