



Abstracts

US Icons and Iconicity

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Adeleke, Tunde

MLK, Jr.: Ambiguous and Contested Icon.

In his brief life, Martin Luther King, Jr., 1929-1968 (MLK) won the hearts of Americans across the racial divide. He held deep convictions about the perfectibility of America and the redemptive power of the American Dream. King has become an American icon whose historical memory has metamorphosed into a national celebration. This celebration is itself distinguished for iconographic reenactments of his life and struggles. MLK is today being quoted and invoked by Americans of all political persuasions. In January, during observance of his birthday, his “**I have a Dream**” speech assumes the status of a national anthem. This national recognition and seeming canonization notwithstanding, a significant segment of Black America now challenges and contests the iconization of MLK. For this disaffected group, the gap between MLK’s faith in America, and the ideals and visions of America as enshrined in the *Declaration* that humans were created equal and endowed with certain unalienable rights, among them, “life liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” renders such iconization hypocritical and deceptive. The focus of this paper is on this growing dissatisfaction with the iconization of King and the search for icons in ethos that directly contradict the hopes and dreams of his life.

Antretter, Martina

Contesting an American Icon:

Apropos of the Astronaut as “Homo Mechanicus” in May Swenson’s Poetry

In *The Rediscovery of North America* (1990), Barry Lopez argues that at the turn of the 20th century, the American continent still remains to be discovered. He suggests that to truly know this place, a profoundly reciprocal relationship with the land must develop. Such a sense of place must include, Lopez writes, “knowledge of what is inviolate about the relationship between a people and the place they occupy, and, certainly, too, how the destruction of this relationship, or failure to attend to it, wounds people” (40). The American poet May Swenson (1913-1989) can be said to have anticipated Barry Lopez’s argument. In her poetry, the vision of a fundamental relationship between

humans and the nonhuman world is always at work. My objective in the following presentation is to concretize this vision by examining the denotations and connotations of the poetic persona of the 'human machine' or "*Homo mechanicus*" in May Swenson's poetry as compared to that of the 'human animal.' I will show that the "*Homo mechanicus*" – which, in various poems, is represented emblematically by the figure of the astronaut – is not a hero but a violent conqueror and destroyer, an impotent, helpless and, above all, mutated being, whose physical functions are replaced by mechanical and technological devices and whose ties with the earth are utterly disconnected. In contrast to the astronaut, the figure of the 'human animal,' or, in other words, personae that Swenson creates to hide behind the skins of animal creatures or to fuse the human with the animal, is not characterized by such a loss of contact; these personae affirm, as a close reading of relevant examples shall reveal, the subtle and ineffable intertwinings between humans and nature.

Balestrini, Nassim

Rip Van Winkle on the Stage: Myth and Icon of American Origins

Even in the early twenty-first century, Washington Irving's "Rip Van Winkle" continues to attract playwrights. The actor Joseph Jefferson III impersonated Rip throughout the United States for about forty years after the end of the Civil War and influenced later adaptations. "Rip Van Winkle" has also been adapted into burlesques and a minstrel show sketch, a Pennsylvania Dutch play, plays for children, operas and operettas. The plays and the libretti reflect the literary reception history of "Rip Van Winkle" as a mildly humorous and somewhat sentimental story. Moreover, playwrights and librettists created their own readings of the American myth and thus conveyed their understanding of American history and culture.

I will focus on two examples of Rip as an American icon. First, I will discuss how Jefferson's Rip was celebrated as an icon of American colonial and post-revolutionary times. Jefferson fostered his own iconicity by presenting himself on stage and in public as the embodiment of American values of rugged simplicity and fatherly benevolence, while the play simultaneously promoted the protagonist's ability to pursue his individual pleasures of drinking and escaping profitable labor under all political systems. Secondly, I will introduce Robert Planquette's French operetta commissioned by a London theater in the early 1880s, which was successful all over Europe and in the United States. The various versions of the libretto illustrate the adoption of an American fictional character, who was well-known in Europe through translations of Irving's tale and through Jefferson's play, in terms of an American stereotype that is then parodied through rewriting the plot according to fashionable operetta conventions. As

a result, both the political content and the mythical elements are treated differently than in the original or in Jefferson's drama. Ultimately, I will show how Jefferson turns "Rip Van Winkle" into a mostly de-politicized affirmation of American values and how the librettists of Planquette's operetta transform the same story into musical theater geared towards the expectations of various national audiences for whom colonial America represented an exotic location.

Barker, Anthony

Monuments of Ageing Intellect: Actor-Director-Icons

Clint Eastwood and Woody Allen.

Tom Stoppard famously wrote that "Age is a very high price to pay for maturity". This is particularly true in the movie business, which has good commercial reasons for valuing youth over maturity. As a result of the industry's systemic "lookism", performers past and present have been prepared to go to considerable lengths to arrest and camouflage the ageing process. But a few stars, a brave few, are prepared to accommodate their star personas (and therefore the kinds of role that they play and stories they tell) to the passing of the years. Two figures who have negotiated this transition with a fair degree of success are Clint Eastwood and Woody Allen, and part of the reason for this is that by the skilful management of their resources – Eastwood's production company Malpaso and Allen's screen-writing skills - they have the option of not **having** to go before the camera to prolong their careers. But unlike non-actor directors, they **have** indeed kept their personas before their audiences by employing actor surrogates. Notable examples of this would be Allen's use of Mia Farrow, John Cusack and Kenneth Branagh in his films and Eastwood's use of Kevin Costner in his. In this paper I should like to argue that in Eastwood's case ageing itself has become the subject of many of his movies of the 1990s, from *Unforgiven* to *Space Cowboys*, whereas in Allen's case they have been inflected more towards the getting (or failing to get) of wisdom that should come with age. In passing, I will also look at how destabilizing off-screen revelations about these publicity-avoiding stars have also been addressed or finessed on-screen during this period.

Baschkin, Laurance E.

"The Three Stooges" and public opinion towards government policy"

If this subject matter can be accepted, I would like to make a presentation to your participants. This would include viewing of 1-2 "short" films by the Stooges (also known as Moe, Larry and Curly)

As their shorts were approximately 22 minutes each, I hope to offer at least one for your audience. While the subject of the one I wish to show may be considered a subject in poor taste to Europeans, I would likely show a short entitled "I'll Never Heil Again". The subject is the newly "elected" dictator of the State of Moronica, who along with his Minister of Propaganda and Field Marshall "Herring", begin their plans to take over their neighboring countries. To borrow a quote from the story, "We must offer a helping hand to our neighbors, then we must help ourselves to our neighbors"

It is obviously a "spoof" as we say on Hitler and the Third Reich. This Stooge short was released in the early stages of World War Two and it offers Hollywood's humorous contribution to American propaganda against Germany and Japan. While Hollywood indeed produced serious war films to help motivate the people, several well known Hollywood comedians lent their support for the war cause. As a result, subjects such as Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito were constantly ridiculed.

Bernier, Celeste-Marie

Black Heroism as Tableaux in the Works of Frederick Douglass and Jacob Lawrence

"I have great admiration for the life of such a man as Toussaint L'Ouverture. It's the same thing Douglass meant when he said, "Judge me not by the heights to which I have risen but by the depths from which I have come " There's so much to do there's never any trouble to find subjects (.Jacob

Lawrence). This paper explores representations of black heroism as allegorical tableaux in late nineteenth century literature and early twentieth century visual arts as writers and artists moved towards producing an iconographic universalism in their politicised depiction of the black heroic figure. Considered alongside the slave narratives and unpublished manuscripts of Frederick Douglass, the serialised paintings of Jacob Lawrence clarify their joint production of a discourse of black heroism across genres and historical contexts. The relationship presented by their parity of subject-matter testifies to a powerful and radical visual and written legacy within which black masculinity has been represented: dating as far back as the 1890s and thriving throughout the post-Harlem Renaissance period of the 1930s, persisting on into the twentieth century. This narrative tradition has been characterised by the manipulation of dramatic set pieces, designed simultaneously to subvert official historical discourse, while also challenging the permissible boundaries within which to articulate black male and female subjectivity. Dedicated to the visual and textual representation of a whole pantheon of heroes, both Douglass and Lawrence sought to create representative “race” men and, to a lesser extent, “race women.” Hence, in their work, Douglass and Lawrence removed references to context, historical specificities and individual complexities in their impetus towards an iconographic universalism. Their written and visual narratives documented the “epic” in form and subject-matter as they destabilised and dismissed as artificial the distortion produced by racist paradigms purporting to neutral status. They created various tableaux of epiphanic moments in order to portray black heroism allegorically, and to produce heroic exemplars suited to the political dictates of the era. These figures were considered capable of translating to diverse audiences the *bete noir* of turn of the century North American culture, described by Lawrence simply as the “black thing” and by which he meant black culture. Despite their commitment to the recovery and narration of a number of black heroes, my paper analyses Douglass’s and Lawrence’s dramatisations of the eighteenth century heroic slave, Toussaint L’Ouverture. He was otherwise known as the “Black Napoleon” and is famous as the leader of the St. Domingo Revolution of 1791 which took place in the West Indies on the site of present day Haiti and which led to the foundation of the first independent black republic. In the final analysis, the paintings of Jacob Lawrence and the manuscripts of Frederick Douglass dramatising the life of Toussaint L’Ouverture bear witness to the continuing preoccupation within African American culture with producing artefacts commemorating epiphanic moments of black liberation. These include set pieces documenting scenes such as: black resistance to white barbarity; black education; black self-government and engagement with politics; black leniency in the face of white aggression and white betrayal of black magnanimity. The works of both Douglass and Lawrence politicised the recuperation of black history and culture as they employed instances of slave heroism specifically to undermine the racism of their respective eras which sought to deny black humanity and to underplay black achievement.

Birkle, Carmen

Conflicting Images of American Nationhood: The Statue of Liberty and the American Eagle

Both the Statue of Liberty and the American Eagle have become well-recognizable icons of American nationhood and above all symbols of liberty. While the Statue of Liberty has greeted every visitors, refugee, and asylum-seeker ever since 1885/86 upon arrival in the New World, the Eagle defines America as a worldly and sacred power above all on its monetary currency. However, both icons also express the often conflicting images of America as a land embracing liberty, freedom of speech, and the pursuit of happiness on the one hand and actually often practicing – in the very name of these values – censorship, severe immigration restrictions, and abuse of natural resources. In my paper, I will look at the inception and history of these icons as well as at their representations

in literature, the visual arts, and popular culture. Texts to be discussed will include Margaret Fuller's *Summer on the Lakes, in 1843* (1844), paintings by early 19th-century Romantic painters, Emma Lazarus's "The New Colossus" (1883), the American one-dollar note, and modern visual representations of a multicultural Statue of Liberty.

Bogle, Lori Lyn

"The President and the Corpse: Theodore Roosevelt, John Paul Jones, and the Creation of a Naval Icon"

Once a third-rate maritime force commanded by a close-knit, and often interrelated elite that often resisted change, the United States Navy by the 1890s was developing into a first class, professional and technically oriented service with an officer corps that was opening to all those of character and ability. Rapid modernization in naval technology, management, and manpower brought great tensions and some officers feared that values that had made naval officers effective in the past would now be lost. By the turn-of-the-century, the Navy found an effective means to preserve its honor, courage, and the willingness to sacrifice by capitalizing on certain tenets of a civil religious revival that celebrated naval heritage while still embracing modern technology. Along with sanctifying Alfred Thayer Mahan as its prophet (circa 1897) and undertaking an ambitious classical building program at Annapolis that conveyed nobility to its midshipmen and the American public (beginning in 1899), the Navy, with personal direction from President Theodore Roosevelt, also interned John Paul Jones' body on the Academy yard as its icon and patron saint (1905).

More than any other one individual, Theodore Roosevelt can be credited with utilizing collective memory and modern publicity to bridge the gap between the old and new Navy. The president set out to change public opposition to an offensive, fleet navy in part by tinkering with the historical record so that Jones, whose body had just been located in Paris, would meet the qualifications of "Father of the Navy" while at the same time representing "modern" ideas regarding naval professionalism despite ample evidence to the contrary. Roosevelt gave full presidential support to recovering the body, personally designated the Naval Academy as its final resting place, helped sanitize the Revolutionary War heroes record, and used the elaborate dedication ceremony at the Naval Academy to promote John Paul Jones as representative of the president's vision of sea power. Through the years, the Navy has maintained Jones' icon status for current naval personnel through ritual and commemoration celebrations.

This project is part of a multi-faceted study on public relations and the Navy at the beginning of the twentieth century that will result in my second monograph tentatively titled "Presidential Persuasions: Theodore Roosevelt and Turn-of-the-Century Naval Public Relations."

Braidt, Andrea B.

On the Generic Translation of Iconicity:

Madonna Meets James Bond

There is little that has not already been said about Madonna's quality as cultural pop icon and most of it she has said herself. Pop Queen, Mother of MTV, Mistress of Reinvention, Queer Mainstreamer: whatever journalists, cultural theorists, and biographers call her, her status as American icon seems as assured as can be. My attempt is not to add yet another piece of cultural evaluation of Madonna's oeuvre from a cultural studies perspective, but to focus on the signification process of iconicity which is, I want to argue, crucial to Madonna: although *symbol* (crucifix) and *index* (muscles, henna-tattoos) play an important part in her work, it is the *icon* with its emphasis on (visual) resemblance that is employed most in her videos.

After a short tour through some of Madonna's most memorable iconic moments, I will closely examine the iconicity involved in the music video to the Madonna song DIE ANOTHER DAY (US 2002, dir. Traktor), which is the title song of the twentieth James Bond movie of the same title (US 2002, dir. Lee Tamahori). The song features like all "Bond-songs" as the musical number for the title sequence of the film, which appears like a ritual as the second sequence of the movie, straight after the initial "medias-in-res" action-filled opening sequence. To unravel the complex relationship between the music video (starring Madonna) and the title sequence (starring Pierce Brosnan) means to decipher the process of iconicity which works – in this case – as a translation phenomenon which crosses the borders of media, genres, and genders.

Breen, Margaret Sönser

Spider-man as Cultural Icon:

The Politics of Heroes and Monsters in Spider-man and "A Long Line of Vendidas"

The particular American cultural icon that I am interested in discussing is the superhero Spider-man, particularly as he is represented in the 2002 hit film of the same name. I am interested in the reemergence and popularity of this superhero in the post-9/11 and pre-Iraq War political climate in the United States.

By considering the representations of the superhero and the monster in the film *Spider-man* against those in Chicana lesbian writer Cherríe Moraga's 1983/2000 essay "A Long Line of Vendidas," this paper indeed begs the question of monster and superhero's essential opposition. I have chosen to read the film against the essay because of the very different configurations of power in each. *Spider-man*, after all, extols a one-dimensional understanding of personal (as well as cultural) identity. The film's storyline repeatedly insists that the use of force is always an experience over which one has choice and can exercise control. In effect, the film's configuration of power, not unlike that expressed by U.S. government leaders today, reflects the immediate interests of the superhero as the arbiter of power—*especially on the levels of language and culture*. Moraga's essay, in turn, offers a differing narrative perspective. The essay underscores how the experience of aggression, in whatever form—as gender violence or racism or homophobia, for example—is often not a choice but an intransigent reality, a nonnegotiable context that, in turn engenders a multiplicity of meaning and a complexity of identity. In other words, one does not choose violence; rather, as a grounding element of one's experience of identity, it is chosen for one. From this perspective, one can only really resist violence by adaptation, by metamorphoses *on the levels of language and culture*. To paraphrase African-American lesbian poet Audre Lorde, one alters to survive. "A Long Line of Vendidas," then, illuminates what is readily obscured in *Spider-man*. "Making monsters—willfully by state policy or media agency, or accidentally by slandash language—

is bound to fail, however sophisticated the rubric...[because] monsters invariably suggest multiplicity of meaning” (Ingebretsen 29). Not only is there no essential opposition between monster and superhero, the illusion of that opposition as inevitable or natural is a function of narrative expectation at work on the levels of text and, more broadly, nation.

Because that expectation is gendered, this paper pays attention to the narrative distribution and regulation of power along gender lines in both *Spider-man* and “A Long Line of Vendidas.” This paper argues that the oppositional relation between monster and superhero is in fact sustained by the continual insertion of binary gender equations, equations that the monsters in both texts repeatedly destabilize. Ultimately, then, what makes the monster monstrous? It is his/her ability to challenge dominant social norms distributed along various axes of social differentiation, such as gender, race, sexuality, and class. The monster, then, is the inverted image of the superhero’s consolidation of power along these axes.

Initially published in 1983, the essay was reissued in 2000 in an expanded version of the original collection, *Loving in the War Years*, which includes new essays that sustain the themes at work in “A Long Line of Vendidas.”

See Lorde’s poem “The Brown Menace or Poem to the Survival of Roaches.”

Bugaeva, Lyubov and Ryder, John

Baseball Iconography: American Images

It has long been commonplace to acknowledge the special place that the sport of baseball holds in American culture. For many millions of Americans the game’s history is closely tied with their own sense of identity. Baseball’s iconography, as well as and perhaps more deeply than its history, indicates its cultural significance. One of the more powerful illustrations of baseball’s place in the culture is the fact that it carries with it the trappings of a religion: in the early 20th century a commission was established to create a creation myth for the game, a myth which, despite its implausibility, is passionately adhered to even today by millions; baseball’s stadiums, and local fields, serve as cathedrals and shrines in which quasi ritual events are played out from generation to generation; and most obviously the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, NY, famously includes a hall where there hang plaques commemorating the heroes of baseball’s history, a hall which is constructed on the model of a church, to which hundreds of thousands of visitors (pilgrims?) travel annually. Iconographic examples of this kind can be multiplied at length.

In this essay we will focus on two aspects of baseball’s relation to American culture: 1) the ways in which the game reflects and embodies aspects of the broader culture, and 2) how baseball imagery during one of its strongest periods, the 1930s, intersected with events in the culture as a whole. It was in the 1930s, in the Great Depression, when with the reduction of their income, people became interested in inexpensive leisure pursuits. The interest in spectator sports such as baseball grew and the formation of the baseball myth had started. We will describe and pursue the strategies used in the myth formation and development in the 1930s — power discourses of the game, visual support of the myth up to the conceptualization of the figure of a baseball player, the mortar, as an integral part of the myth.

Butkus, Michael F.

Smokey Bear

Born from a combination of legend and the necessity to symbolize the importance of forest fire prevention during World War II, Smokey Bear is among the most recognizable icons in US culture. Every school child has been exposed to his basic message of more than 50 years: "Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires". He appears in public service announcements on television, marches in local and national parades, and his face greets visitors to almost every area of public land in the United States.

This paper will tell the story of Smokey Bear, his rise to icon status in the United States, and how and why he is able to remain the beloved and respected symbol of a federal agency, the USDA Forest Service, that is so often lately besieged by controversy and turmoil over such policies as road closures, timber harvest reductions, and livestock grazing restrictions on public land it manages.

Campbell, Brooke M.

If "War is Not the Answer!" What's the Question?

Early in this year's wave of anti-war demonstrations, one of the movement's prominent organizations (FCNL) began circulating what soon became its most recognizable slogan: "War is Not the Answer!" These days, few would argue that either the movement or its slogan even came close to accomplishing their purported objective. I would like to propose that, although they may not have prevented war in Iraq, this slogan did, in fact, do something. Furthermore, I would like to suggest that this something the slogan did--albeit well intended- may, lamentably, have worked at cross-purposes

with its objective. Although an explication of these cross-purposes cannot, of course, bring the thousands dead back to life, it stands to offer some insight into ways in which those of us vested in "preventing war" - which investment, I will argue, requires a radical re-conceptualization of this objective- might manage to avoid undercutting ourselves from now on.

Campbell, James

The Many Lives of the Franklin Icon

In a letter to his sister, Jane Mecom, of 25 October 1779, Benjamin Franklin reports that he is in "Vogue" in France. His successful management of his position as ambassador from the New World had made him an admired and fashionable figure; and, he writes that "[t]his Popularity has occasioned so many Paintings, Busto's, Medals & Prints to be made of me, and distributed throughout the Kingdom, that my Face is now almost as well known as that of the Moon" ([The Papers of Benjamin Franklin](#), 30:583). Early on, Franklin began to function as an icon; and iconic uses of Franklin continue in America to this day. In this paper, I will be examining a series of these

uses.

Franklin's role as the 'official' icon of thrift and hard-work has long been a part of the American psyche; and, as a glance at any American phone book will testify, he remains so today. Some examples of his role as patron saint of banks, investment firms, insurance companies and printing firms – each with their own symbolic representation of Franklin – will be considered. There are numerous other examples of the Franklin icon that deal with his work in electricity and for the post office. Perhaps more interesting are cartoon uses of the Franklin character, and Franklin's appearance in various advertisements. Together, these images offer some insight into how Americans have attempted to rework the meaning of Franklin despite their increasing distance from their colonial/revolutionary past.

The aim of this presentation will be, on one level, to suggest Franklin's current status as an American icon, and, on another, to inquire into how America re-appropriates its icons. From others at the conference, I hope to get a sense of the current meaning of Franklin in Austria and in Europe.

(In the interest of simplicity, I will distribute copies of the various uses of the Franklin icon that I will be discussing rather than try to project them).

Ciugureanu, Adina

Rosie the Riveter, an Icon of (Fe/male) Liberation

Norman Rockwell's *Rosie the Riveter* became overnight (in 1943) the icon of female warrior at a time when women were for the first time officially accepted to do various jobs in the army. Yet, the picture is known to be a composite portrait, which, besides the fact that it is a replica of a male body dressed in overalls, combines the double image of aggressive masculinity and cheeky, if not subversive, femininity. My paper will attempt to discuss the component parts of the portrait, a cluster of iconic images (the American flag, "Mein Kampf", the rivet, the sandwich), and analyse the reasons why a series of juxtaposed icons may create a new icon with a different meaning.

Cortiel, Jeanne

"Uncle Tom": Literature, Ethnology and Popular Culture in Mid-Nineteenth Century America

Shaped by the intensifying debate around slavery and human origin that reached across the U.S. in the mid-nineteenth century, the main character of Harriet Beecher Stowe's most popular novel soon became a cultural icon for racial difference. This paper discusses this complex and conflicting icon in the moment of its inception, analyzing its career in the context of pre-Darwinian racist science and racist romanticism. Both of these discourses conceptualized racial and ethnic difference in a framework provided by the attributive dichotomy "barbarous" and "civilized". As a cultural icon, the "Uncle Tom" character accommodated contradictory racial agendas of the time and was thus able to serve as a vehicle for the shifting cultural consensus on racial and ethnic difference.

Cristian, Reka M.

The American Dream: Edward Albee and the Subversion of the Icon

The concept of the American Dream is a broad one denoting one major American icon and connoting much more. The aim of the presentation is to show how the concept of the modern(ist) American Dream icon is challenged, subverted, redefined and reformulated in the dramaturgy of Edward Albee by taking into consideration - besides the concepts of iconicity, emblem, euphemisation, omissions, taboos - issues of social structure and gender constructions. *The American Dream, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, The Sandbox, A Delicate Balance, Finding the Sun* and *The Play About the Baby* are the plays that form the basis of the discussion and provide the material basis for a redefined American (dramatic) icon.

Dakovic, Nevena

The Power of the West Wing

The concern of this paper is to analyse visual representations of the White House as the icon of power and the power this icon exercises. i.e. the paper depicts the ways in which the cinematically produced White House participates in the (iconic) construction of the concept or idea of American democratic system, power, ideology. It explores the building and "inventing of the tradition" of the system with its all mythical and abstract potentials. The case study is body of the Hollywood films of the nineties but as neatly summed up in the TV series *West Wing*. In spite of its transparency the series neatly recaps the Hollywood tradition- ITS' subversive and affirmative richness; 'optimistic/JFK' ((*Dave*/1993, d. I. Reitman; *American President*/1995, r. Reiner etc.)) and 'pessimistic/Nixon' (*Murder at 16.00*/1997, d. D. Little; *Clear and Present Danger*/1994, d. Philip Noyce) paradigmatic portrayals and generic variety from neocapraesque comedy to thrillers that span across Washington's institutional domain.

White House is just one, but important element in the iconicity of power- inseparable from the mythical figure of the President,; close to Washington sites, CIA, Pentagon etc. It is home of the President, his professional and private space; nodal point of creation of internal and external politics mapping out the political power and web of relations. It is the center of the ruling system and gathering point of political executives and employees, sort of micro version of the whole society, its (democratic) strata and world influence. The topography of the iconic space - that neatly reflects the real one - and mise-en-scene of the staff outline the (idealised?) relations between classes, ethnicities, genders and other social groups in whole of USA.

Daxell, Joanna

The Western Movie Icon In the Native American Literary Imagination

This paper explores the ways in which the Native writers Sherman Alexie and Thomas King resist the romanticized image of the Native "other" as represented in the Western movie by undermining and exposing many of its conventions. In older Western movies, Indians are often played by white actors pretending to be Natives. Natives are portrayed as stoic and humorless beings without depth. Alexie and King show Natives as funny and sensitive beings well aware of their situation as

colonized subjects.

The icons of Western imagination are often subverted in Native American literature and film. In Alexie's and King's texts the Western icons are appropriated and made to fit the Native narrative. For example, in King's novel *Green Grass, Running Water* the main characters – four Indian elders bear the names of heroes from the Western imagination: Hawkeye, Ishmael, Lone Ranger, and Robinson Crusoe – who magically alter the endings of well-known Western movies. In Alexie's screenplay *Smoke Signals*, the first Native feature film to receive recognition by a wide audience, the main characters make up a song, "John Wayne's Teeth," with traditional drums poking fun at this quintessential Western hero in order to render the icon of the Western imagination powerless. King's and Alexie's writings permit their Natives to reclaim a Native identity, not based on the Western image of the colonized Native subject, but a representation that reflects their cultural identity as members of the Native American community.

This paper explores the ways in which the Native writers Sherman Alexie and Thomas King resist the romanticized image of the Native "other" in the Western imagination by appropriating and poking fun at Western icons, thus rendering them powerless. King's and Alexie's writings permit their Native characters to reclaim a Native identity, not based on the Western image of the colonized Native subject, but one that reflects their cultural identity as members of the Native American community.

Deck, Alice A.

The Mammy/Aunt Jemima as an American Icon: Toni Morrison Responds

This paper discusses characters from two of Toni Morrison's novels, *Aunt Jimmy (The Bluest Eye)* and *Ondine (Tar Baby)*, as one black woman writer's response to the Mammy/Aunt Jemima American corporate icon that not only advertises the great American breakfast, but also conveys a stereotype of blackness that has pervaded American popular culture since the 1870's. Mammy/Aunt Jemima appears in advertising, novels, films, and television sitcoms and it is at once an ambivalent object of desire and derision. Mammy/Aunt Jemima represents the American nostalgia for the pre-Civil War era of slavery; especially for the nurturing black domestic who lives for nothing else but to serve the white middle and upper class family. This paper argues that Toni Morrison's two characters complicate this ambivalence by unveiling the black woman's perceptivity and ingenuity as a potentially disruptive agent.

Deszcz, Justyna

"The Bidding for Dorothy's Ozian Magical Shoes: Salman Rushdie's 'At the Auction of the Ruby Slippers' as a Reflection on the Contemporary America"

It seems that Rushdie has recently become a post-deAnglicized American author, torn between repulsion and enchantment in relation to the myth of the New World as utopia. The perplexing nature of the U. S. is amply illustrated in his two latest novels, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999) and *Fury* (2001), whose characters traverse all sorts of boundaries, imaginative, linguistic, cultural, or political. only to find themselves in America. the overcommitted new imperial power with which

they share a profound anguish about the post-frontier times. Their stories reflect Rushdie's own uneasy border-crossings and the attempts to navigate across multiple America religious, political, economic, or cultural territories. In my paper I discuss Rushdie's relatively unpopular short story "At the Auction of the Ruby Slippers" (1992), a result of the writer's continuing preoccupation with both Frank Baum's tale and the MGM film *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), as a sober, or even acerbic, gloss on various lineaments of America's domination when it has gone too far, that is, when the ideals of economic integration, just distribution of resources, cultural inclusiveness, and exuberant social and political exchange have all become a nightmarish delirium, actually serving the needs of neo-imperialism. More specifically, I focus on Rushdie's interpellation of the myth of Ozian magical slippers, which have been idolized as one of the most revered iconic embodiments of emancipation, individualism, and unrestrained mobility. Accounting for their misadventures in the modern Oz, which has actually become another Disneyworld, Rushdie offers a wry commentary on the extremes of America's neo-liberal ethics and market-oriented capitalism. Still, the very fact that Oz has so strongly etched itself on the writer's memory testifies to Rushdie's subscribing to the philosophy of Oz as an oppositional space that provides an alternative to any instances of an oppressive and alienating order. Rushdie does realize the possibility of utopian impulse and oppositional practice and sees in Oz an exceptional capacity for harbouring not so much consumerist drives but unfulfilled dreams that could come true. Thus, I also argue that his own interpretation of the commodified American iconography of Oz exposes in a fascinating way the possibility of a resistant appropriation of the mass-produced art.

Diekmann, Stefanie

NYC Heroes - The American Fireman after September 11

In the aftermath of September 11, many figures have become the focus of interest and sympathy but the NYC firemen form a category of their own. No other group has experienced a comparable rise in public esteem, none has been subject to a similar glorification, and even if janitors, police officers, doctors and office people have enjoyed their share of attention it did not take long until the NYC firefighter was established as the no. 1 object of respect and admiration. (As proves GWB's choice of a firemen's congregation on Ground Zero for one of his first public appearances after the attack on the Twin Towers.) The deeds of NYC's professional rescue workers have been commemorated in songs (e.g. Bruce Springsteen's new album), film (e.g. the Naudet brother's documentary that was meant to show a young fireworker's initiation to a tough job and transformed itself into everyone's favourite film on miraculous survival), comics (the Marvel series that featured a whole new set of 'real' American heroes), and so on, all dealing with issues of agency and responsibility on the one hand, and mourning and redemption on the other. The presentation will focus on excerpts from the Naudet film and the Marvel series and explore the interesting figure of a real hero who is emphatically ONE OF US and at the same time considered as one who turns out to be somewhat LARGER THAN LIFE.

Dragon, Zoltán

Brando Named Desire. Bodies as Icons in Tennessee Williams Film Adaptations

The paper investigates the process whereby bodies become icons in filmic representation. Bodies in

Tennessee Williams film adaptations become first glamorized and eroticized images due to the specular focus directed at them. A notable example for such a mechanism is Blanche DuBois's (Vivien Leigh) look that renders Stanley Kowalski's (Marlon Brando) body as an object of desire in the adaptation of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The spectator's desire and the identification processes triggered by the cinema elevate the image of the body onto the status of the icon, which thus goes beyond the particular mimetic stratum it appears in. Central bodies in Film adaptations of Tennessee Williams' dramas became icons in the twentieth century – notably, Marlon Brando in *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) and *The Fugitive Kind* (1960); Paul Newman in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1958); Elizabeth Taylor in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Suddenly Last Summer* (1959); and Richard Burton in *The Night of the Iguana* (1964). The presentation aims to trace the process of the transformation of these bodies through their images to their iconic status, and to analyze this status in a framework that points beyond the world of the cinema.

Engel, Georg

The Stars and Stripes < more than a flag (Preliminary title)

The ubiquity of the American flag in every aspect of life in politics, in the military, in education, in art, in religion (esp. TV evangelism), in the celebration of public holidays -, make it the central icon of America: the symbol of patriotism, loyalty and American values, the center piece of ritual (e.g. the pledge of allegiance), a medium and expression of national identity. This almost sacred role, at least in conservative circles, make the flag an almost perfect means of criticism of, and protest against, conservative America, which again and again has demanded legislation to protect the sacrosanctity of the "Star-Spangled Banner," the "Stars and Stripes", "Old Glory". This talk attempts to show verbally and visually the wide specter of flag use, from ritual to ridicule, from devotion to desecration, from flag poetry to flag burning.

Eßmann, Bernd

Making the world a better place! – Henry Ford as an icon representing a shift towards a more egalitarian society

Henry Ford is one of the outstanding examples in the early twentieth century of a deliberately created icon. Representations of him as an individual genius gave the people the impression that it was solely Henry Ford's Yankee ingenuity – similar to that of Benjamin Franklin – that led to the development and subsequent success of the Model T, an automobile that the American people seemed to have been waiting for. Publications such as *My Life and Work* or *Today and Tomorrow* helped considerably to create this image of Ford as the benevolent head of the immensely powerful Ford Motor Company. In these texts "Fordism" – a principle conveniently named after its 'creator' – is described as an egalitarian principle that will improve the lives of all workers by giving them more leisure time and more money to spend. Furthermore, Henry Ford is represented as an employer making work in general available to everyone. For not only trained and physically healthy people but also the handicapped are included in the workplace.

This egalitarian principle is also reflected in the actual product of the company: the automobile. The aim of Fordism is to give every American the opportunity to buy one's own car, a kind of 'democratic

machine' giving every individual the opportunity to go wherever s/he pleases and thereby 'liberating' the average American.

Farrington, Holly

'[L]ittle more than a round of vaudeville antics'?: Louis Armstrong as cultural icon

This paper will examine the jazz musician Louis Armstrong as a historical, musical and social icon of the US. It will trace the development of Armstrong from unknown poverty-stricken petty criminal to his appropriation by the media as jazz's answer to Uncle Tom. It will suggest that Armstrong as icon embodies a manifestation of white

American society's attitudes towards African-Americans in the mid-twentieth century. The paper will also evaluate the response of contemporaneous jazz musicians such as Miles Davis, Sidney Bechet and Duke Ellington to Armstrong as icon.

An examination of his iconistic image in the media of the time reveals a stereotypical stance: his features frozen into a constant grin and his body adopting a comical, dancing posture. One particularly (in)famous advertising feature shows him squatting, grinning as he advertises toilet paper. However, this paper will go on to suggest that this attempt by the mass media to represent Armstrong as an 'Uncle Tom' figure is ultimately challenged by his own writing. Through examination of Armstrong's three autobiographical texts: *Swing That Music*, *Satchmo*, and *Louis Armstrong: In His Own Words*, this paper will seek to re-evaluate our response to Armstrong, suggesting that the complexities of his personality as revealed through these texts point towards an ultimate dissatisfaction with his status as icon. It can appear at first

glance that Armstrong, writing in a period when the fight for black equality was pressing, ignores prime opportunities to influence his readers politically. However, I will suggest that his writing is deliberately concerned with the presentation of a complex and carefully-developed persona within the autobiographies. This paper will

ultimately suggest that our images of iconistic figures such as Armstrong are existent primarily in order to be challenged.

Fellner, Astrid M.

"Route 66": Presentation of a web project and an international excursion

In his famous social commentary, *The Grapes of Wrath*, John Steinbeck proclaimed U.S. Highway 66 the "Mother Road." Steinbeck's classic 1939 novel, combined with the 1940 film recreation of the epic odyssey, served to immortalize Route 66 in the American consciousness. Our multi-media presentation will focus on the various levels of signification of this cultural icon. We will present the results of a web project, which combines teaching and travel experiences. The class "Route 66 and the Desert Southwest: A Journey in Cultural Geography," which was taught at the University of Vienna, analyzed both methodological aspects of American cultural studies as well as specific representations of Route 66. On the road. students then had to apply their knowledge and analyze

concrete cultural manifestations. The aim of the excursion in the summer of 2003 was to capture the symbolic significance of this legendary road and analyze its importance in American culture.

Fink, Dagmar

Cherished as well as Suspicious: Femmes Icons of Female Femininities

Not only within queer communities and cultures has the butch become an icon of an empowering and subversive 'female' gender, an icon also of "the lesbian" or female queer. The femme on the other hand receives little or no attention with regards to queer – not to mention: radical – genders. The butch is supposed to be visible as queer and therefore a target of homophobia, the femme is seen as passing for straight. And where the butch represents a transgression of femininity, the femme is suspicious of reproducing a heteronormative femininity. On the other hand the femme is admired, cherished, the center of (not only) butch attraction – though not always trusted. Even within queer cultures the femme often is associated with the image of the femme fatale.

Recent trends within queer-feminist theories which analyze the transgression of (hetero-)normative genders in drag, cross-dressing, transgender, and, most recently, in the various female masculinities – unintentionally – reinforce this devaluation of femme femininities. Necessary and valuable as these analysis are, they all look for the transgression of heteronormative genders at sites of their obvious contradiction, i.e. at sites where sex, gender and the performance of gender contradict each other in terms of a coherent heterosexual gender. The recent focus on female masculinities alone, nourishes the misconception that only those genders that *cross* heteronormative genders are performative. The paper therefore attempts to problematize this trend and to outline the critical appropriation of femininities in femme genders. It makes an argument for an understanding of *femmen*ity or femmeness as radical, queer and subversive, as distinct from heteronormative femininities.

Fitz, Karsten

The American Revolution Remembered, 1840s to 1860s: Competing Images / Competing Narratives

The most often employed and most frequently recurring representations of national history in the visual arts reveal much about the perception of particular historical events at a certain time and their impact on American cultural life. In their most persistent configurations these images become sites of national and cultural memory. Those images help to interpret crucial historical moments and figures and their continuing significance in American cultural traditions. This paper discusses collective cultural and historical memories of the American Revolution as they are represented in certain "images agentes" (Aleida Assmann) – or 'enduringly and creatively powerful images' – between the 1840s and 1860s. It deals with images printed in pictorial histories, illustrated biographies, and pictorial magazines, as well as with lithographs depicting the Revolution, and scrutinizes the cultural narratives these images evoke. Addressing aspects of race, gender, and the (visual) construction of historical 'truth,' the reading of these images focuses on the question of *whose history* is depicted and for *what purpose*. The creation of a usable past in these 'texts' at times vehemently competes with established images and narratives and affects the cultural memory

concerning the Revolution in the decades prior to the Civil War: for instance, what if the first American martyr becomes an African American of Indian descent; what if female and black patriots emerge as actual agents of history (instead of passive victims or by-standers); and what if the revolutionaries are no longer represented as David fighting Goliath (the British army), but as equals? These oftentimes competing narratives recontextualize the Revolution in 'their' time (the antebellum period), resituate the Revolutionary War as a culturally formative event, and in many respects require a redefinition of established popular cultural concepts as, for instance, that of the American Adam (and masculinity), republicanism, and exceptionalism.

Griem, Julika

King Kong and the Dinosaurs: Evolving Icons of Evolution in American Films

In two recent studies W.J.T. Mitchell (*The Last Dinosaur Book*, 1998) and Cynthia Erb (*Tracking King Kong*, 1998) have traced how American culture has redefined and reappropriated the icons of the great ape and the dinosaur. As "totem animals" of modernity these icons have not only evolved in somewhat similar ways but also been cast as a significant configuration in evolutionary narratives. In my paper I will look at *Lost World* (1925), *King Kong* (1933) and Spielberg's *Congo* and *Jurassic Park* to examine the historically variable semantic and semiotic division of labour linking apes and dinosaurs. I will concentrate on two conflicting observations: On the one hand both icons are cast as main agents in narrative scenarios propagating meaningful and ideologically charged evolutionary structures. On the other hand these structures are increasingly undermined by iconoclastic gestures triggering a multiplication of meaning: Whereas the ape-men in *Lost World* still function as racist scapegoats Kong becomes a tragic hero by saving Fay Wray from the giant lizards and by challenging the media apparatus capitalizing on the representation of monsters. In the two Spielberg films the iconographical and ideological setup becomes even more complicated: Here, dinosaurs and apes simultaneously figure as didactic pets *and* as disturbing new/recreated species attacking the technologies of representation and control.

Hadzibeganovic, Tarik, and Georg Bauer

Media of Mass-Destruction: „On Staying Informed and Intellectual Self-defense“

In the ever-growing ramification of the various forms of mass/mainstream media it has become increasingly important to stay informed by systematically sieving through the information overkill. Noam Chomsky, a towering icon in the world of linguistics, political science and mass media analysis, represents this practice of intellectual self-defence against "tyrannical" corporations that steer their subordinated media companies to conform to their respective world views. This talk has been sparked by a theory provided by Solomon Asch, a pioneer in the field of social psychology. In an empirical investigation of leadership and conformity, Asch observed that individuals accommodate their own opinion to that of the group in order to "belong." Even though the view of the individual may widely differ from that of the group, the rhetoric of the mass forces the individual to agree. Consequentially, if we take this phenomenon and apply it to each person in the group, could it be that none of the group members' opinions are identical to that of the whole? Furthermore, we argue that the power of a given group opinion, at any point in time, depends on the consistency of the skillfully (re)arranged information and its daily supply by the mass-media. Such information is then without much questioning adopted and learnt by a group, and hence may change dynamically over time as a consequence of feedback from experience and from the behavioral consequences of

adopting a specific attitude. In this sense, dispositional states of our collective memory constitute causal propensities and, as we shall argue, they provide powerful elements to understand the patterns of our socio-cultural memory formation. With our empirically testable hypothesis, we seek to suggest that the dynamics of the collective may crystallize an autonomous view. How the mass media (particularly “serious” formats such as news programs, broadsheets, etc.) exploit this phenomenon and Chomsky’s investigations of this misuse will also be subject of this talk. In addition, the influence of the governing corporations on the media and their subsequent (systematic) toying with the viewers’ world views (“manipulation”) are to be investigated.

Hediger, Vinzenz

A „Gesamtkunstwerk“ of Effects: Program and Prologue in Silent Era Movie Palaces

In American movie theaters of the late teens and twenties, the primary unit of presentation was the program rather than the film. Films were the main attraction, but they were integrated into a thematically coherent sequence of varied attractions that comprised lavish dance numbers, songs, recitals and short films. Key among the program elements was the so-called atmospheric prologue, a stage number that came immediately before the film and supposedly prepared the audience for the showing of the film. Theater managers such as Sid Grauman or Samuel “Roxy” Rothafel, who in the process became celebrities in their own right, almost on par with major movie stars and certainly more famous than most film directors, pioneered the thematically coherent film program. In the mid-to late twenties, this uniquely American art form was exported to foreign markets along with American films, particularly to Germany, where a number of American studios had managed to acquire a dominant position in the theatrical market by buying up Ufa’s movie theater holdings. Already hotly debated in the American trade papers, American style film programs became the focus of public controversy in Germany. Most notably, Siegfried Kracauer wrote a vitriolic attack on what he disdainfully termed a “Gesamtkunstwerk der Effekte”, an assemblage of effects that hindered, rather than helped, the perception of the film. – Based on a brief sketch of presentation practices in US silent era movie theaters, this paper will trace the public reception of program and prologue according to the “American principle” in German movie theaters of the twenties.

Heissenberger, Klaus

The White Man in Recent American Films

White masculinity has long been a staple icon in American popular culture, especially in its graphic representations that the medium film has provided. While for decades mainstream films have left white male identity by and large uncontested as the seemingly stable and whole center of the culture, a number of films of the 1980s and 1990s have made white male identity their major concern.

In films such as Sam Mendes’ *American Beauty* or David Fincher’s *Fight Club* (both 1999), a critique of the alienating and estranging effects that late capitalist consumer society has on the individual is articulated through a concern with white male identity—more specifically, through the protagonists’ perceived crisis of masculinity and their attempts to reclaim an authentic masculine identity which they regard as having been infringed upon by American society. In both films, an iconic masculinity

reemerges that vigorously asserts itself in opposition to its sexual and racial other at the same time as it is unambiguously heterosexual and unabashedly white. In my paper, I will investigate the ambiguous consequences that this gendering and racing of social critique has for both the possibilities and limits of the critique put forward and the white masculinity that the protagonists seek to rescue. I will look at issues such as authenticity; identity and political agency; masculinity and heterosexual desire; the unacknowledged presence of homosexual desire in the construction of heterosexual masculine identity; the suppressed presence of a racial/ethnic other; and the connection of the gendering and racing of social critique to other forms and texts of American (popular) culture.

Heller, Arno

„Reinventing Billy the Kid: The Juvenile Delinquent as Cultural Icon“

Of all the Western heroes in popular culture Billy the Kid is still one of the most popular. Hundreds of historical markers and museums and a huge fan club called „The Billy the Kid Outlaw Gang“ with thousands of members keep his memory awake. Hundreds of dime novels, popular novels and comics, 20 biographies, more than 40 films, 30 plays, an opera, a ballet, and an uncounted number of pop-songs, poems, or also articles in journals and magazines have been produced about him.

This amazing popularity and the tremendous reception it has triggered off stands in strange contrast to his striking historical unimportance and the lack of solid information about his life. All we definitively know is that he was born in New York in 1856, that he came to Silver City, New Mexico, with his parents in 1873, turned into a formidable gunman during the so-called Lincoln War, killed more than 20 people, escaped from hanging in a spectacular flight from the Lincoln County jail and was finally located and shot by Sheriff Pat Garrett in Fort Sumner in 1881. The immense amount of fantasy and myth that has turned Billy the Kid into an American icon in the course of time must be seen, so it seems, as a projective compensation for this absence of concrete knowledge.

The interpretations of his personality reach from the early demonizations as a satanic killer, a great number of historical, social and psychological analyses, his celebration as a culture hero in the 1960s to the deconstructivist images of today. The paper investigates these reinventions in the context of cultural history and analyses their underlying changing motivations.

Hochbruck, Wolfgang

Iconic Submersion: The Consumption of Modern Myth and the Disneyform Condition

Mythical and popular icons, their consumption and their reproduction tolerate a "margin of mess" (Dennis Tedlock) on which conscious as well as accidental ironic as well as satirical subversions not only occur, but apparently fulfill a social function in space and time. It needs to be asked what this function is, and where its borderlines are. Hypothetically, in democratic and polyvocal societies these subversions of mythical iconicity are part of a dissident fringe still within the current form of hegemonial discourse, providing carnivalesque countercurrents of meaning. But what about the post-democratic societies of the virtual / disneyform modern?

The presentation will try to direct attention to aspects of this margin of myth consumption and reproduction, reviewing iconic forms ranging from Robert E. Lee and Abraham Lincoln via the Statue of Liberty to the Titanic.

Hoople, Robin

GREAT STONE FACES: NATURAL SIGNS AND TROUBLED ICONS

J. Heffernan's notion of "lusting for a natural sign" in review of Murray Krieger's Ekphrasis (1993) neatly conditions a treatment of two troubled and conflicting icons-The Old Man of the Mountain in Franconia, New Hampshire and The Presidential images on Mt. Rushmore. Both icons have what Ripa would call a *fatto*, or illustration; both icons have been shrines for numinous cultural values; both icons have confronted the fate of all cantilevered rock masses, the Great Stone Face having recently crashed (May 2 or 3, 2003) and the images at Mt. Rushmore recently undergoing support engineering. Heffernan offers ekphrastic configurations of sign: 1) the visual impact of a natural image and 2) its use as a cultural hermeneutic. Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The Great Stone Face," as *fatto* for the New Hampshire icon, reveals its antiquity in native lore prophesying that its noble form would descend as a consummate blessing on the land. The narrative shows a series of American worthies claiming to fulfill the prophecy unworthy of the honour. The *fatto* for the Mt. Rushmore icon is more complex, but it is neatly summarized in the report by People Weekly (Sept. 1991) of President George H. W. Bush's mission to dedicate Federal funds to combating the erosion of Gutzon Borglum's "Shrine of Democracy"-the icon as artifact lusting for a natural sign. The article features Tim Giago, editor of Lakota Times, who retitled the icons "the shrine of hypocrisy" citing theft, betrayal and desecration as the history contrasting the iconography of the enshrined democracy. Hawthorne's interpretation of the New Hampshire icon offers a sharp critique of the inscribed icon on Mt. Rushmore, Giago having accused all four Presidents of atrocities against the native people. The icon as artifact struggles uneasily in its "lusting" for status as a natural sign.

Sources:

Chu, Daniel and Bill Shaw. "About Faces," People 36:68-70.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "The Great Stone Face."

Heffernan, J. A. W. "Lusting for a Natural Sign," Semiotica 98:219-228.

Hulsey, Dallas

"a heartbeat away from the Incarnation": Uncle Sam as Political Icon in Robert Coover's The Public Burning

In the United States and other nations, the government endorses official symbols and icons, encouraging its citizens to identify with these figures as a means of encouraging patriotism and maintaining social control. Uncle Sam is one of the prominent characters in American political iconography; the American-flag-wearing, finger-pointing uncle was featured in recruitment campaigns for the Army during WWI and has been a favorite of political cartoonists for over a

hundred years. In the famous painting of Sam by James Montgomery Flagg, Sam stares into the eyes of the viewer, points at him, and declares, "I WANT YOU." The painting recruits as it forms the subject; it is a mass message received in a personal context and conjures the subject it requires in the act of calling.

This paper analyzes Uncle Sam from the standpoint of Lacanian psychoanalysis, focusing on Robert Coover's novel *The Public Burning*, which presents a fictionalized account of the Rosenberg executions. Expanding on the frozen moment in Flagg's painting, Coover presents Sam as a living character. Uncle Sam symbolizes the 1950's American spirit: freedom, politics, anti-communism, baseball, mom, and apple pie. Sam reconciles the paradoxes of American consciousness into a cohesive whole. However, the other characters in the novel are plagued by the inconsistencies of American thinking. Coover personalizes this conflict between the individual subject and the dominant ideology (Sam) through the character of Richard Nixon, who comes to doubt the wisdom and legality of executing the Rosenbergs. Simultaneously, Nixon believes that to attain the presidency is synonymous with becoming the incarnation of

Uncle Sam. Nixon, then, is a bifurcated subject, and Sam is his Ideal-I, but, for Nixon, Sam is also the transcendental signifier that grounds the structure of American culture. Coover utilizes the split between Uncle Sam and Nixon in *The Public Burning* as a metaphor for the gap between individual subjects and the collective ideology of the American populace.

Johnson, Rachael

MADONNA'S WORLD: THE CULTURAL CANNIBALISM OF A NON-CONFORMIST ICON

Madonna is a cultural cannibal. She has embraced and consumed a dazzling variety of ethnic, religious and sexual sources. Aesthetically stimulated by Hispanic, Anglo-European, African-American, Asian, Middle Eastern and Jewish cultures, she is also fascinated by the sacred, by Catholicism and Jewish mysticism, as she is intrigued by secular, universal forces like Hollywood. Conscious of her femininity, Madonna equally claims identification with a variety of historical female characters such as Marilyn Monroe, Marlene Dietrich, Evita Peron and Frida Kahlo. She has embodied a variety of archetypal yet culturally diverse female roles from pregnant teenagers to women of power, from "bad girls" to martyrs, from geisha to dominatrix, from femme fatale to Everywoman. Madonna assimilates "high" and "low" cultures. She devours distinctions. Moreover, Madonna subscribes to gay culture and has flirted with sexual subcultures. She consistently celebrated all forms of sexuality. Everything must be tasted.

What are we to make of her assimilation of such a diverse array of sources, particularly her assimilation of "minority" cultures? Is Madonna a sexual and cultural tourist? Does her entire career constitute American globalisation at its seductive best? Has she not accrued millions by stealing "exotic" images and sounds and repackaging them in a clean and sleek all-American fashion? Furthermore, are her attractive representations of gender-bending finally safe and fake? In the following paper, I will address these questions which, it must be said, would serve to portray Madonna as a cultural reactionary. It is not a portrait, however, which I ultimately recognise. Madonna has been frequently perceived by the mainstream culture as a radical popular cultural force. Her powerful and challenging femininity still inspires awe and hate. It is also cynical to believe that her identification with many of her sources is not grounded in personal passion. Secondly, such an interpretation ignores the powerful and thrilling ambivalence which she offers. Madonna is a cultural cannibal. As Maggie Kilgour has written, the cannibal simultaneously desires autonomy and identification as he seeks to intensify and destroy boundaries. Furthermore.

Madonna's images are often ambivalent. They may be read as conservative or dissident. They may mock or revere. Icons may be given new meaning. They may be subverted or radicalised. Madonna is a natural post-modern performer. As a post-feminist icon, she is an ambiguous figure. Identifying with both genders, she understands the allure and abuses of masculinity as she is attracted to subversive same-sex desire. Ultimately, I argue, Madonna is the most influential popular feminist *per se* in contemporary culture.

Madonna is a pluralist. As a popular artist, her eye for what is beautiful, interesting and provocative appears unrivalled. Incorporating various cultural and sexual influences, she has sought to diversify insular American popular culture by mixing the alternative and distinct with the conventional and dominant. As an often transgressive performer, she provides a model of femininity which is at once radical and popular, counter-cultural and cross-cultural. Madonna's cultural cannibalism incorporates the heterogeneous impulse.

Kern, Louis

“Captain America and Bucky, Too: From Super Soldier to Iconic Embodiment of a Super Power-Origins, Evolution, and Historical Revisionism”

Since World War II, America has increasingly come to define itself and to be identified by its popular cultural icons. In particular its superhero figures have provided a mythic underpinning and popular idiom to express and transmit reductionist versions of foreign policy objectives and clichéd statements of fundamental national values. The extent and power of the superhero as the focus of an identifying set of symbolic representations was made clear by the official response to a derisory article on the Bush administration's "War on Terrorism" that appeared in the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* in early 2002. In the article, the administration was analogized to the "Masters of the Universe," and the cover illustration depicted Bush himself as the reincarnation of Rambo, and his national security advisors as various other superheroes. Far from being offended by the comparison, the Bush administration revelled in its association with the fictional icons of national power, and through the U.S. ambassador ordered thirty-three poster-sized blow-ups of the magazine's cover. The earliest of the superheroes who would come to wield powers beyond the reach of mere presidents was created on the eve of America's emergence as a superpower, at the outbreak of World War II (1941), in the form of a 4-F recruit who acquired superhuman powers, transforming himself into an invincible fighting machine, when he drank a secret serum. Dubbed "Captain America," he becomes a "terror to spies and saboteurs," a giant, blond figure, who is patriotism personified. He wears a red, white, and blue costume with a large white "A" on his forehead, not simply wrapping himself in the flag, but essentially becoming an animated American flag.

The Captain America figure waned in the post-war years, was revived briefly to combat Communists in the mid-1950s, but not having sufficient scope in which to exercise his vast powers, went into early retirement by the end of the decade. His contemporary incarnation is within the context of historical revisionism.

In 2002, in the time-honored cinematic tradition, a "prequel" to the origins of Captain America was released by Marvel comics entitled "Truth: Red, White, and Black," which reveals that the first Captain America was a Black Army recruit, who was one of a group of African-American soldiers who were used as guinea pigs to test the super serum before it is administered to the white recruit, Steve Rogers. But the picture is not so uncomplicated as a mere displacement of one Captain America by another by way of disclosing a racist cover-up of the true story. For presently, the Black

Captain America coexists with a rejuvenated white one, who is currently pursuing international terrorists in a five-part series entitled "The Extremists."

The paper will focus on the origins and historical evolution of the Captain America figure and examine the character's symbolic significance as the embodiment of a civil religion of patriotism and a faith in the nation's transcendent, divinely-ordained power that reflects an ambivalent national ideology of militant jingoism, adventurism, sacred crusading for the democratic way of life, unilateralism, embattled paranoia, and commitment to the rule of law that political scientists have called "The Captain America Complex." It will also be concerned with how contemporary racial tensions are reflected and imaginatively played out in the rivalry of the competing racial champions who bear the Captain's legacy. I anticipate the use of slides drawn from the compic texts to supplement the presentation of the paper.

Klarer, Mario

Framing Women: 19th-Century Gender Iconography in Tableaux Vivants

In the course of the nineteenth century, tableaux vivants -- the immobile arrangement of living human bodies in order to represent a framed piece of visual art -- became a widespread fashion in a variety of artistic media and social contexts, including Victorian melodrama, evening-long public tableau shows, and private parlor theatricals in the homes of middle-class families. The planned paper will look at different manifestations of physical embodiment of the visual arts by ascribing to tableaux vivants the position of a mirror of Victorian social and aesthetic norms. Although a minute detail of 19th century cultural practice tableaux vivants and their underlying mechanisms indirectly shed light on central gender issues and domestic politics of the period.

Kuntschner, Eva

The Color Purple-Controversy: (De)Constructing African-American Masculinity and the 'Ideal Family'

This presentation will be based on the thesis of the same title, completed in april 2003, which examines the controversy that erupted in American public discourse after the 1986 release of Steven Spielberg's adaptation of Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel The Color Purple. Many critics, among them a disproportionately large number of African-American males, were enraged about what they viewed as Walker's sexist and racist portrayal of black men, which, after the novel's 'Hollywoodization', would reach an even greater number of people. They severely attacked Walker, calling her a 'traitor to the race' and basically accusing her of having been bought by white, racist society in order to further destabilize concepts like black masculinity and the black family.

The paper looks at constructions of African-American masculinity and the 'ideal', meaning patriarchal, black family in American public discourse of the mid-1980s in reference to both Spielberg's film and to the ideas of a female-centered society presented in the novel. The fact that Walker was far more severely attacked than Spielberg, who was at best perceived as a marginal figure, shows that the reasons for the controversy around The Color Purple do not only lie within the novel itself. but are moreover situated more deeply inside African-American cultural discourse. By

giving voice to African-American women Walker questions ideas central to black men's definition of themselves: Not only does she attack the idealized public image of black males, but she also challenges their self-assumed right to write and to define sexuality, history, truth and categories like 'feminine' and 'masculine'. Her demonstrative interpretation of the concept of the Phallus as an extension of the very real penis instead of as an abstract symbol of power places Walker firmly within the tradition of African-American women writers' questioning of the patriarchal understanding of cultural norms. Their view of the penis/phallus as a concrete instrument for sexual oppression serves as a counterpoint to earlier, male interpretations of the penis as a signifier for the evolution of a new, more powerful 'black race'. By challenging masculinist assumptions about the representation of African-Americans in cultural discourse, Alice Walker, like many other women writers, also challenges basic parameters of a masculinist understanding of the world. The attacks of many male critics on Walker's work can thus be seen as a desperate defense of this world order and of their own place in it.

Lipp, Martina

Cyberspaces and Metropolises: The American City in (Science) Fiction

In my talk I will be focusing on one of the icons most frequently related to American culture: The Metropolis.

By drawing on cultural studies and feminist/post-structuralist film theory, I will analyze representations of the (American) metropolis in Science Fiction film in general, and in the cyberspace/cyberpunk genre in particular. The films I will discuss will range from *Metropolis* by Fritz Lang to Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* to the first two films from the *Matrix* series: *The Matrix* and *Matrix Reloaded*.

I am particularly interested in how the image/icon of the Metropolis becomes a carrier of meaning that goes beyond its physical structure:

How, the city in the case of *Metropolis* becomes what is already implied in the name itself: the (*meter*)Mother(-City): a substitute for the non-existent mother.

In *Blade Runner*, on the other hand, we will find out that the city is used to represent a postmodern future society, that is essentially and almost exclusively urban.

However, I am particular interested in the cyberspace genre, where the city is used for two different effects: While in earlier cyberspace films (e.g. *Johnny Mnemonic*) urban iconography, that resembles streets and skyscrapers, is used to represent cyberspace, in later films, e. g. *The Matrix* series, the city actually becomes cyberspace.

By looking at these films and their representations of urban environment, I will try to come to some conclusion about the status of the metropolis in present American culture.

Ludwin. Samuel

"Instrumentalized Icons: On Their Development and Inconsistency."

In my paper I would like to raise questions about the nature of iconic representation and the instability of iconic meaning. Where do we place icons within traditional categories of semiotics? In which end of semiotic triangles should we locate them? In order to find answers, I will a) focus on the development of the Pocahontas figure on the early American stage and the changing roles that she personifies in three different plays, and then make a transition to b) the discursive use made of icons in pragmatic instrumentalizations in a few selected statements by Ishmael Reed and his rhetorical strategies, which are based on notions of conjuring and ultimately a cosmology of Voodoo, in which loa-icons are neither good nor bad but powerful tools at the magician's disposal. Their "meaning," then, is ultimately pragmatic and cannot be limited to representamen, object, or interpretant. The nature of this function is most succinctly demonstrated in the inconsistency of Reed's commentary on iconic figures such as Jimmy Carter, Elvis Presley, and others, when he has no qualms about first setting them up as role models and then criticizing them (or vice versa). This iconic instability can only be explained in a historicized context of pragmatic application.

Malecki, Wojciech

Da Boyz in da Hood. Remarks on the Icons of American Hip-Hop Culture

In my paper I seek to analyze the following icons of American hip-hop culture: the ghetto (and its particular manifestations – Bronx, Brooklyn, Compton etc.) and the hip-hop heroes – Tupac Shakur, the Notorius B.I.G. and Eminem.

I shall start with the necessary brief description of American hip-hop culture, its division into breakdance, graffiti and rap music, and its purely ethnic origins and political engagement. The main focus of this part of the paper will be rap music. I will try to summarize philosophical insights on rap proposed by R.Shusterman (see his, *Art. Infraction: Goodman, Rap, Pragmatism*, „Australasian Journal of Philosophy” Vol. 73, No. 2; June 1995; *Rap Remix:Pragmatism, Postmodernism and Other Issues in the House*, “Critical Inquiry” 22(Autumn 1995); and *Performing Live. Aesthetic Alternatives for the Ends of Art.*, Ithaca, 2000.). I will also put forward rap music's relation to the music industry and examine its absorption by non-American societies, which is a key to understanding its ability to replicate and modify its cultural icons.

The second part of the paper will cover the issue of the icon of the ghetto. The ghetto is thus a place where rap music originated in the 1970's and it is also a place where every “true” rap artist should come from in order to gain respect. I will show how the icon of the ghetto (or “the projects”) reflects (and in some ways reinforces) the so-called “dialectics of exclusion” (see R.Shusterman, *Ghetto Music*, JOR:Winter 1992, pp.11-18). In this particular case it relates to black pride in America mixed with exclusionary ghetto chauvinism. Many particular manifestations of this icon such as Compton, described by hardcore rap supergroup N.W.A [Niggaz With Attitude], and Ice T's South Central, will be examined. I will also show how this icon has influenced artists from beyond American rap genre and even from beyond the rap genre itself (i.e. pop artist Jennifer Lopez explicitly taking pride in being raised in Bronx in her hit single *Jenny from the Block*).

In the remainder of my paper I will take into consideration the question of rap heroes. I will argue that figures such as Tupac and the Notorius B.I.G. – now known by every teenager living in any

country where MTV can be watched – are not only icons for Afroamericans (for whom they are a great help in solving the question of the black identity and - to put it crudely - a proof that you don't have to be white to achieve fortune and admiration) but also for many other cultural/ethnic groups worldwide. I will also reflect on the problematic status of the icon of the white rapper, Eminem.

I shall conclude with general remarks on the cultural and political aspects of those icons, on aporias that inhabit them (i.e. that some of them can simultaneously express black racism and serve as a tool to preserve the presumption of black's inferiority) and also on some problems concerning the aesthetic study of this subject and the political value of including it in the curriculum.(see T.Brennan, , *Off the Gangsta Tip: A Rap Appreciation or Forgetting about Los Angeles*, "Critical Inquiry" 20 [Summer 1994]: 663-93., H. Bloom, *The Western Canon*, New York 1994, R.Shusterman, *Popular Art and Education*, "Studies in Philosophy and Education"13: 1995.)

Marin, Ileana

Grand Canyon - the Icon of the American Multiplicity

The Romanian Perspective

For the Romanians who wrote about America before 1989, the geographical encounter was the most reflected issue in their memories and travelogs, deliberately ignoring the human encounter that could draw the attention of the ideological censorship. Thus the Grand Canyon has become the most suggestive icon of the American society based on democratic values, civil rights, and economical power.

Visiting America, the Romanians writers reconsider their contemporary history and describe it as the state which preserves Romanian lost ethical and democratic values, the mythical Earthly Paradise, on the one hand, and the biblical Promise Land, the hope for the future better times, on the other. Its splendour manifests at the physical level: for Ana Blandiana, the Romanian writer before 1989, a political leader after, geographical majesty of the Grand Canyon represents a transfigured former mineral civilization: a pyramid without its peak stands for Wotan's Throne. No scientific explanation about the geological phenomena can decrease the metaphysical feeling the admirer experienced in front of the overwhelming natural scenery.

According to Grigorescu, canyon is the effigy of American nature and culture: wild, primitive patterns connote innocence and violence, pride and humiliation, luxury and poverty, eternity and mortality, vastness and enclosure, illimited power and weakness. Concrete and glass buildings, intricate highways remind the massive structure of the canyon; their steep rocks – the highest peaks and the lowest valleys stand for a metaphorical image of diversity. Geological layers concentrate an elementary allegory of the social classes whose emblems are their houses, cars, clubs, and favorites stores.

The Grand Canyons remain the millenary hallmark of this Newly Born World. In Dan Grigorescu's book, geographical and human elements are impossible to be separate, and this seems to be the constant characteristic of the country as large as a continent.

While the descriptions before 1989 are mainly geographical, those after 1989 are interested in the human encounter. As regards the obsessing refrain of the Grand Canyon. Vera Calin. a Romanian

exile in LA, refuses to describe it since she considers Gran Canyon has become a cliché in the Romanian texts about America. “The huge geological deed of Colorado” is anthropomorphized and signifies the apothotic end of her life. The insignificant dimension of human being struggling with history and nature is confronted with that divine magnificence which bears an allegorical message at the end of the book.

Mettauer, Susanne

Air & Style: Michael Jordan Continues to Fly

Even after repeated retirements and comebacks, Michael "Air" Jordan is probably the most successful and popular basketball player of all times, and one of the most visible and lucrative African Americans in global media culture. As a sportsperson, he represents athletic excellence and competition. His association with numerous sponsors, particularly the Nike company, makes him an icon of capitalist consumer culture. The particular Jordan style, in the spotlight of the basketball court and elsewhere, highlights black cultural creativity with such attendant attributes as performance, improvisation, and spontaneity. As an example of virtually unlimited black achievement, Jordan is the incorporation of the "Hoop Dreams" of uncountable black inner city youth—yet a figure who remains in godlike distance for the overwhelming majority of them. And despite a long tradition in white American society to regard the black male body as a menace, whites, too, admire Jordan's feats and want to "Be Like Mike."

In my presentation, I want to analyze how Jordan as a cultural icon has become the space onto which these various and often ambiguous images and notions have been projected. Considering all these functions, it will become clear that Jordan is indeed a "polysemic signifier," as Douglas Kellner put it, encouraging mainstream but also counterhegemonic readings, transcending as well as reinforcing racial connotations. But I also want to focus on the broader implications of this iconic status for the person who functions as a signifier. Does the role as cultural icon entail a sense of accountability and agency, a social dimension? Or has Jordan himself been turned into a commodity, an image that is out of his control and responsibility?

Miller, Char Roone

Icons and Democracy: Neither Palace Nor Temple Nor Tomb

“The monument is neither palace nor temple nor tomb,” wrote Helen Nicolay of the Lincoln Memorial. What then, it is fair to ask, is it? Or more generally, what does monumental architecture do? This article relies on Walter Benjamin's account of the appropriation of architecture to examine some of the discussion concerning the creation and use of the Lincoln Memorial. In spite of the interest of the creators in organizing a site that would demonstrate intellectual and aesthetic harmony—“the landscape architectural treatment,” wrote Irving Payne (Landscape Architect, Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital), “is one whose elements have been successfully blended into a harmonious whole”—the monument and its creation can be seen to represent possibly contradictory accounts of political and social power. This article explores the contradictory ways, in which the memorial is palace, temple, tomb, and, as Nicolay went on to suggest, log cabin—“oddly enough, its stately outlines have much in common with those of the rude square cabin in which he first saw light” What could embody greater contradiction and less

harmony than a marble temple representing a log cabin?

Neset, Arne

The Hunter and the Hunted as Icons in late 19th Century American Art.

The paper is an exploration of the significance of the hunter as an icon in American art. The hunter is an old image and in America it goes of course back to the beginnings of European settlement and exploitation of the resources of the virgin land. The paper will focus on the ambiguous meanings of the hunter as represented in late 19th century American art in the more kitschy paintings by Frederic Remington and in the highly sophisticated Adirondacks paintings by Winslow Homer. In Homer's paintings and watercolors from the Adirondacks in the 1890s the professional guide and hunter takes the place of Bingham's trappers in the canoe. It is a theme Homer developed over more than thirty years from his early oil painting called An Adirondack Lake (The Trapper, Adirondacks) (1870), to his watercolors from the same area in the 1890s.

Theodore Roosevelt contributed enormously to the ideals and practice of the manly outdoors and the strenuous life after 1900. As president he supported a budding conservation movement, extended the national parks and wildlife refuges and initiated the system of national monuments, such as the Grand Canyon. He was not only the hero of the Rough Riders storming Kettle Hill outside Santiago de Cuba during the Spanish-American War in 1898, but also the great outdoorsman, hiker, camper, hunter and bird watcher. He liked to be photographed wearing the hunter's clothes and gear and to be seen as a big game hunter not only in America but in other continents as well. He also wrote several books about his own hunting experiences like *The Wilderness Hunter* (1893), *Good Hunting* (1907), *African Game Trails* (1910), topics that were continued by Ernest Hemingway 25 years later in *Green Hills of Africa*.

Olson, Greta

America's Two-Body Society

This essay describes the attributes and significance of the iconicized body in American culture. Lists such as *People Magazine's* annual 50 Most Beautiful People in the World and *FHM's* annual 100 Sexiest Women and the locations of CBS *Survivor* series in areas in which its predominantly young and ultrabuff contestants need to wear as few clothes as possible demonstrate the American obsession with the body perfect. The fetishizing of young-looking, lean, often surgically altered, hairless bodies has become an American preoccupation. Moreover, the perfect body of a succession of American superstars such as Cindy Crawford and Halle Berry has become a recognizable American icon outside of the country.

The iconic buff body in its male and female variations stands in radical contrast to the increasingly obese bodies of the vast majority of Americans. Most Americans lack the means to make their physiques look anything like those of celebrities or celebrity look-alikes. Instead, the fat and ever-fatter majority pays to watch, covet, and measure their own inadequacies on perfected physiques. On the basis of increasing rates of obesity in the States and the concomitant greater outlay of money for cosmetic surgery and other 'body-enhancing' measures I argue that the perfected body

represents a borderline between the haves and have-nots in US society. Some few pay fiercely to make their bodies competitive in very-fierce body stakes. Most others continue to feel insecure about themselves when they look at images of perfected bodies in the media but, nonetheless, continue to pay to see these images. The iconic American body, I conclude, has little to do with pleasure and much to do with class membership and marketing.

Peprnik, Michael

Daniel Boone Recast

In Daniel Boone American has received a new iconic hero. Iconic character is more than a type – to brand Boone as a hunter or a frontier-man, means to simplify the complexity and indeterminacy of this icon, to reduce its mirror-like quality to reflect a flattened image of the cultural contents that power of nostalgia brings to focus. It is no coincidence that Boone's tale and consequent myth came to being in the time when the eastern board was steadily "planted", wherefrom also its maker, John Filson, a teacher came. A cultural icon, at the same time, is not a mere reflecting surface, but a luminous image that dazzles the Eye/I and submits us to its magnetic force and thus weakens our analytical responses – we avert our eye, or we get spell-bound.

This paper try to find ways of *looking aslant* at the object of fascination and will endeavor to identify the components of nostalgia and will try follow the transformations of the Boone myth from Cooper's Natty Bumppo to Michael Mann's "Daniel-Nathaniel-Natty-nutty" Poe of the latest film version of *The Last of the Mohicans*.

Phillipson, Allan

THE KILLING ICON: MICKEY SPILLANE'S MIKE HAMMER.

When it comes to fictional icons, few have been more popular than Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer. Hammer burst into print in "I, The Jury" (1947), selling millions of copies and making his creator the biggest-selling author of the 1950s. By the end of that decade, Spillane held seven places in the top ten best-selling novels of all time. Hammer has helped Spillane sell over two hundred million books to date. He has also appeared in almost every other media: comic strips, commercials, record albums, radio serials, television series and feature films. Hammer has become an icon--and in the process he has disappeared.

In other words, Hammer's entry into the mainstream simplified his character to the point where he no longer seemed to have one. Hammer became a caricature, the big man with a big gun, a big car, and lots of big women. Parodies began early, with the 1953 film "The Bandwagon" featuring a 'Rod Riley' thriller by 'Mickey Starr,' in which Fred Astaire struts as a super-tough private eye while Cyd Charisse stalks him as a spread-legged femme fatale. Spillane himself contributed to the simplification, appearing for nearly twenty years in Miller Lite beer commercials that spoofed the Hammer persona and milieu.

It is hard to see the original Hammer through all the simulcra that followed. Moreover, critics argue that the Hammer of the novels is himself "a degenerate copy of Marlowe and Spade." Nevertheless.

by deconstructing both the icon that obscures him and the critics who abhor him, I hope to rehabilitate a character who has been too often dismissed as "the perversion of the hard-boiled tradition."

Polizoes, Elias

Wallace Stevens: "from an allegorical point of view"

The abiding American interest in icons, and the concomitant hermeneutical conviction that the world is legible down to its smallest detail, finds its roots in Puritan typology — the idea, that is, in the words of Jonathan Edwards, that "the things of the world are ordered and designed to shadow forth spiritual things." In Edwards's view, the "material world" of nature is "wholly subordinated to the spiritual and moral world." Moreover, just as a lowly tree can serve as "a lively emblem of many spiritual things," America itself apocalyptically stands as the shadowy type for the anagogic City of God: "The changing course of trade, and the supplying of the world with its treasures from America, is a type and forerunner of what is approaching in spiritual things, when the world shall be supplied with spiritual treasures from America."

Arguing that God "makes the inferior in imitation of the superior," Edwards shows (albeit belatedly), not only his debt to Baroque notions of interpretation, but his desire to marshal what Walter Benjamin has called "the antinomies of the allegorical."

What would remain of Edwards's typology in what Wallace Stevens calls "an age of disbelief" — an age, that is, abandoned to the immanence of the "material world" and without any recourse to redemptive interpretative models? One answer, perhaps, is that typology would be short-circuited and restricted to what Stevens, in a late poem, calls "The Plain Sense of Things":

After the leaves have fallen, we return
To a plain sense of things. It is as if
We had come to an end of the imagination,
Inanimate in an inert savoir.

It is difficult even to choose the adjective
For this blank cold, this sadness without cause.
The great structure has become a minor house.
No turban walks across the lessened floors.

The greenhouse never so badly needed paint.
The chimney is fifty years old and slants to one side.
A fantastic effort has failed, a repetition
In a repetitiousness of men and flies.

Yet the absence of the imagination had
Itself to be imagined. The great pond,
The plain sense of it without reflections. leaves.

Mud, water like dirty glass, expressing silence

Of a sort, silence of a rat come out to see,
The great pond and its waste of the lilies, all this
Had to be imagined as an inevitable knowledge,
Required, as a necessity requires.

The “plain sense,” however, may come only after an apocalyptic event: the “end of the imagination.” And to imagine the “absence of the imagination” is to think a world without gods. In a lecture delivered at Mount Holyoke College on April 28, 1951 (that is, about the time he wrote “The Plane Sense of Things”), Stevens states:

To see the gods dispelled in mid-air and dissolve like clouds is one of the great human experiences. It is not as if they had gone over the horizon to disappear for a time; nor as if they had been overcome by other gods of greater power and profounder knowledge. It is simply that they came to nothing. Since we have always shared all things with them and have always had a part of their strength and, certainly, all of their knowledge, we shared likewise this experience of annihilation. It was their annihilation, nor ours, and yet it left us feeling that in a measure we, too, had been annihilated. It left us feeling dispossessed and alone in a solitude, like children without parents, in a home that seemed deserted, in which the amical rooms and halls had taken on a look of hardness and emptiness. What was most extraordinary is that they left no mementoes behind, no thrones, no mystic rings, no texts either of the soil or of the soul. It was as if they had never inhabited the earth.

To think “the end of the gods” is to undo typology. Evaporated, the spiritual realm is no longer the “antitype” of the shadowy “material world.”

In this paper I would investigate the logic of typology in the poetry and prose of Wallace Stevens. My discussion will draw upon Jonathan Edwards, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Henry Adams, Walter Benjamin, and Paul de Man.

Quendler, Christian

Markers of Makers: Authorial Self-Fashioning in the American novel

A curious relation characterizes authors and their works. Authors usually gain renown through their works and are correspondingly framed as “the author of . . .” Their works, in turn, are often referred to by their author's name, as it is the case, when we say “I'm reading James” rather than “I'm reading *What Maisie Knew*”. The name of the author thereby becomes a shorthand reference that, like a general title, stands for the author's complete oeuvre.

Taking this metonymical relation that identifies the text with its writer and *vice versa* as my starting point, I will examine the making of an author as a textual production. For example, the fact that the name of the author was frequently omitted on title pages of early American novels reflects the low social prestige attributed to writers of fiction as much as it indicates that fiction was a domain largely controlled by printers and publishers. The suppression of the author's name also reveals something about the conception of authorship and the aesthetics of the period. In contrast to the later romantic era, authors of the Early Republic were not so much regarded as creators of fictional worlds but

rather as compilers of allegedly factual material.

In this paper I set out to explore textual strategies of fashioning authorship in the history of the American novel. I will examine how novelists are framed *in* and *through* their works and spell out some of their social, economic and aesthetic implications. More specifically, I will analyze framings that occur in the paratextual apparatus (e.g. covers, titlepages, frontispieces, prefaces, etc.) and at the beginning of the main text (e.g. metafictional statements that differentiate between an author persona and a narrating figure).

Jonathan Edwards, *Images of Divine Things*, in *Works*, ed. Harry S. Stout (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), volume 11 ("Typological Writings"), p. 53.

Ibid., p. 61.

Ibid., p. 80.

Ibid., p. 101.

Ibid., p. 53.

States Benjamin: "Any person, any object, any relationship can mean absolutely anything else. With this possibility a destructive, but just verdict is passed on the profane world: it is characterized as a world in which the detail is of no great importance. But it will be unmistakably apparent, especially to anyone who is familiar with allegorical textual exegesis, that all of the things which are used to signify derive, from the very fact of their pointing to something else, a power which makes them appear no longer commensurable with profane things, which raises them onto a higher plane, and which can, indeed, sanctify them. Considered in allegorical terms, then, the profane world is both elevated and devalued," *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, tr. John Osborne (London: NLB [Verso], 1977), p. 175.

Wallace Stevens, "Two or Three Ideas," in *Collected Poetry and Prose*, ed. Frank Kermode & Joan Richardson (New York: The Library of America, 1997), p. 841.

Ibid., p. 428.

Ibid., p. 842.

Jonathan Edwards, *Images of Divine Things*, p. 62.

Ratner-Rosenhagen, Jennifer

"Conventional Iconoclasm: The Iconography of Genius and Madness in American Life"

This paper will explore elements of the iconography of genius in twentieth-century American life. The trope of the creative genius as madman (or woman) has had a long and vibrant career in Western thought, and this connection between the life of the mind and mental and emotional instability continues to figure prominently in American culture. In America, treatments on Beethoven, Van Gogh, and Sylvia Plath, to name a few, tend to celebrate this image of the artist-intellectual who is willing to forsake his or her health and well-being in the pursuit of knowledge, aesthetic purity, and higher ideals. However, as I will argue, what also is emphasized in the

American iconography of genius is the heroic image of genius as one who dispenses with the tepid aesthetics and the intellectual timidity of the crowd. What is exalted above all is not so much the thinker's ideas or the artist's new poetic vision, but rather, his rejection of inherited truth and canonical forms. From books, to movies, to magazine articles, the image which is most celebrated is the radical intellectual as destroyer of tradition, debunker of myth, and critic of custom. Put simply, the image of the mad genius as a critic of convention has itself become a conventional trope in American culture.

The aim of this paper is to examine the linkage between madness and genius, and genius and iconoclasm, by focusing on the American iconography of Friedrich Nietzsche. The interest in and uses of Friedrich Nietzsche's image and ideas in twentieth-century American thought and culture traversed the borders between professional intellectuals, middlebrow readers, and even popular culture. To Nietzsche's American readers, he exemplified the self endowed with an oversized capacity for creating, willing, feeling, and suffering. Though the multiple meanings of his thought and his person are varied and complex, common to most Nietzsche discourse is his monomaniacal dedication of all his life's energies to challenge cultural conventions. By exploring both the construction and cultural work of the Nietzsche trope, I aim to examine the contours and function of the iconography of genius.

Regalado, Aldo J.

Never-Ending Battles: The Contested Meanings of Superman

Clad in patriotic colors, flying across star-spangled backdrops, and never wavering from his mission to fight for "truth, justice, and the American way," the iconic comic book character of Superman is usually perceived as an embodiment of America's hegemonic power in the world. Understood in a historical context, however, Superman emerges as a more complex figure, the meanings of which are constantly evolving as he is employed by competing cultural voices in broader cultural debates over the nature of American national identity.

This paper attempts to more fully understand the formation and meaning of this American cultural icon as it developed over time. Starting with Superman's first appearance in 1939, this paper returns the "Man of Steel" to his Great Depression roots, where he initially manifested as an expression of anti-modern sentiment, railing against the capitalist foundations of American society, and challenging earlier heroic models that argued for the inherent superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race. The paper then proceeds to examine the ways in which Superman's unparalleled success, coupled with America's wartime needs, resulted in the character's more familiar lineaments, as he was co-opted into a more mainstream national discourse. Finally, this paper reveals the ways in which comic book creators since the 1960s have parodied, attacked, appropriated, or otherwise employed Superman's more mainstream image in the crafting of narratives that often question the use of American power both at home and abroad.

By examining the historical development of Superman, I argue that icons should not be understood in isolation, but rather in relation to other signs and signifiers appearing both in comic book fiction and in the culture more broadly. Furthermore, I hope to demonstrate that the meanings of popular culture icons are not static, but rather constantly in flux, as producers, creators, and audiences interact both within and without the marketplace, appropriating, re-appropriating, defining, and redefining these signifiers in attempts to navigate social and cultural discourse and to articulate

national and individual identities.

Reiter, Roland

"The Beatles Conquer America": Mass Media, Image and 'Instant Stardom'

As pointed out by Simon Frith, "all entertainment businesses are organized around the idea of stardom." While the mass media had always been crucial in establishing 'stars' in popular music, from Benny Goodman to Elvis Presley, the media hype surrounding the Beatles' first visit to the United States set new standards as to the promotion of musical entertainers.

According to official Beatles lore, the group was quite surprised by their instant fame and popularity in the States. In fact, however, the band's first U.S. tour was a carefully planned and executed publicity campaign, designed to attract and enthuse a mass audience via numerous media channels. While Capitol Records poured \$40,000 into a promotion campaign for Beatles records, the band's appearance at press conferences, on radio programs, television shows, and on stage shaped the public perception of the Beatles that is still prevailing today. Moreover, the media coverage of the Beatles' first U.S. visit lastingly shaped the image of the band as a key icon of the 1960s.

In my presentation, I will identify and analyze the rhetoric of stardom in the media coverage of the Beatles' first U.S. visit. More specifically, I want to show how a particular representation of the Beatles and their alleged "conquest" of the United States have become 'naturalized' by a general audience.

Requena, Teresa

"Gertrude Stein: The Making of a Celebrity"

In 1934, Gertrude Stein travels back to her native country after having spent thirty years in France. Upon arrival on New York city, both Stein and Toklas are treated like celebrities and Stein is established as the living icon of literary modernity. Such a process, is a most astonishing one if we take into account that, as Kellner has written, she probably was "the best known unread writer in American literature" (1). The paper wishes to explore the very process by which Stein became such a popular icon through her own biographical accounts, the accounts by those who met her and the long campaigns of ridicule and parody both of her writing and physical appearance in the newspapers. The paper will also analyze the ways in which her writing came to be associated with a certain view on modernism that linked experimentation with unintelligibility.

Reutter, Cheli

The Office of the Twin Towers; or, Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder

In my paper I discuss the Twin Towers as a cultural icon that has taken on great significance as an

absence. Since September 11 of 2001, the Twin Towers have come to function as a symbol for U.S. culture. The psychoanalytic explanation that the United States was “castrated” by the leveling of the towers might seem all too obvious. And yet, the dominant narrative of my national culture suggests that, far from being “bobbitted,” we have reclaimed the power of the phallus.

As Jane Gallop suggests, symbolic castration leads to anxiety about power. In equating the penis and architectural replications thereof with the phallus, we ascribe to them a generalized social authority—aka “phallic power.” When the penis or its architectural replication is “castrated”—as in the Bobbitt case and 9-11 respectively—we are forced to recognize that no single individual or institution actually *possesses* the phallus—and certainly not intrinsically.

And yet the leveling of the Twin Towers did not dislodge my country’s sense of its intrinsic global authority. In fact, though the initial narratives suggested an outraged vulnerability comparable to that of the infamous Mr. Bobbitt’s, later narratives (including support-the-troops campaigns) began to suggest a reclamation of phallic power even despite the insistence that the icon not be rebuilt.

The infamous Bobbitt remains in the memories of most of us as rather a laughingstock, despite the surprising number of women who offered to date the man after his altercation with Lorena. For a nation castrated, the stakes were quite a bit higher. So, too, the narrative has been more complex, contested, and evolving.

For New Yorkers, the idea that their seat of commerce has become a national icon—and the fact that Manhattan has come to represent America—is hardly a matter of straightforward syllogist. Some New Yorkers in fact resent or resist this cooptation. Still, somehow it seems that the Big Apple continues to be swallowed by a dominant national narrative.

The dominant narrative itself thrives by evolving. However conscious or unconscious this process, the narrative of the Twin Towers has altered from a narrative of castration to a narrative of self-censure (in Freudian terms, the development of the super-ego).

Lacan suggests that the power of a symbol is most precisely its power to dissolve itself into the object it represents. We have seen this phenomenon in Hawthorne’s most American of novels. Sacvan Bercovitch reminds us that Hawthorne only grants that “the scarlet letter had done its office” *after* the letter has burned its way into Hester Prynne’s heart, after the sign itself had been removed from Hester Prynne’s chest. Similarly, the Twin Towers, ablaze as so many of us still envision it, were also removed, even piece by dusty piece. Still, like Hester’s heart, the gravesite, and the sky in Hawthorne’s novel, Ground Zero remains as hallowed ground. *This* is the place, our newspapers and memoirs report, where we go to remember, and never to forget.

Rheindorf, Markus

When Cultural Icons Cross the Media Divide: Lady Lara Croft goes to the Movies

Despite or perhaps even because of her origins in Britain, both as a real-life icon and multi-media product and as a fictional character, Lady Lara Croft has become one of the most prominent fictional characters among contemporary US cultural icons. As Lara Croft (and the Tomb Raider games) are fairly recent and commercially produced and “controlled” phenomena, one might expect to find relatively clear cut answers to question as to how “she” came into being as an icon and who controls “her” shinning. More specifically I want to explore the relation of Lara Croft as an icon in her relation

to the mass media and how “she” and “her” reception has changed historically with her (repeated) crossing(s) of the media divide. Before the background of Lara’s intensive history of multi-medial mediation, the recent Lara Croft: Tomb Raider film will form the focus of my paper. Beside a semiotic analysis of the filmic text vis-a-vie the original game version(s) of Lara, I will be interested in analyzing the film’s reception by two distinct and recognizable discursive communities: film critics in the (U.S.) press and the game’s fan community. The perspective which will emerge from these concerns is one of Lara Croft as a cultural icon that is very much in the process of being contested and appropriated by a number of cultural forces, ranging from multi-million dollar film productions in the style of the Hollywood blockbuster to the individual fan writing a piece of what is called fan fiction on his or her personal computer.

Roush, Jan

Subversive Humor and Acid Wit in the Works of Sherman Alexie

Two of the most readily recognized icons in the United States today are the cowboy and the Indian. Whether expressed generally as in the above categories or specifically in the form of John Wayne, Geronimo, The Lone Ranger and Tonto, Gene Autry, Hopalong Cassidy, Crazy Horse, or Sitting Bull, these two images more than any others are emblematic of American culture and, more importantly, of the disproportionate balance of power between the colonizer and the native. From the time the first wave of colonizers hit the shores of what was to become the United States of America, pushing steadily west in an effort to tame the land, the cowboy has had the upper hand. What happens, though, when the colonized iconic group seizes control and subverts that icon for their own purposes? That is what is happening in the United States today. Increasingly, Native Americans are taking the tools of the colonizer and using them to achieve their own voice, their own power. Nowhere is this more evident than in contemporary Native American fiction and, in particular, Sherman Alexie’s fiction. More than any other Native American author today, Alexie has achieved a voice that has made the American public aware of just what it is like to be Indian today, the heir of centuries of colonization, and he has accomplished this feat primarily through humor.

It has often been noted that humor—subversive humor in particular—helped Jews survive the Holocaust. It might equally be said that such humor has also helped many American Indians to survive: acculturation, assimilation, annihilation, and, more recently, termination—and over a much longer period of time. How else could Native Americans have survived more than 500 years of attempts to wipe out two thousand indigenous cultures in the West? Nowhere is this more evident today than in the works of Sherman Alexie, who alternately plays anger and humor in subtly shifting waves against an often desolate backdrop of life on the Rez.

Did you know that in 1492 every Indian instantly became an extra in the Great American Western? Sherman Alexie

In contrast to the common stereotypes of noble savage, stoic warrior, subservient squaw or sexy Indian maiden invented by the dominant culture for many different reasons, Indians, like any other ethnicity, come in all shapes, sizes, political awareness and levels of intellectualism: “[T]he Indian is actually a very human person” says Stanley Vestal in “The Hollywood Indian” “—humorous, sexy.

sensitive, touchy and quick-tempered, a great gossip and practical joker, a born mimic, a politician from infancy, and an incorrigible lover of human society.” If one is to believe all the adjectives applied to Sherman Alexie—as a poet, as a novelist, a screenwriter, a biting satirist—Vestal’s description stands. But the qualities that are most often cited concerning Alexie’s writing are his acerbic wit and devastating use of humor in order to point out the painful injustices of everyday Indian life. “Being Indian,” Kenneth Lincoln notes of Alexie’s fiction, “means you’re hanging on for dear life, hanging in there with catastrophic humor, kicking back at sunset, staggering through the ‘49 to dawn, [and] laughing your ass off and on again.”

How do you explain the survival of all of us who were never meant to survive? Sherman Alexie

But survive they do; by bonding together, by humorously projecting onto a sterile society the inverted injustices they themselves so often experience, contemporary Indians survive, and Alexie is a master of such subversions. Vine Deloria says, “When a people can laugh at themselves and laugh at others and hold all aspects of life together without letting anybody drive them to extremes, then it seems to me that that people can survive.” Some would argue that Alexie pushes the borders of extremity in both his poetry and his prose, but none would argue that he does so effectively and that one of the major tools he uses to balance his often black viewpoint of contemporary Indian life is his subversive humor. What this paper will examine is how, in such works as *The Business of Fancydancing* through *Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* to his latest collection, *The Toughest Indian in the World*, Alexie seizes control of this major iconic figure of U.S. culture, subverting it for his own means to convey the perspective of Native Americans today.

Schaberg, Christopher

Brad Pitt and the Symptoms of Tense Iconicity

Do the cinematic characterizations of Brad Pitt shape or subvert American ideals? In the various deployments of this popular actor, we can read symptoms of a tense iconicity that resists settlement: Brad Pitt is an icon of cultural *tension*—what his characters mean (in terms of social, political, and philosophical implications) is never settled and often verges toward extreme ends. Through critical readings of Pitt’s performative personae, I will analyze three recurrent discourses that play out across a range of films in order to argue that Brad Pitt’s distinctly American iconicity (re)lies on unsettled ground.

On Wildness and Being at Home

Pitt’s characters often seem to exhibit a sense (however strange) of bioregional localism while they simultaneously express insatiable craving for power and agency—often to stereotypically macho-heroic ends. Films that trace this rupture include *Legends of the Fall*, *A River Runs Through It*, *Fight Club*, and *Snatch*.

The Death Drive: Unanticipated Terrorist, or Just Another White Guy?

In *Meet Joe Black*, Pitt plays the figure of Death—why should Death be depicted as The Sexiest Man Alive? In *Fight Club*, perhaps one of Pitt’s most overtly staged iconoclastic roles, his character Tyler Durden becomes the spectacle of this paradox: here is a desperate plunge into anarchy and

the annihilation of Western thought that uses hegemonic strength and ruling tendencies in order to undo precisely these modes of authority and control. Must U.S. icons be terrorists? That is, must popular iconicity always be capable of self-destruction, thus rerouting otherwise secure socio-cultural intentions? (*Twelve Monkeys* represents another apt point of entry into this discussion.)

Pitt's Native Others

In *Spy Game*, Pitt's character Tom Bishop is an American sniper in the Vietnam War who works with a Vietnamese sidekick—his "Tonto" figure. We see this theme elsewhere: in *Legends of the Fall* and *A River Runs Through It*, Pitt either dates or marries Native American women. How does the Other (portrayed as native friends and/or lovers) represent contested space around Pitt's characters? What does this suggest about either colonial inclinations or the problematic desire to constantly re-ground (re-settle, re-territorialize) U.S. iconicity?

Scheiderer, Sean

"Scientific Authority Through Iconicity in Popular American Diet Literature"

A comparative analysis of the icons created and exploited by two popular American books on dieting, low-carbohydrate Dr. Atkins' *New Diet Revolution* and low-calorie *Dieting for Dummies*. Sociologist Bruno Latour explains that literature becomes "scientific" "when the local resources of those involved are not enough [and] it is necessary to fetch further resources coming from other places and times," a rhetorical maneuver he calls "ally-making," while insisting that the making of scientific facts is thus always a "social" endeavor. Icons are both a product of and a tool for making such authoritative alliances, representing the identifiable--and therefore marketable--intersection of several interests, cultural vectors which may be working in tandem or in opposition to one another. Both these books utilize icons throughout, but this presentation focuses on just their covers, which alone display myriad attempts at authoritative iconicity. Low-carb guru Dr. Atkins himself (name, image, celebrity) has become an icon not only of rapid weight-loss, but of scientific anti-establishmentarianism, while the "...For Dummies" series and its related logos (e.g., "The Dummy") stand for popular understanding, i.e., the dominant paradigm. Such iconicity helps each book sell itself as authoritative, but also makes it vulnerable to attack, as they compete to make money as well as scientific facts.

Schwarz, Claudia

In Search of Keys: Music Performance in American Literature.

Jeanne Murray Walker brings it to the point in one of her poems: "How This World Needs Keys." My diploma thesis is an attempt at searching for musical keys in literature. The discussion of music performance in literature challenges traditional distinctions between the spheres of text, music, and the reality of the reader. The experience of performances as "live art by artists" and music as the most Dionysian art is always immediate, universal, and irreversible. Therefore, it conjures up existentialist connotations in context. The thesis is divided into three parts. The first one provides a theoretical basis and sheds some light on the general characteristics of performance studies and performance art, philosophical approaches to music, and the metaphysical meaning of music performance. The second part applies those theories in four literary texts: music performance as a means of expressing feelings, in Ann Petry's short story "Solo on the Drums"; music performance as a key to a more universal

understanding of Being, in Martin Gardner's story "The Devil and the Trombone"; music performance as a possible indicator of experience of life in Paula Huston's novel *Daughters of Song*; and music performance as a way to overcome an existential crisis, in Lynne Sharon Schwartz's *Disturbances in the Field*. Each text provides a key to accessing the dynamic field of music performance both on and off the pages, i.e. for the characters in the stories as well as for the reader. The third and more experimental part aims at showing how a piece of literature can itself be seen as a music performance, not only in its structure but also in the interaction of the characters in the story. The novel discussed is *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* by Carson McCullers. This is an attempt at ultimately breaking down the distinctions between a "fictional" reality and the reality of the reader, and should illustrate how they need and influence each other.

Schwelling, Birgit

Contested terrain: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as a lieux de mémoire

With the category *lieux de mémoire* Pierre Nora developed a concept for the study of collective identities. *Lieux de mémoire* are understood as replacements for *milieux de mémoire*, are symbolic realities that became necessary once experience and memory were not transmitted by traditional communities any more. Even if one does not share the sharp distinction Nora draws between history and memory, a moderated version of the concept proves to be a useful tool to analyse representations of collective identities.

In my paper I will apply Nora's concept on the case of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The history of the monument can be read as the struggle over collective identity of veterans who returned from the Vietnam war defeated, who came home but never really arrived back into society, and who demanded a symbol in the middle of what can be viewed as the symbolic site for what the United States as a nation achieved and for what their national identity is all about: The National Mall in Washington, D.C. I will show that the story of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is one of struggle over the representation of contested terrain: the idea of the nation, the soldier and the citizen.

Seago, Alex

The Kraftwerk-Effekt & DJ Culture : Towards an Analysis of the Deterritorialization of Pop in the 21st Century

Throughout the period of the Cold War the term pop was virtually synonymous with what Christopher Bigsby once termed American 'superculture'. However the past two decades have witnessed profound transformations in the ways in which pop is produced, consumed and distributed on a global scale.

Focusing upon an analysis of pop culture in general, and pop music in particular, this paper aims to trace the origins and development of contemporary cultural deterritorialization. Relying upon a theoretical framework derived from theories of cultural globalization and employing examples from key sonic texts, it will be argued that the diminishing global importance of Anglo-American pop music can be traced back to key cultural and technological developments in Central Europe and the Caribbean during the 1970s.

Smith, Tanya

Roadside Memorials: Pollution, Obsession, or a New Grief Process?

Over the past twenty years, roadside memorials and monuments have become common fixtures along most major thoroughfares and even many secondary surface streets across the United States. Families and friends honor the memories of loved ones lost in traffic accidents with anything from small, tasteful plaques to large garish displays that are refreshed for every season and holiday.

Law enforcement and public officials often dismiss these displays as distracting traffic hazards or unsightly litter, and employ special service details to remove them. Some members of communities view these memorials as obsessive mourning rituals performed by people unable to work through the grief process and move beyond the immediate loss toward healing.

However, given the frequency of such displays, perhaps these icons need to be investigated as an extension or grown of the grief process in the United States. My paper will explore the history of roadside memorials in the U.S. and the social significance of these icons as a part of the grief process. In addition, I will consider the resistance of some aspects of the community, such legal standards and some members of the social environment.

Sørensen, Bent

Sacred and profane icon-work: Jane Fonda and Elvis Presley

Based on some general theses - outlined briefly below - this paper aims to analyse collaborative and adversarial icon-work in two cases: Elvis Presley and Jane Fonda.

I propose that iconic representation of persons combines two modes of representation: It presents a stylised and sacralised image of the person. This duality originates in connotations of iconicity from two spheres of use of the term: The commercial icon or pictogram which works through simplified representation (i.e. is stylised), and the religious icon, which works through embellished representation and through symbolic detail (i.e. is sacralised)

Iconicity places us, as viewers and readers, in communi(cati)on with the person behind the icon, but, since we are not ourselves icons, a passive role is enforced on us as viewers or voyeurs - a role which we may resist, but are doomed to re-enact whenever we communicate with an icon. The relation between icon and viewer is basically unequal. Iconicity means a reduction of the person behind the icon (the iconic subject) to image, to object. Iconicity thus becomes a form of martyrdom as a reduction or translation from individuality to symbol. This causes problems for persons who become icons while still alive, since they experience an isolation from other people whom they only know as generic representatives of the voyeuristic gaze (the public, an audience – all un-individuated mass terms) and they must develop strategies for dealing with the public's icon-work.

From the religious connotations of iconicity we as public inherit the position of worshipper. The need for icons is an expression of our longing for something beyond our own subject-hood, a desire to idolise. This need is no longer fulfilled in traditional religious ways. but has become transferred onto

other manifestations of the extraordinary. From the industrial, service and information oriented connotations of iconicity we inherit the position of consumer. Both these positions are well served by dead icons, which offer no active resistance to commodification.

Icons, especially over-commercialised and over-familiarized ones, tempt people into actively resisting icons, e.g. by defacing them or tampering with them (slander, rumour-mongering, gossip, satire and co-optation are all possible strategies): The formerly passive worshippers become iconoclasts. All of these activities, however, ultimately serve chiefly to perpetuate the iconic person's status and longevity.

Elvis Presley (whom for the purposes of this paper we shall presume dead) offers a sterling example of posthumous collaborative and adversarial icon-work. Sacralised images as well as other fetishised representations of Elvis' body proliferate. Brief analyses of Elvis as saviour and as object of consumption in (un)holy communion will be supplied. In opposition to dead Elvis a still living iconic figure such as Jane Fonda can be read as a chameleonic re-inventor of self, strategically shedding layer after layer of her public personae: Barbarella, Hanoi Jane, Work-out Jane etc. All these past personae will be shown to remain in the public conscious as objects of fetishistic and adversarial icon-work, ranging from voyeuristic posters and web-sites devoted to Barbarella, via urinal-art depicting Jane Fonda in several of her personae, to tribute sites celebrating Fonda as an icon of eternal (sag- and wrinkle-free) female youth.

Stein, Daniel

Bebop's Politics of Style and the Changing Iconicity of the Black Jazzman

Jazz has been at the forefront of public attention in America since its very conception. First rejected as the ragtag noise-making of scandalous savages, then celebrated as a commercially viable dance music, and later regarded as the often politically and socially motivated self-expression of self-conscious African-American artists: The music and the cultures that surround and suffuse it have created an extensive iconography with the black male soloist at the center. The present essay examines the changing iconicity of the jazz musician by tracing its workings in a variety of contexts. Special attention will be given to the bebop era (circa 1940-1955) with its dominant investment with the politics of style and representation. Drawing on a number of sources (interviews, autobiographies, jazz magazines, book-length studies, the mainstream press), the essay investigates how the image of the bebopper has come into being, how the icon has served as the battlefield of clashing ideologies and understandings of jazz as culture and music, and how the image of the revolutionary, beret-wearing and drug-using musical innovator has been employed by critics, novelists, and scholars alike in their definitions of what exactly jazz and its players can tell us about American culture.

Significantly, current divisions in the budding field of jazz studies offer greatly differing conceptions of the iconicity of the black jazz player. In fact, writers and commentators such as Albert Murray, Stanley Crouch, and Wynton Marsalis whole-heartedly and proudly embrace Durkheim's and Parson's notion of icons as symbols of their nation's shared democratic values and history, albeit not without neglecting a large number of musicians, styles, and ideas that do not fit their agenda. As the far less reductive and ideologically invested work of Ronald Radano, Krin Gabbard, John Gennari, Scott DeVeaux, and Brent Hayes Edwards demonstrates, jazz music and its practitioners need to be situated among and within the many discourses and pressures (gender, race, class,

marketplace) that have influenced, and continue to influence, the status of jazz as both art and economic commodity.

Stein, Lisa K.

The Magical Mystery Tour of America's European Icon: Chaplin's Little Tramp, Isolationism and the Age of Free Love

This paper will examine the rise, fall, and rise of Charlie Chaplin's Little Tramp persona, a sort of "magical mystery tour" of a controversial icon of the disenfranchised and misbegotten in America in the 20th century. Thomas Burke, an author and early Chaplin critic, noted the iconic nature of the Little Tramp character, "Charlie" in his book *City of Encounters*, "Charlie was born fully grown, and is as static, and correctly static, as the figure of John Bull or Uncle Sam. We know nothing of his past or future, nor want to know. We realize that he has none. He lives all his life in the fixed and eternal present of the day of his birth" (144).

Often labeled "everyman" or the common man or the man of the people, the Little Tramp, a blatantly European character of the Victorian period, was adopted by American audiences as one of the first and longest lasting filmic icons. Chaplin reached the height of his fame in 1915, only a year after creating the Little Tramp character at Keystone Studios in Glendale, California and was able to sustain his success until the early days of World War II, a time in American history marked by a staunch isolationism with regards to foreign affairs. With the disappearance of the Little Tramp from the screen in *The Great Dictator* in 1940, Chaplin and his legacy fell into disfavor--a situation that resulted in his departure from the US in 1952. Because the Little Tramp had been cast out by "the man," the counter-culture of the late 1950s through 1970s resurrected the icon for their own uses and he became, once again, the herald-bearer of everything and everyone anarchic and anti-establishment in American culture and art.

Tate, William

Black madonnas. Readings on the heroic servant black madonnas

Let me put it this way: Have you ever gone to a cocktail party where everybody seemed to know everybody else and as you stood at the door and looked around you realized that you did not know a soul? Everybody there regarded you as an intruder----- some as something that the cat had brought in.

We feel like that guest, only more so, for we have not even been invited to the party.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

University of Cape Town

February 1983

This paper is a set of readings, findings, unearthings, and radical discoveries.

In the year 1999-2000, I participated in the architectural competition for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in Washington, DC. The project took me into deep researches of the American civil rights history, American slave history, and apartheid in South Africa. The project generated elements specific, symbolic, and mythological. The project work begs one to confront issues of race, justice, freedom, and peace. As we live it.

I found that I was working within a crucible of uncertainty, damnation, and courage.

Good for a royal flush. That is our time.

Our entry did not win, which only means that Washington is not the immediate place for it to be built. For the ideas had merit, too strong to let lie. I have thus taken them into the deep South. Into the places of origin of the deep researches. Alabama. Birmingham. Selma. Johannesburg. Soweto. In these places I have encountered three men who are historic figures in these stories of marches and oppression. And they still are involved. Now they are working on me, as an architect, as an American, as a believer. They call me to task. It is a state of subterfuge.

The three men are Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Dr. F.D. Reese, and Jonathan Daniels.

Archbishop Tutu needs no introduction. He is currently teaching at Emory University and living in the United States. Dr. Reese is a teacher and Baptist minister who was one of the principal leaders in the Voting Rights march from Selma to Montgomery. He was on the Edmund Pettus Bridge on Bloody Sunday. Jonathan Daniels was a martyred civil rights worker, whose death is commemorated annually in the Blackbelt of Alabama. His death and sacrifice still resonate for the people of that region.

The deep research has now gone beyond:

on Monday, 17 February 2003, I met Dr. F. D. Reese in person.

on Wednesday, 21 May 2003, I met Archbishop Tutu in person.

on Saturday, 23 August 2003, I will attend a memorial service for Jonathan Daniels in the Blackbelt of Alabama with his people.

The values I have found are those of integrity, risk, tenacity-beyond-hope, and radical vision. And each of these is based upon a definite spiritual perspective.

I propose to bring the experience, the meetings, and the questions to Graz. The paper will be a weaving of oral history, liberation theology, architecture, and stories of reconciliation. It will be about looking fear straight in the eye and saying No. That we may learn better how to serve, and how to overcome. How to endure, how to carry on, how to follow through, how to change.

The lessons here are profound; they anticipate the needs of our time. We are laden with lack, these three men are laden with fullness. As was the Madonna. Blessed art thou.

Oh that we may learn. That we may learn.

Cut out the cock-and-bull story about how you are going to change the system from within.

Be more honest and say you are in it for what you can get.

Freedom is certain and they are delaying the day of liberation when South Africa will be truly free.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

University of Cape Town

February 1983

Toal, Catherine

"In Search of a Gay Icon: Redburn and American Criticism"

This paper will propose that Herman Melville's novel Redburn strives to create a figure that can function as an icon for American homosexuality. It will argue that the novel's portrayal and treatment of the character of Harry Bolton, who fails to transplant himself successfully to America, represents a rejection of a European culture of aristocratic homosexuality and the kinds of social and economic relations which support it. The figure of Carlo on the other hand, serves as a celebratory and unconstrained focus for homosexual desire. An image or reference point rather than a character, Carlo is, like an icon, a repository for attachments and sentiments, and

becomes fully iconic in his final exit from the action of the book (standing to play "Hail Columbia" as he is "triumphantly rowed ashore"). My argument will suggest that Carlo's 'replacement' of Harry illuminates his general cultural significance: he signifies the fantasy of a homosexual economy which is purely aesthetic, free from class hierarchy and overtones of exploitation or power. I will consider the way in which this project in the novel has been neglected by recent American criticism, and the implications of this neglect for the relationship between class, aesthetics and power in American queer theory.

Tschachler, Heinz

***'In God We Trust' or, how the dollar bill represents the American nation -
an attempt in cultural iconography***

In C.S. Peirce's theory of signs, the relation of an icon to its referent is described in terms of similarity. As regards the dollar bill, it is, firstly, a representation of money in the form of paper

currency. Yet beyond representing something concrete, the dollar bill also represents something abstract, i.e., the United States of America or, rather, the American nation. The transferral of meaning is of course culture-specific. The phrase "In God We Trust" means "United States" or "America" only to those who know that it is the national motto. What we see on the dollar bill is, therefore, part of the larger semiotic universe that Americans are born into and that will largely determine the way they see the world around them. The cultural formation which fostered these depictions can be tied to the emergence of a central state authority in the nineteenth century. Then various elites in the employ of the central state engaged in designing (or "inventing") a "tradition" for the purpose of buttressing and sustaining an "imagined community," to borrow Benedict Anderson's famous phrase. As a congressman from Michigan remarked in 1863, "As surely our flag represents ... the unity of these States, just so surely, sir, do the United States Treasury Notes represent ... the priceless value of these United States." The Treasury Notes are a good example of the role of money in the production and reproduction on a national scale of the integration of people. Then, as well as before and after, the iconography of the dollar bill drew upon seminal images in the history of the nation - including personalities, events, classical images and allegories, and historical vignettes. Overall, the material symbolicity of the dollar bill is part of a coherent web of stories, events, national symbols and rituals which, taken together, represent the shared experiences in the nation's history.

Vågnes, Øyvind

Quoting the Zapruder

November 22, 2003 marks the anniversary of the assassination of John F. Kennedy forty years ago. Among the most famous pieces of documentary films in American history, the super 8 film Abraham Zapruder shot of the assassination remains - in spite of its brevity (it lasts a mere 25 seconds) - a repository of imagery that serves as a source for reinscription in almost every visual narrative of the event that has followed it.

My paper is a presentation of a selection of such reinscriptions into narrative, each narrative contributing to a manifold and complex cultural memory of the event. Among the narratives I will show images from (on transparent paper) are: a reportage in *Life* published a week after the assassination (Life/Time bought the film before it was developed); a book of charcoal sketches by Josiah Thompson, *Six Seconds in Dallas* (1967), which made *Life* ask for an injunction against Thompson on the claim that the sketches were "appropriated" from the film they owned; *The Eternal Frame* (1975), a filmed reenactment in Dealey Plaza by the performance collective Ant Farm; Oliver Stone's *JFK* (1991); a children's book, *A Picture Book of John F. Kennedy* (David Adler/Robert Casilla, 1991); two graphic novels, *Badlands* (Steven Grant/Vince Giarrano, 1993) and *The Red Diaries* (Gary Reed/Caliber Comics artists, 1997); a digitally enhanced commercial release of the Zapruder film on DVD, *The Image of an Assassination* (1999); mixed media images and poetry by Steve McCabe, *The Wyatt Earp in Dallas: 1963 Project* (2003).

The presentation will focus on how the meanings of the Zapruder film change every time it is reinscribed, and on the consequences of such image-quotation for the ongoing formation of cultural memories of the assassination.

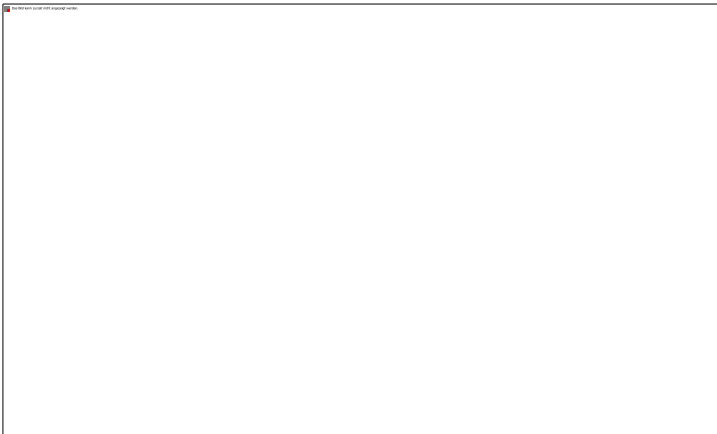
Van Oostrum, Duco

US Sports Icons: Cartoons, Ads, and Resistance

When Michael Jordan shares the basketball court with Bugs Bunny in the 1996 film *Space Jam*, what happens to MJ's iconic status? The entire film plays games with the icon Michael Jordan: Michael Jordan plays Michael Jordan; in-jokes about 'being the face of corporate America' are being performed in his face (for example: 'eat your wheaties and your Big Mac, put on your Hanes and your Nikes. You've got a game to play'). As a cartoon character, Michael Jordan stretches himself like a super duck to score the winning basket against the alien 'Monstars'. The Nike Ad, "I want to be like Mike," is translated into serious scholarship by Eric Michael Dyson (see his article, "I want to be like Mike: The Pedagogy of Desire"). Henry Louis Gates is puzzled by MJ's iconic status to unite an entire Nation and even to go global with the Dream Team at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. But rather than 'anchor the sliding of signification,' MJ's iconic status drifts from a safe corporate harbour. Even with the children's film *Space Jam*, there is a horrific cartoon of Michael Jordan as slave (the result of his addiction to betting, another cruel in-joke), suddenly not even resembling Michael Jordan but a badly drawn image of a black man.

American sports is too easily regarded as the great 'Americanizer,' able to dissolve any differences on and off the playing field, race probably the most visible one. Many clichés on the locker room walls read: 'there is no I in team.' Yet the sports stars themselves reflect multiple images from their playing ability, from their representative value, to those of the fans. Is it possible for an American sports star—the ultimate US icon—to have agency, to resist commodification and become three-dimensional? Are the stories of dreams, success, failure, super human ability always read in the hegemonic myth of US culture?

In this paper, I will examine the cartoon dimensionality of African-American US sports icons by reading three texts from 1996: film (*Space Jam* mainly), literature (Paul Beatty, *White Boy Shuffle*) and autobiography (Dennis Rodman, *Bas As I Wanna Be*).



Westwell, Guy

The Girl in the Picture: image icons and American cultural memory of the Vietnam War

This paper describes how the reporting of the Vietnam War in newspapers and on television results in the production of a number of vivid and powerful 'image icons'. Analysis will focus on one image icon in particular – an 'accidental' napalm strike on Trang Bang village in 1972 which resulted in news photographs, film footage and television reports showing a young girl – Kim Phuc – burnt by

napalm. This image-icon has had a significant impact in the shaping of the American cultural memory of the war in Vietnam.

The paper will begin by identifying how image icons such as these are always already positioned, or 'interpretatively coded', by the technological, institutional, and ideological preferences and practices of the American news media. Then the paper will offer a description of how the central position of image icons such as these within popular cultural experience of the war triggers a secondary process of representation in which the initial meanings are re-scripted in response to the changing needs of the present. In conclusion it will be claimed that through the use of this particular image icon and the telling of 'Kim's story' we are beginning to see a merging of competing representations of the war into a single icon which is able to reconcile some of the conflict so central to the Vietnam experience.

Wynn, Neil

The Black Boxer as American Icon: From Jack Johnson to Mike Tyson

The symbolic role of African American boxers is often acknowledged in literary and other writings. Individuals like Jack Johnson and Joe Louis for example stood as representatives of their race against the white majority and challenged notions of racial superiority in the ring. Both Johnson and Louis were not only heavyweight champions of the world, but significantly black champions. Johnson's success, applauded by African Americans, was hated by whites. While Louis too began as a 'black' hero his 'iconic status' shifted as he assumed, and was located in, the role of representative 'all-American' firstly by conforming to a public style acceptable to white audiences, and secondly through his public relations role during World War II. Muhammad Ali on the other hand, moved from the position of black hero to American and even international hero as a consequence of shifting racial and political positions and a retrospective iconisation. More recently, different responses to Mike Tyson demonstrate that the contested reading of the black sporting icon still reveals much of the racial divisions in American society.

This paper locates these issues in a broad historical/cultural interpretation of the different ways the black boxer has been 'read' by diverse audiences at various times, offering a barometer of the state of American race relations.