

Abstracts

Transitions

Race, Culture, and the Dynamics of Change

AAAS Conference

Nov. 5-7, 2004

University of Salzburg, Austria

Keynote speakers

Yetman Norman R.

**“Black Monday”: The Legacy of *Brown v. Board of Education*
and the Enduring Significance of Race in American Life**

May 17, 2004 marked the 50th anniversary of the U. S. Supreme Court’s *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision, the most momentous judicial decision of the twentieth century and, arguably, the most important Court decision in American history. The *Brown* decision declared that racially segregated schools were “inherently unequal,” and therefore unconstitutional, thereby marking the end of the “separate but equal” legal doctrine the Court had established nearly 60 years earlier, which had provided the legal justification of the system of racial segregation and oppression that was widespread throughout the U.S. South throughout the first half of the twentieth century.

The *Brown* decision represented the midpoint in a century-long struggle for civil rights by African Americans, and in many respects the history and legacy of the political, social, cultural, and legal issues it involved stand as a metaphor for and microcosm of American society in the last century. The tensions, struggles, conflicts, and divisions the *Brown* case elicited themselves reflect broader issues of the very structure and nature of American federalism and the Constitutional separation of powers, as well the meaning and reality of one of the most contested values—equality—in American life.

Although the specific issue with which *Brown* was concerned was education, the real issue was race. Although education continues to be one of the primary arenas in which issues of equity and equality that *Brown* raised are fought, the impact of the decision went far beyond the specific institution of education and had implications for race relations in every phase of American life. Therefore, in trying to assess the legacy of *Brown* one must be concerned with the continuing and enduring, albeit changing, significance of race in American life.

But for most white Americans, "race" means black folks or at least those who aren't "white;" for most of American history, "race problems" were, as in the subtitle of Gunnar Myrdal's 1944 classic *An American Dilemma*, the "Negro problem." However, *Brown* and subsequent efforts to address issues of race in American life aren't really about black people, they are about white people, the white majority who created the system of Jim Crow, segregation, and enduring caste, about assumptions of white supremacy and privilege, and about the enduring power of whiteness, even as the white population of the United States continues to decline and the country has become an increasingly diverse, multicultural society.

Madsen Deborah (University of Geneva, Switzerland)

Multicultural Futures: Subjectivity, Citizenship and American Exceptionalism

In this paper, I want to consider the ways in which the dynamics of "belonging" as an American subject have been constructed. I explore the ways in which specific American subject positions have been created through the deployment of the rhetoric of American Exceptionalism. This leads me to consider ways in which these constructions of the American subject have been critiqued by ethnic minority writers, who deconstruct one set of subject positions only to establish alternative but equally problematical sets. In conclusion, I suggest some directions for the further theorizing of American multicultural constructions of national and subjective identity.

Speakers

Adeleke Tunde (University of Montana-Missoula, U.S.A., e-mail: tadeleke@selway.umt.edu)

Gloracialization: The Response of Pan-Blackists to Globalization

The color line as a construct is deeply rooted in black American history. For centuries black leaders have invoked color as a strategy for combating the problems and challenges of existence in the new world. This racist paradigm is however increasing rendered superfluous as globalization expands the parameters of human encounters. Black cultural nationalists respond by rejecting globalization in favor of a gloracialization—a racially configured paradigm that glorifies race and is designed as a unifying umbrella for all blacks, regardless of geographical location, who share negative experiences associated with a common historical foe. This paper traces the development of the color line in black history and the conflicts and challenges generated by the advent of globalization, particularly in relation to the gloracialized Afrocentric world-view. It argues that globalization has compelled black cultural nationalists to invoke a countervailing gloracialized framework for survival against what is perceived as the hegemonic character of a European dominated world order. Black cultural nationalists view the global context as troubling, contending that globalization has rendered blacks susceptible to European hegemony. They urge a strengthening rather than weakening of the racial line, and the creation of a Pan-Blackist framework that unites all blacks in Africa and the Diaspora against perceived common enemy and challenges.

Albassam Alham (University of Kuwait, Kuwait, e-mail: elhamsam@yahoo.com)

Arab And English Poets' Attitudes To US Political Strategies in Middle East

The paper examines the images and attitudes of US in modern poetry in English and Arabic. These viewpoints are either in favor or against US strategies, dependent on the poet's political beliefs -regardless of the poet's race, religion, or culture. For example Harold Pinter (a well known British-Jewish –dramatist) attacks the war in Iraq in 'The Bimbs'. In another poem “God Bless America” published in the Guardian Pinter mockingly visions that the dead air becomes alive while breathing the smell of America, which recalls Merwin’s poem of the 1960s “ When the War is Over”. This title refers to a folk song from the western tradition sung by soldiers with its sad reference into the Vietnam war. In short, another two Iraqi poets Saadi Yousef and Dunya Mikhail who live in exile envisage to get rid of Saddam is never achieved but with the help of a Superpower. But they do not ask for war. Adonis of Syria also condemns US policy in the middle east. This paper is a comparative study of poems that has a socio-political theme that US plays the role of the world's god of war.

Armstrong Rhonda Jenkins (University of Saint Louis, U.S.A, e-mail: jenkinra@slu.edu)

Affrilachians and Hillbillies: Poetry and the Evolution of a Regional Identity

Popular conception of the Appalachian region, even within scholarly circles, is that it is isolated and uniformly white, with a unique culture stemming from the Celtic and Anglo-Saxon roots of its inhabitants. However, in the past decade, poetry and other literary works by African Americans from Appalachian have challenged the homogeneously white perception of the region, asserting an “Affrilachian” identity that is not a rare exception, as early narrators of the region had suggested, but a pervasive and vibrant sub-culture. In celebrating the racial diversity of Appalachia, this new sub-genre of literature also demonstrates the troublesome nature of trying to define and ascribe identity to specific regions within America. This paper explores how the works of poets including Frank X Walker, Patricia Johnson, Doris Davenport, and Nikki Giovanni help Appalachian scholars to enrich their conception of regional identity. It questions what parts geography, custom, and racial-ethnic identity play in the American idea of “regionalism” and considers the future of such regional identity in an increasingly mobile, globalized society.

Bowles John P. (University of Indiana, U.S.A., e-mail: jpbowles@indiana.edu)

The Racialized Self in Transition: Adrian Piper and the Myth of American Whiteness

African-American artist Adrian Piper has repeatedly staged her own racial transformation in order to unsettle the racist attitudes of her artworks' American viewers. Piper looks white but in her video installation, *Cornered*, for example, she tells viewers, “I’m black.” Over the course of the video the decision to call one’s self black or white becomes a moral issue rather than a simple matter of genetics or parentage. In the process, Piper casts the possibility of racial identity into doubt. Piper’s self-transformations figure the fears and fantasies that define the myth of American whiteness. Citing the unspoken “one drop” rule of racialized identity – according to which a person with only “one drop” of African blood running through his or her veins is considered black – Piper challenges the viewer of *Cornered*: “You are probably black....What are you going to do?” Piper stages herself as an object for inspection, but in a way that ultimately reveals less about the artist than about the viewer’s own attitudes towards race. She identifies miscegenation and folkloric accounts of passing as the founding crisis for a pseudoscientific race consciousness in order to challenge Americans to take personal responsibility for the history of racism in the United States.

Bugaeva Lyubov (Saint Petersburg State University, Russia, e-mail: Lyubov@gmx.at)

Migratory Artists and National Identity

Emigration is alienation both from the native land and from the influence of the native culture. The émigré who is separated from his former place of residence and has lost his former status is none other than the liminal (marginal) person as the emigration is none other than the rite de passage. However, intellectual or artistic exile differs from exile in general. The intellectual or the artist as exile often prefers to stay out of the mainstream; hence, a condition of emigration corresponds with his marginal position in the society. The question is: whether the term “exile” is politically correct at present? The notion of “unhomeliness of home” introduced by Homi Bhabha destroys the strict binary opposition of home and homelessness and makes problematic the boundary between the private and the public spaces. The nowadays experience when many people find themselves living in the situation between cultures, amid languages, across borders allows us to speak about hybridity as about the process that forms any culture. As a result, the situation “in-between” and the mobility of a marginal person in the rite de passage becomes one of the principal characteristics of the contemporary life. Besides, the boundary dividing into the insider and the outsider can be at work not only between two separate entities but within a single entity. The main goal of the paper is re-conceptualization of the notion “exile” in the connection with the notion of national identity on the basis of the exilic experience of migratory artists in the USA. The paper concerns works by Shirin Neshat, an American artist (a photographer and a film-director) from Iran, that serve as an example of differentiation of Eastern and Western mentalities and at the same time as an attempt to integrate Iranian experience into a new context and to re-conceptualize it.

Chanen Brian W. (Warsaw University, Poland, e-mail: chanen@asw.waw.pl)

Negotiating the Web: The Tension Between Cyberspace and Textspace in John Barth's

Coming Soon!!!: A Narrative

Critics from neo-luddites such as Sven Birkerts to champions of new media such as Stuart Moulthrop and David Jay Bolter have made it clear that modes of cultural production are changing. New technologies change the way texts (in the broadest sense of the term) are created and distributed. Whether or not new modes of production are embraced by artists, however, readers must adopt new strategies for negotiating the digital landscape. Contemporary philosopher Mark Taylor writes that the individual in the digital age, confronting new media technology, including the proliferation of the internet, is led to identification with, and a point of view focalizing through, various nodes or self contained digital spaces. John Barth's novel *Coming Soon!!!: A Narrative* can be seen as the portrayal of the complex moment of transition to a digital, web-based culture—one that crosses international borders but creates new challenges for reader self-identification and the navigation of text.

Dakovic Nevena (Belgrade University, Serbia and Montenegro, e-mail: danev@sezampro.yu)

Accented Cinema: Hollywood Balkans

The concern of this paper is to explore the representations of the Balkan and Balkan population in the Hollywood cinema. The analytical systematisation of the representations involves the range of titles – from Kazan's *America, America* (1963) to L. Davis *3. A.M.* (2001)- while the analytical focus is twofold. The

main one is to explore the dialectics of cultural interaction. On one side is the assimilation and acculturation of the Balkan immigrants (Four Friends, 1981, d. Arthur Penn etc.) and on the other is the change of America's co-optive pluralism toward multiethnic pluralism. The parallel although less evident concern is to trace the changes in the imagining and presence of the Balkans in the cultural and political imagination of the USA- from *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1937, d. John Cromwell) to *Behind the Enemy Lines* (2001, d. John Moore), *Running Mates* (2000, d. R. Largomarsino) etc.

Drabble John (Koç University, Turkey, e-mail jdrabble@ku.edu.tr)

The FBI, COINTELPRO-WHITE HATE

and the Decline of Ku Klux Klan Organizations in Alabama, 1964-1971

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's highly secretive and extralegal covert action program, known as "COINTELPRO-WHITE HATE," sought to "expose, disrupt and otherwise neutralize" Ku Klux Klan groups, between 1964 and 1971. This paper assesses COINTELPRO's effect on Klan groups in Alabama, adding an entirely new dimension to the question of how and why an important change in race relations came to one Southern State during the 1960s. My research is based on FBI files. Additional conclusions are drawn from white supremacist publications I acquired from a number of archival collections. COINTELPRO-WHITE HATE operations exposed and disrupted Klan activities, causing disillusionment, and creating factional splits within Klan organizations. They increased animosity among Klansmen, causing expulsions and defections. They discredited high-ranking Klan officers, many of whom were purged or quit. They caused resignation, frustration and fear among rank and file Klan members. This brought about drastic reductions in the membership rolls and the concurrent disbanding of most of the local Klan units in the state. In combination with criminal prosecutions, COINTELPRO-WHITE HATE vitiated all of the KKK organizations that operated in Alabama. Alabama racists adapted to the collapse of traditional frontiers between federal and local jurisdictions, and came to view the Federal Bureau of Investigation as one of their primary enemies. Alienated from the new social structures, hard core Klansmen modified their allegiance to the nation and its political system, infusing Klan ideology with revolutionary and utopian discourses of vociferous anti-Semitism and Christian Identity theology. During the 1970s, some Alabama Klansmen coped with chaos by embracing transnational discourses of neo-Nazism and Christian Identity and reinterpreted older discourses of paramilitarization and anti-Federalism. They made alliances with racists of different ideological stripes, metamorphosing into a revolutionary, "white power" movement.

Fleming Sherman (U.S.A., e-mail: shermanfleming@hotmail.com)

Self-Effacing: Chrono-Racial Politics of Prince and Michael Jackson.

Culling examples from a range of visual sources, from comic books, 20th Century modernist works to body actions/performance, Sherman Fleming conceives how looking and remembrance impact the ways we imagine Black performers. In this case, it is the identity erasure of Prince and the physical transmutation of Michael Jackson over time that challenges our perceptions about race, memory, time and representation of the black performative body. Prince and Michael Jackson, pop superstars that dominated the latter 1980's and early 90's evolved their distinct identities to create a new political model, having to do more with time than with location, what I define as a chronoracial politic. Prince, during his legal battle with Warner Records for recording rights and branding, dispensed with his name, and, instead, adopted a symbol by which to be referred. Michael Jackson, on the other hand, initiated in 1983, physical changes, resulting in a visage that in

no way resembles his former self. Questions of racial heritage and masculine impulse enveloped both performers at a time when issues surrounding identity moved to the center of racial and political discourse, proffering the question: What does it mean to be Black?

Gallego Mar (Universidad de Huelva, Spain, e-mail: stemar@teleline.es)

Revisiting the 50s and 60s:

Race, Gender and Class in Paule Marshall's *Reena* and Other Stories

The decades of the 50s and 60s remain crucial as a formative period to understand and make sense of the manifold changes that affected the lives of the African American community and, by extension, of the African diaspora living in the United States. In this sense, Paule Marshall anticipated many of the themes and modes that would characterize this period in her short stories, later collected in the epochal publication *Reena and Other Stories* (1983). At the core of these stories lies the need to account for the rampant racism, sexism and classism of the American society of the time, which she uses as the background for her female protagonists' search for selfhood and wholeness. By problematizing race and gender issues, Marshall delves into the significance of these women's liberation, especially of its shortcomings and failed promises. On the way, though, she is able to voice some of the most recurrent debates of the era: intracaste prejudice, interracial relationships, sexual harassment, difficult relationships with mother figures, failed marriages, ... basically presenting a quilt wherein it is possible to draw the contours of the price these women had to pay for their independence. Moreover, the analysis of the stories will provide the grounds to investigate the complex nature of Marshall's art as a story-teller, able to combine the canonical Western tradition with the Barbadian vernacular one. This mixture allows for a rich tapestry, where generic crossing and code-switching feature prominently in the stories. Drawing from diverse and divergent sources, Marshall's stories are imbued with a unique style that expands the very notion of short story and makes room for a whole range of possibilities that undoubtedly contribute to create an almost brand-new genre, the black diasporic short story.

Ganser Alexandra (Austria, e-mail: a9601650@unet.univie.ac.at)

RACING THE ROAD:

Nomadic Migrations in Diane Glancy's *Claiming Breath* and *The Voice That Was in Travel*

Claiming Breath chronicles a year which Diane Glancy (Cherokee/German-English), a major voice in contemporary Native American literature, spent mainly on the road travelling in Oklahoma and Arkansas. Both physical and spiritual travels are significant in Glancy's work, from *Traveling On* (1980) to the short-story collection *The Voice That Was in Travel* (1999). An important part in both "Western" and Native American cultures, the quest-narrative serves as an act of claiming cultural and physical space for Glancy's hybrid ethnic identity. Her claim to space becomes a claim to breath, to speak and write in order to create reality. The voices of Glancy's dislocated characters always articulate a sense of cultural displacement; likewise, the disrupted narratives formally reflect the broken context of contemporary Native American life. The nomadic migrations of the road warriors in the texts also invoke the collective historical trauma of the author's (sedentary) Cherokee ancestors, the Trail of Tears. In many ways, Glancy transforms this traumatic experience by re-writing movement as empowering and poetic: "Poetry is road maintenance for a fragmented

world which seeks to be kept together”; “in travel, in the act of migration, is the POEM.”

Gerhardt Christine (Universität Dortmund, Germany, e-mail: christine.gerhardt@uni-dortmund.de)

“The red aborigines, Leaving natural breaths”: Race and Nature in Walt Whitman’s Poetry

Walt Whitman’s poetry is well-known for its complex and contradictory views of racial and ethnic difference. At a time of major shifts in America’s racial politics—marked not only by Civil War and Reconstruction but also by Indian massacres West of the Mississippi—Whitman’s inclusive poetic vision frequently transcended mid-nineteenth century racial attitudes, while also expressing some of his time’s characteristic white middle-class prejudices and anxieties. What has so far gone largely unexplored is the way in which his conflicting views of race intersect with his multi-layered evocations of nature. Whitman not only wrote at an era of shifting racial perspectives, he also witnessed a dramatic change in America’s attitudes towards the non-human environment, and he frequently merged both issues in his poetry. In this paper, I argue that Whitman’s conflicting views of race and ethnicity are intricately linked with his equally disparate green visions in an overarching quest to come to terms with the nation’s many Others. Bringing together ecocriticism—environmentally informed literary analysis—and postcolonial theory, I explore how Whitman’s early, proto-ecological perspective as well as his later views that celebrate the exploitation of natural resources are critically undercut by the recurrent Native American presences in his poetry.

Heissenberger Klaus (Universität Wien, Austria, e-mail: klaus.heissenberger@univie.ac.at)

The Changing Geography of Race after “9/11”: Whiteness in Spike Lee’s *25th Hour*

Spike Lee’s film *25th Hour* (2002) is one of the numerous texts of popular culture that have investigated American identity in the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001. *25th Hour* does so in the fractured multi-ethnic and multi-racial cityscape of New York City itself. As Montgomery Brogan, the white male protagonist, wanders the streets of the city, American flags, New York’s firefighters, and Ground Zero itself are omnipresent. Circumscribing the protagonist’s geography of belonging as overdetermined cultural signs and sites of collective identity, they oscillate between the inside and the outside of the diegesis and thus situate the filmic text in the discourses of its cultural context. The threat of emasculation and the crisis of whiteness are two such discourses that have marked U.S.-American culture—and American identity—since “9/11” and that *25th Hour* takes on in an ambivalent way. In my paper, I will address the ways in which Spike Lee’s search for a viable American identity after the cultural break marked by the terrorist attacks articulates gendered and racial discourses of nationhood. While apparently confirming the deep-seated cultural anxieties that have come into focus around the trope of masculinity in crisis in the U.S. in the last years, the film uses this trope in an attempt to displace the geography of race in dominant U.S. culture. I will look at how the vision of American identity that *25th Hour* tries to articulate between nostalgic longing and utopian aspiration is based on an interrogation of whiteness as a racial category; and how in this questioning of whiteness the cityscape of New York serves as both the point of departure and the vanishing point of a geography of race and national identity created on the run.

Heller Arno (Univ. Graz, Austria, e-mail: arno.heller@uni-graz.at)

Glocal vs. global: New Aspects of Regionalism

In recent years there has been an increasing transnational, transcultural and transdisciplinary response to a rapidly globalizing world in American Studies. It has led to a strong interest in "global fiction", thematizing global mass culture, digitalized communication and the ongoing reduction of reality to the simulacra of the electronic media. On the other hand strong countermovements to this development have simultaneously emerged, pitting themselves against globalization from a regional, local, ecological, ethnic or personal perspective. It has created a strong demand for the non-abstract and immediate as well as a keen interest in the margins and losers, the pains rather than the gains of globalization. The central paradox, so it seems, is that the rapid homogenization of the world in the wake of globalization has triggered off a new wave of heterogenization by opposing the "glocal" to the "global". It is not just a return to earlier forms of regionalism, but expresses the grappling with a new cosmopolitan consciousness. The paper will investigate a number of recent voices in this context.

Hoople Robin (University of Manitoba, Canada, e-mail: hoople@cc.umanitoba.ca)

HENRY JAMES AND METROPOLIS: THE TRANSITION TO THE MODERNIST ETHOS

Henry James the traveller delighted in Europe. His sketches of favorite sites offered high praise for cities and landscapes that showed a deep sense of historical preservation reinforced by an immersed aesthetic. He visited the United States at the time of his father's and mother's deaths in the middle of the 1880s; but remained absent from that time till his acceptance of a commission in 1904 from Harper and Brothers Publishers to return to the United States to take and record his impressions. The new century was to become the century of American hegemony. James would take the American pulse and appraise its cultural estate. By using images and examples from his European travels, James could gauge the current condition of the United States and the transition it had made both during his long absence and overall from its beginnings. This paper witnesses James's methods and tools of measurement and describes James's means of predicting the development of the nation that became a superpower during the century. This paper follows James in describing the American transition from a producer to a consumer society with the eradication of history as its corollary, the America that we know today.

Hoople Sally C. (U.S.A., e-mail: dgramho@aol.com)

Frank Gehry: Transitional Architect

Inherent in the development of architect Frank Gehry's building style during the twentieth century is a transition from depersonalized, abstract, corporate architecture to the innovative, client-centered, subjective buildings that usher in the twenty-first century. My paper will address those changes in style, practical but creative uses of building materials, adaptation to site, and Gehry's restless search for new structures characterized by a startling instability. The paper will refer to the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, but the primary focus will be upon the Bard College Center for the Performing Arts in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, and on Ray and Maria Stata Center, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The construction of both buildings (Bard College started in 1997; MIT in 1998) has spanned

years of both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Julien Claude (Universite de Tours, France, e-mail: claude.julien37@wanadoo.fr)

Story, History, Consciousness:

Sherley Ann Williams's *Dessa Rose*

The chronology of Sherley Ann Williams's *Dessa Rose* straddles the Civil War, without so much as even mentioning the conflict. Fritz Gysin(*) has studied this erasure and the irony it implies from a literary perspective. The aim of this paper will be to approach Williams's rewriting of history from the consciousness of a hoped-for other (better) world that still has to come. Based on Pierre Nora's *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, we will attempt to interpret the characters' movements through the geography of the locale in order to construct a modern perspective.

(*) In *Red Badges of Courage*. Rivista di Studi Anglo-Americani, X-11, 1998.

Kettemann Bernhard (Universität Graz, Austria, e-mail: bernhard.kettemann@uni-graz.at)

A Critical Analysis of American Christian Fundamentalist Discourse

There has been agreement on the importance of “language”, as a hermeneutic key to various areas of human life and cultures since the linguistic turn in the social sciences and the humanities. It thus only seems consistent to approach the phenomenon of fundamentalism from a linguistic point of view. This paper thus aims to show what linguistics can contribute to the understanding of this complex, social phenomenon by using the methods of Critical Discourse Analysis. Three linguistic or discursive strategies are presented that seem to be prominent features of fundamentalist language and discourse: immunisation, polarisation and radicalisation. These three strategies are illustrated with exemplary analyses of text samples.

Laws Page (Norfolk State University, U.S.A., e-mail: prlaws@nsu.edu)

Witness to/for the Persecution:

Of Race, Religion, Mel Gibson and Stirred-up Passions

This paper touches on three different adaptations of the Passion story. The first is a traditional spiritual sung across Black America on Good Fridays entitled “Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?” The second is the Oberammergau Passionspiel, its checkered Rezeptionsgeschichte and some of its American spin-offs. The third, and my chief focus, is Mel Gibson’s controversial popcorn Passion, still stirring debate here in the US a month after its opening. In some ways, Gibson’s film offers to many millions of viewers a two-hour ‘witnessing’ experience comparable to the day-long theatrical experience offered to small audiences at tiny Oberammergau every ten years. But is this a time condensation (and audience expansion) devoutly to be wished? In the beginning was, of course, the Word – not only John’s, but also the accounts of his co-witnesses Matthew, Mark and Luke. The adaptation of the gospels into other genres has always been a problematic feat with its own complex hermeneutics. America’s divided response to Gibson’s adaptation reveals the way race,

religion and aesthetics currently divide our nation.

Lewis Robert (University of Birmingham, England, e-mail: r.m.lewis@bham.ac.uk)

The Louisiana “French” and Optional Ethnicity

Those who claim French ethnicity in contemporary Louisiana comprise several overlapping groups:

- * Acadian: descendants of settlers in Acadie [Nova Scotia] expelled by the British in 1755 and who arrived in Louisiana, 1765-1785
- * Cajun: those living in the 23 southwestern parishes designated as “Acadiana” by the state legislature in 1965
- * French: all descended from French-speaking settlers from Canada, France, the Caribbean, and Louisiana

Tourism needs an invented past. Since the 1960s, Cajun music and food festivals have provided the main stimulus for ethnogenesis, with COFODIL [Council for the Development of French in Louisiana] as the main agency. The “Acadians” have sponsored their own revivalist organization, the Congrès Mondiale, and various reconstructed Acadian “villages.” However, the “French” in the late 1990s have placed greater emphasis on broader groupings, especially celebrations for the Francofête that provides links with the francophone world and incorporates African Americans who dislike the Cajun tag. Even so, it is a “French” ethnic identity without a living language, because most observers believe that French has ceased to be a functional means of communication, despite the efforts of CODOFIL in schooling a new generation. Why does the “French” identification persist and become more pronounced as ethnic identification? The theories of Herbert Gans, Richard Alba and Mary Waters about the continuing need for a “symbolic” and “optional” ethnicity that centers on a remembered and expressive Frenchness are the most persuasive.

Mah Kai Wood (McGill University, Canada, e-mail: kai.mah@mail.mcgill.ca)

Architecture and Self:

Coloured Schools in Late Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia

Community, identity and location of Black Philadelphians were simultaneously fragmented and continuous in the nineteenth century. Situated on social, cultural and political fault lines, the urban landscape of African Americans was a politicized one. Through the distorting lens of race knowledge prevalent in the period, black citizenship was systemically inscribed and understood, in part, within the contemporary discourse on the “Black Problem.” In dealing with it, the Republican city of the preceding centuries was overlaid with other layers of spatial order which confined and segregated black bodies well into and beyond the late nineteenth century. The public school system was such an order. The boundaries and barriers limited movement, socially and culturally. Yet, inadvertently, they also prompted the creation of community and new subjectivities derived in part from the inexorable challenges, negotiations and contestations in the practice of everyday life. Using the black schools in the city—Coulter Street, J. E. Hill, Robert Vaux, O. V. Catto, Wilmot, James Miller and J. S. Ramsey—as case study, I explore their cultural landscapes, considering them from the inside and outside. Studying the coloured schools as material culture in relationship to the city of

Philadelphia, I focus on the formation of self and community through architecture. I examine three contexts to explore the architectural history of black schools: (1) the racial discourse on education of Black children and their schools, (2) the school building activities of local Black entrepreneurs and philanthropists and (3) the lived-experience of these spaces. Some of the pertinent questions are: What was the architecture of the coloured schools like and who constructed them? Can a study of the above mentioned cultural landscapes and archives recuperate experience of childhood belonging? What were the community initiatives in building its own educational institutions outside that of the dominant system?

Maierhofer Roberta (Universität Graz, Austria, e-mail: roberta.maierhofer@uni-graz.at)

The Endless Transition: Death and Dependence in American Culture

When Renée Rose Shield in her study of a nursing home in the North Eastern part of the United States comes to the conclusion that living in a nursing home can be understood as a rite of passage, where the individual leaves his or her old status behind (separation), enters a new world with like individuals (liminality), and eventually dies (reincorporation), she links this to an “endless transition.” Rites of passage and reciprocity are universal cultural forms that take on unique expression in the context of a nursing home. In 1908, Arnold van Gennep’s seminal *Les Rites de Passages* showed how rites of passage throughout the world have three parts: separation from the old status, transition (“liminality”) between the old role and the new role, and reincorporation into the new role. In this paper, I will explore the question of transitions in view of death and dependence. The traditional emphasis of American culture on the autonomous and independent individual and his/her search for identity in opposition to accepted cultural and societal rules, can be contrasted with new definitions of self. The need of an aging society to define individuals not only as independent and self-supporting, but also as necessarily relying on the help and assistance of others, reflects the challenges American culture faces to accept the final transition we face, that is the transition from adulthood to death.

Moen Ole O. (University of Oslo, Norway, e-mail: o.o.moen@iba.uio.no)

‘Enduring Freedom’ or ‘Infinite Justice’?

‘Liberty and Justice for All’ in Contemporary American Political Rhetoric

This paper will address some aspects of the modern usage of treasured terms in the traditional American political vocabulary—such as “liberty,” “equality,” “justice,” and “fairness”—in contemporary political rhetoric. I will argue that there is a strong tension between their current use and their impact in practical policies, which is clearly at variance with their traditional interpretation and, in fact, with alleged American values. My main emphasis will be on the presidential speeches and U.S. Supreme Court opinions.

Mulvey Christopher (King Alfred’s College, England, e-mail: christopher.mulvey@winchester.ac.uk)

African American Ambassadors in Europe:

Pre-Civil war race representations

African Americans came to ante-bellum Europe as Delegates, as Representatives, as Citizens, and as Human

Beings. As delegates, they attended Peace Conferences and anti-slavery Conventions; they lectured constantly. As representatives, they came as spokespersons for the African race and of Africa. As citizens, they came to establish that they were Americans; passports were not normally issued to them in the United States, but American passports were regularly be issued by consulates and ministries in Europe. These became important documents in the struggle for civil recognition on the return home. As human beings, they arrived in Europe to take part in the anthropological argument and to raise their voices against the claims of the American School as that was expressed in the racial theorists of Philadelphia, New Haven and Charleston. The focus will be on W. W. Brown, A. Crummell, F. Douglass, J. I. Gaines, M. R. Delany, Henry H. Garnet, J. W. Loguen, J. W. Pennington, L. Remond, R. Ward, W. J. Wilson, J. W. Pennington, J. M. Whitfield, J. C. Holly, and W. Nell. They were called "Public Men in Europe." That title conferred a burden as well as an honor.

Potter-Deimel Raeschelle (Austria, e-mail: a8808449@vienna.at)

Surviving the Centuries: Amazing Discoveries in Oral History

within a Native American *Intertribal* Community - The *Texas Lumbee*

Historical facts take on new meaning with today's generation of the Texas Lumbee through oral history. Descendants now reveal intricacies in cultural tradition, the migration of their patriarch and the development of today's intertribal community. Interdisciplinary research has afforded a broader scope of details through historical facts, performance of rituals - in marriage, birth, death, burial, etc., and linguistic analyses. Researching artifacts and regalia, rhythmic patterns with styles and formation, performed in Powwow competition, revealed surprising information. The debated early Roanoke involvement was established. Oral history identified several ancient tribal kinships while documenting their decentralization, an ongoing periodical migration, types of amalgamation and trauma of forced ethnic denial. Entities included in the Texas Lumbee community were historically recognized for being rivaling tribes, a fact which aided southeastern settlers with continued Indian slave trade. Their intertribal bloodline and tribal lineages cover regions from the southwest, southern plains, and the south to Atlantic coastal territories. As diverse as this Texas tribal community seems to be so are their religious and economic practices. They retain differences within a strong tribal union. Modern-day researchers are recognizing the importance of oral history within such intertribal bodies for new and vital information.

Rai Kul B. and David F. Walsh (Southern Connecticut State Univ., USA,
e-mail: raik@southernct.edu)

Sources of Racial, Ethnic, and Religious Diversity in the United States

Few large societies are as diverse as the United States. While the country was diverse even when it was founded, demographic changes accelerated with the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, which removed the preference to Europeans for immigration to the United States and introduced racial equality in this area. In 1960 the U.S. population was 88.6 percent white. In just four decades that percentage dropped to 69.1 and minorities—Hispanics, blacks, Asians, and American Indians—increased to 30.9 percent. Another major source of demographic diversity in the United States is varying birth rates of the racial/ethnic groups in the United States. While white birth rate is below the replacement level of 2.1 children per child-bearing-age woman and black rate is at the replacement level, Hispanic birth rate is nearly 3.0. Religious diversity has also increased, largely due to changed immigration patterns. Protestants continue to be a majority and Catholics are just under 30 percent. The largest increase is in the number of Muslims who are now as many as Jews. In

addition, there are adherents of Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism.

Rheindorf Markus (Universität Wien, Austria, e-mail: markus.rheindorf@univie.ac.at)

Transitions in early film theory: The politics of Siegfried Kracauer as émigré intellectual

While conventional accounts of the history of film theory portray Siegfried Kracauer as a “naïve” realist, this paper argues that, though there is a factual basis for this dismissal of his position, these accounts depend on a reading that thoroughly ignores the many contradictions that mark his writings. This paper will relate the major contradictions in Kracauer’s theory of film to transitions of his socio-cultural context: (1) in the 20ies and early 30ies, when his hopes for film to change society were confronted with the increasingly disillusioning political reality of the Weimar Republic, he wrote of film primarily as an “Esperanto of the eye”. This universal language, which he saw approximated if not realized in the mature silent films of Chaplin, would have facilitated an understanding between the peoples of Europe and prevented a return of the horrors of the Great War. (2) After barely managing to escape to the United States in 1941, Kracauer radically changed his conception of film as part of a large-scale pathologization of the “German national character”. This involved an effort to prove that there was – there had to be – something specific about “being German” that could explain the rise of Hitler, even make it appear as an inevitable consequence of the “national character”. Conceiving of film as the “soliloquy of the collective unconscious” allowed Kracauer to read the films of the Weimar Republic as the visually expressive language of the collective unconscious of the German people – a language which spelled in large letters the immanent rise of National Socialism and a coming doom. (3) Only in the course of the 50ies did Kracauer’s hopes for film as a form of social critique re-emerge, now carrying the contradictory meanings of “ideology” from the Weimar 20ies and the U.S. 50ies. As in the 20ies, the notion of film as the potential to “reveal” rather than merely “picture” social reality and thereby begin to change it, was tied to film’s montage capacities. During this last phase, both the “montage” principle and its political implications became the dominant “other” of Kracauer’s realist theory. Paralleling McCarthyism, Kracauer now read “montage” as an ideological contamination and manipulation of a neutral reality faithfully captured by the camera.

Rieser Klaus (Universität Graz, Austria, e-mail: klaus.rieser@uni-graz.at)

The Mainstreaming of Racialized Characters in Film

In this talk I would like to trace how processes of racialization and deracialization can be employed in a visual medium. Obviously, stereotypes and typing are intimately connected to visual clues, a fact which forms a particular problem for shifting the reception of ethnic characters. Nonetheless, in the last decades U.S. films have exhibited a marked transformation of the representation of race. Particularly noteworthy is of course the productions by ethnic American filmmakers. But also mainstream film has placed a stronger focus on ethnic characters – in particular African American and Asian characters, which used to be thoroughly marginalized vis-à-vis the central white male character. In my presentation I will approach this topic through selected examples, focussing on the effects these transformations have not only for interracial but also for gender relations. My claim is that gender is intimately connected to issues of racism – witness, for example the stereotypes of the feminine Asian or the Black stud -, and that, therefore, a change in racial typing also results in an upsetting of gender typing.

Schinko Carsten (University of Bonn, Germany, e-mail: cschinko@web.de)

From Soul to Post-Soul: Cultural Discourses beyond the Hermeneutics of Memory?

One of the most promising theoretical distinctions of the current debates within Black Studies originated in approaches to music. The post-soul era as proposed by Mark Anthony Neal and Kodwo Eshun soon came to designate a shift within the (self-)descriptions of the black communities as well as their location in society at large. While these commentators might differ in their respective interpretations, their combined effort can be seen as a call for more valid theoretical tools that openly confront the complexity of modern communication. Consequently, they reject the recurrent ethnic absolutism and cultural hermeticism and offer alternative readings of (Afro-)modernity which intend to challenge the categorical collectivism of the soul-paradigm without presenting yet another version of liberal individualism. Sceptical about the authority of the influential hermeneutics of memory (Gilroy) these scholars seek to avoid the fetishization of tradition as well as the pitfalls of a mere modernist New. After a critical delineation of these interventions my paper will analyze the potential of the post-soul-semantics as a general tool for theorizing black cultural articulations and its global dissemination. A concluding comparison with literature suggests that one of the preconditions for such a generalization is a heightened awareness for medial differences.

Seidl Monika (Universität Wien, Austria, e-mail: monika.seidl@univie.ac.at)

Cutting edge laughter

The young African-American artist Kara Walker (*1969) predominantly works in the medium of silhouetting, an 18th and 19th century art form then used for portraiture, caricatures and as a decorative craft. Her best known works are *The Means to an End ... A Shadow Drama in Five Acts* (1995), *Danse de la Nubienne Nouveaux* (1998) and the more recent installations *Darkytown Redux*, after *Anonymous* (2001) and *Darkytown Rebellion* (2001). Walker's explorations of the (hi)-stories of race relations in the United States are based on near life-size cut-outs of characters loosely relating to highly controversial images, such as images of mammies, pickaninnies and Sambos, which are usually simply pasted on white walls. Many critics, especially African Americans such as Howardena Pindell, accuse Walker's art of reinforcing stereotypes and of failing to offer any analysis of the present in relation to the past. My paper will address the humorous side of Walker's silhouettes and will argue for laughter as a spatial practice occupying a third place between the space of racial stereotypes and life space as lived experience. The grotesque images of blacks featuring in Walker's art are the exaggerated products of an appropriation of the stereotypical imaginings of nineteenth-century slave narratives. Offering a ludic perspective is pursued as a key strategy in the context of finding a space from which to criticise and to reflect upon irreconcilable social imaginaries. The stereotypical narratives form the historical backdrop to which laughter in a third space responds. Walker's irritating twist lies in her insistence on flattening out bodies as silhouettes thus depriving them of any space but laying them out literally as projections on a plane thereby emphasising the drama of whiteness and blackness in its 'true colours'. At first sight Walker's silhouettes seem to perpetuate a dichotomous coding of cultural difference, the third space of laughter, however, as will be argued, indicates a state of transition and exerts a disruptive force which comments on the politics of representation from within its stereotypes.

Spark Alasdair (University College of Winchester, UK. e-mail: Alasdair.Spark@winchester.ac.uk)

Symmetries and Asymmetries: Spectacles of 9/11 and the War on Terror

In an article in Le Monde in November 2001 Jean Baudrillard described the events of September 11th as follows: "To a system whose surplus of power does not allow any challengers, the terrorists responded with a definitive act impossible to duplicate." Both the attack on America and Baudrillard's comment matched (perhaps curiously) an assessment already made by the Pentagon that in the 21st century conflicts would fundamentally shift to so-called "asymmetric" warfare. This paper will explore the implications of 9/11 in terms of such and will in particular measure the attack in terms of its asymmetric power as a spectacle. It will then assess the response from the United States in terms of the major counter-spectacle, the "War on Terror." The Report of the 9/11 Commission writes about the desire of the plotters to create a terror "spectacular" (in fact the attacks were much less elaborate than early plans) but as Baudrillard implies, 9/11 succeeded precisely because of the peculiar power of its images to distress and dominate America after the application of so little effort. To understand this, it is necessary to understand that the power of 9/11 comes from another numerical index - "24/7" - and the way that media coverage of the attack, the live daily output of the America cable newsmedia, was exactly fed back upon itself in the constant repetition of terrifying images to the public, surely the true aim of the attacks. However, Baudrillard's observation cuts both ways and in the aftermath of 9/11 a number of institutional responses sought to displace, mollify or counter the attack with American media spectacles - charity telethons and commemorative events for instance. Most significant was President Bush's declaration of a "War on Terror" which can only really be understood as a counter-spectacular reply to the 9/11 attacks, not least in its creation of a climate of patriotic fear (or Homeland insecurity) disseminated 24/7 by the major news media. Furthermore, in this light, the War in Iraq and the "embedded" images which were its real output seem much less the discontinuity from 9/11 (or for that matter from the normal business of American news output) which critics such as Michael Moore have claimed. Appropriately, the response has been asymmetric again, particularly the kidnapping and then the images of the beheading of Westerners made public via internet video. But, the greatest asymmetry lies in the propensity of images (and people) to be beyond the control of strategy, as the unsanctioned digital photographs of Abu Ghraib revealed.

Stingl Stefan (Universität Salzburg, Austria, e-mail: stefan.stingl@sbg.ac.at)

Resonances of History and Representations: Hollywood Cinema and the Cold War

is an attempt to compress both the history of the Cold War as well as history related film studies into one piece of writing. It starts with giving insights in the origins and the history of the Cold War. The thesis later moves on to discuss the representations of history in general. Questions about the differences and commonplaces of traditional history and the historical films are asked and attempted to be answered. The last part of this thesis deals with the cinematic representations of the Cold War in special. The discussion of general problems with the definition of genre is followed by an attempted taxonomy of Cold War films. What is a Cold War film? Which films belong to this genre and why? The chapter defines the Cold War film genre and its sub-genres and ends in the description and taxonomy of two Cold War sub-genres – the Nuclear Anxiety films and the Red Scare films. The thesis cannot be seen as a complete compendium of Cold War films. It provides examples but cannot name every single Cold War film ever produced nor does it intend to. Cold War films did not stop after the official end of the Cold War in 1991. The sub-genres are overlapping and not concrete. A great variety of sub-genres does still exist and waits to be researched. This thesis can be seen as a starting point – an introduction in Cold War and film.

Szmanko Klara (University of Wroclaw, Poland, e-mail: klarka@op.pl)

The Black-Korean American Conflict in Chang-rae Lee's *Native Speaker*.

Chang-rae Lee's *Native Speaker* offers a comprehensive picture of racial relations in the present day "multicultural" United States. The first person narrator of the novel – a second-generation Korean American Henry Park- goes beyond the black and white binary, examining interaction between minorities of diverse ethnic and racial origins. Espousing critical multiculturalism, Henry emphasizes unequal power dynamics between all these groups. He says overtly "It's the uneasy coalition of our colours" (260). The conflict between Korean Americans and African Americans comes to the foreground in the patchwork of these interracial and interethnic interactions. A myriad of factors is at stake in the dispute between both groups: socio-political situation, identity politics, cultural differences, misinformation. All these issues are vital for full understanding of the conflict. Ultimately, however, white people bear the brunt of responsibility for fomenting the tensions. Chang-rae Lee makes it explicit that the white apparatus of power plays a crucial role in stirring up animosities between Korean Americans, African Americans and other minorities in the United States. *Native Speaker* does not present the United States as a promised land but as an "orphanage": "It's an orphanage and there is a fagin" (292). The "fagin" fuels the tensions between various ethnic groups, pitting them against one another. Guarding their own interests, they hardly ever coexist in smooth harmony. Their interests frequently clash. Henry concludes "It's the uneasy coalition of our colors" (260). Usually it is not a matter of accident that these groups find themselves in close proximity to each other. They are posed in their particular locations by the invisible cartographer. The presence or absence on the map depends on who is the cartographer. Neil Smith and Cindi Katz speak about an "absent" cartographer (70). The cartographer may be absent from the map, but he draws it posing people in particular locations. Similarly, whites are absent from the neighbourhoods inhabited by minorities. They are also invisible in the conflicts that flare up between various marginalized groups. Yet they are the ones who keep all these groups incarcerated in their particular locations, preventing them from living or doing business in other areas. An aspiring Korean American politician in *Native Speaker* –John Kwang reflects on the instigating role of whiteness and on different positionings of Korean Americans and African Americans by saying: "It's a race war everyone can live with. Blacks and Koreans somehow seem meant for trouble in America. It was long coming. In some ways we never had a chance" (181). As long as African Americans and Korean Americans battle it out among each other away from the white turf, "it's a race war anyone can live with."

Tate William (James Madison University, U.S.A., e-mail: denada44@hotmail.com)

Shifting the Pegs

architecture : authenticity : america : + beyond

Widen the space of your tent,
extend the curtains of your home,
do not hold back!
Lengthen your ropes,
make your tent pegs firm

Isaiah 54: 2

This paper is an exploration into awareness. We will present an analysis of present architectural education in the United States. Here we find a general vacancy, comfortability, fashionability, and digital sterility. This analysis comes from our respective roles as visiting design critics to various architecture schools, east coast, west coast, and middle earth. In response, we are working to re-define architecture and design as homeopathic arts. It is a call to subversion, surprise, and daring humility. How is this taught in studio? How is does one instill the thirst? How do we cultivate reaches beyond our normal domains? How do we break with habit and really see? How do we welcome the foreign? How do we overcome fear? **Shifting the Pegs** is about vehicles of change. The paradigm shift is upon us. Most institutional thinking is already archaic.

We must cultivate:

flux

the non-bureaucratic

suppleness

varying speeds of operation

fire

peace and all its tenacity

discovery

puccini

We are working on a geography of new tent pegs with much longer ropes. This paper will essentially be a study in ropemaking.

To be a dervish means to be a lump of sifted earth

with a little water sprinkled on top.

It means to be something that

neither harms the soles of the feet

nor leaves a trail of dust behind.

Ansari

Essential Sufism

Troshani Flutur (University of Shkoder, Albania, e-mail: ftroshani@yahoo.com)

"Convulsive Department": Splitting the Sign into its Recalcitrant Components

Complex linguistic and meta-linguistic interactions have veered the literary and artistic construct into more elaborate terrains and have helped to investigate and surmise the epistemological and endemic features of language. More significantly, they have helped to renew the old relations between denotation and connotation. On the one hand, denotation is the word's primary or literal significance, on the other, connotation ranges secondary seemingly important significances. Of many potential connotations to a fragmented text, the particular ones evoked depend upon the context in which the words are used, thus, the connection between connotation and denotation does not necessarily present rigid linguistic conventionalism. Specific texts carry non-sensical, and, often, erratic facets. Although ambiguous they cannot be ditched as nonsense. On the contrary, the sign being split into connotation and denotation, the two veering away from one another, allows for chiasmic readings of the text. The problem for analyses will be grounded on concrete instances from selected texts by Gertrude Stein and Stevens's "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird." My discussion, thus, is going to evolve cyclically from concrete examples into theory, with an ultimate focus on the former. This paper proposes an inquiry into the ways modern poets have fruitfully thematised the splitting of the sign into its componential elements, and how the essence of their texts depends precisely upon the unrestrained deployment of this fragmentation.