

50TH AAAS CONFERENCE 2023
VERSIONS OF AMERICA: SPECULATIVE PASTS, PRESENTS, FUTURES

Oct. 20-22, 2023, University of Klagenfurt
Preliminary Conference Program

Friday 20 October

PRE-CONFERENCE

9:30 AYA Meeting

Roundtable Discussion:

“How to survive a PhD without going crazy” – Thoughts on Academic Wellbeing

PRE-CONFERENCE

11:00 Fulbright Austria Luncheon

Two Decades of the Fulbright Prize in American Studies

PRE-CONFERENCE

13:30-15:00 AAAS Board Meeting

13:30 Registration opens

15:30-16:45 Conference Opening

17:00-18:30 Keynote James J. Donahue

18:30 AAAS Anniversary Reception

Saturday 21 October

08:30 Registration opens

09:00-10:30 Parallel panels

MULTIPLICITIES OF U.S. CULTURE: Indigenous Americas

Chair: James J. Donahue

Karsten Fitz, Pop Art, Activism, and Indigenous Futurism: The Visual Art of Ryan Singer

Katharine Wilson, Francisco Delgado's *Adolescence, Secondhand*: A Postmodern Rhetorics of Survivance

Nina De Bettin Padolin, Transatlantic Belonging: Early and Contemporary Mohegan Travelers in Madeline Sayet's "Where We Belong"

(RE-)VERSIONING PASTS, PRESENTS, AND FUTURES: Visions of American Pluralism

Chair: Sofie Sabbioni

Grit Grigoleit-Richter, Visions of Welfare: Poor Whites and Criminal Blacks?

Lee Rijn Tate, U.S. Pluralism: Intelligent Design or Accidentally All-Inclusive?

Kieran Sommer, “[T]he perfect national illustration of the unity and dignity of the human family”: Frederick Douglass’s Vision of the United States against the background of the “Chinese Question”

AESTHETICS AND POSSIBILITIES OF VERSIONING: Space, Place, and Geo-Perspectives

Chair: Joshua Parker

Robert Winkler, Cabin Fever? Conflicting Versions of America in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852), and *Walden* (1854)

Clara Petino, ‘Salem Literature’ as Memory Site: *The Crucible* and Katherine Howe’s *Conversion*

Matthew Wynn Sivils, Versions in Stone: Hawthorne’s Ecogothic Rocks

SPECULATIVE (CULTURAL) POLITICS: U.S. Cultural Mobilities

Chair: Alexandra Ganser

Éva Mathey, Versions of America Shaping Hungarian Diplomatic Efforts toward the United States between the World Wars

Marcus Gräser, American World’s Fairs in a Divided and (Dis)Connected World: Chicago’s “Century of Progress” (1933/34) and New York’s “World of Tomorrow” (1939/40)

Barbara Gföllner, Decontinentalizing the U.S.? Archipelagic Poetics of Mobility in Caribbean Poetry across the Diaspora

VERSIONING BEYOND THE HUMAN: Pasts, Presents, and Futures of Climate Change

Chair: David Callahan

Marie Dücker, Fragmented Future(s): Chronology and Space in Richard McGuire’s *Here* (2014)

Markus Schwarz, Evidences of an Otherwise Cosmos: Black and Indigenous Futurisms as Decolonial Praxis

David J. Cross, Global Weirding, Science Fiction, and the American Apocalypse; or the Past, Present, & Future of the Late-Anthropocene

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-12:30 Parallel panels

MULTIPLICITIES OF U.S. CULTURE: Afrofuturist Imaginaries

Chair: Juliann Knaus

Timothy E. Stroud, America the Wild Seed: Octavia Butler’s Speculative Versions of a Disrupted Past

Jeanne Cortiel, Afrofuturist America: Risk and Utopia in Black Panther Comics and Films

Charlotte Schmiegel, “All You Have to Do Is Know What You Want”: Failing Kinship in Samuel R. Delany’s *Trouble on Triton*

(RE-)VERSIONING PASTS, PRESENTS, AND FUTURES: West of the Rest: Trans-Mississippi Thirdspaces

Chair: Robert Winkler

Martin Gabriel, Smallpox and the “Empire of Remedies”: New Mexico, 1898/99

Robin Raabe, Where East and West converge: Fort Ross as a Multicultural Contact Zone

Stefan Rabitsch, “But all I know is, real cowboys is white”: Or, why Black Urban Cowboydom is Speculative and Afrofuturist AF

AESTHETICS AND POSSIBILITIES OF VERSIONING: Narrative Versioning Across Media

Chair: Nassim Balestrini

Christian Quendler, Poe and the Aesthetics of Versioning in Early Classical Cinema

Simone Francescato, Two Versions of America: *A Stranger in My Arms*

Karin Hoepker, Speculating in Intimacy – Chance, Algorithms, and the Future of Matchmaking

SPECULATIVE (CULTURAL) POLITICS: Aging, Caring, and Kinship

Chair: Iris van der Horst

Ruth Gehrmann, Medical Futures of America: Health Care in Speculative Fiction and Life Writing of the 1960s

Roberta Maierhofer, Imagining Pasts, Presents, & Futures: Ursula Le Guin and Speculations on the Human Condition: An Anocritical Approach

Katalina Kopka, “I’m Talking to an Appliance”: Speculative Cinematic Visions of Posthuman Eldercare

VERSIONING BEYOND THE HUMAN: Critiques of Environmental Degradation

Chair: Marie Dücker

Marija Krstic, Oil Extraction Culture and the American Novel: Reading Petrofiction as Risk Fiction

Andrea Färber, The Repercussions of Climate Change Affecting the United States in T. C. Boyle’s *A Friend of the Earth*

12:30-13:30 Lunch Break

13:30-15:00 Keynote Sylvia Mayer

15:00-15:30 Coffee Break

15:30-17:00 Parallel panels

MULTIPLICITIES OF U.S. CULTURE: Practices of Identity in Popular Culture

Chair: Roberta Maierhofer

Oleksandra Romaniuk, American Love and Romance in the Global Spotlight: International Adaptations of *The Bachelor* Franchise

Tatjana Klein, A Century of The Last Man Trope – Apocalyptic Depictions Female Presidents in Popular Culture

Georg Gruber, Lonely–Lost–Literally Me(n): Loneliness, Masculinity, and Internet Memes

(RE-)VERSIONING PASTS, PRESENTS, AND FUTURES: Blackness and Resistance

Chair: Timothy E. Stroud

Lena Elisabeth Leßlumer, From Trauma to Agency: Reading Lorde’s Version of America as Presented in her Life Writing *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*

Verena Adamik, Sutton E. Griggs and the Black Possibles

Andrin Albrecht & Hannah Schoch, *Nope*: Jordan Peele’s Versioning of the American Spectacle

AESTHETICS AND POSSIBILITIES OF VERSIONING: Colson Whitehead's Americas

Chair: Karin Hoepker

Jana Rosebrock, "Maybe America has never been great": Remembering an Alternative Past on Screen in Berry Jenkins' *The Underground Railroad* (2021)

Maria Wiegel, "Also, I am a real person": Colson Whitehead's *The Nickel Boys* (2019); or How to Write About Racism in a "Post-Racial" Era

Valentina López Liendo, Playing with Ambivalence: Mark Spitz as the Everyman in Colson Whitehead's *Zone One*

SPECULATIVE (CULTURAL) POLITICS: Prophecy, Conspiracy, and Post-Truth Discourses

Chair: Marcus Gräser

Péter Csató, Deconstruction, the Sokal Hoax, and Alternative Facts, or Did Postmodernism Really lead to Post-Truth?

William Tate, MONK'S EYES: Into Today – Thomas Merton and a New American Seeing

Sofie Sabbioni, 'Don't Say Gay': Anti-Queer Conspiracy Theories and Far-Right Visions of U.S. American Decay

VERSIONING BEYOND THE HUMAN: Speculative and Transhuman Futures

Chair: Jeanne Cortiel

Christian Perwein, Cyborg Futures: Fictional Transhumanism and its Influence

Iris van der Horst, A Transhumanist Version of the United States: Neal Shusterman's *Arc of a Scythe* Trilogy

David Callahan, Rearranging Ethnic America in *Horizon: Zero Dawn*

17:15-18:45 AAAS AGM

20:00 CONFERENCE DINNER (MAGDAS)

Sunday 22 October

9:00-10:30 Keynote Mahshid Mayar

10:30-11:00 Coffee break

11:00-13:00 Parallel panels

MULTIPLICITIES OF U.S. CULTURE: Nonnormative and Intersectional Identities

Chair: Ralph Poole

Christine Veloso Lao, Constructing Masculinities in American Drama: Theatricality in Sam Shepard's *True West* (1980) and Young Jean Lee's *Straight White Men* (2017)

Sandra Tausel, Reading Past, Present, and Future Motherhood in Torrey Peter's *Detransition, Baby*

Gregory Phipps, Escaping the Basement: Intersectionality and American Naturalist Literature

Ege Alperen Özbek, Fatherhood in the Wilderness: The Father-Daughter Relationship in *Leave No Trace* (2018)

(RE-)VERSIONING PASTS, PRESENTS, AND FUTURES: Storying the Nation

Chair: Michael Docherty

Patrick Adamson, Nation(s) in Making: The Historical Westerns of 1920s Hollywood

Ingrid Gessner & Angelika Ilg, Re-envisioning America's Frontier: A Speculative Journey through John Wesley Powell's Expedition to the American West and Jaclyn Backhaus' *Men on Boats*

Christopher Cameron, Secularism, Gender, and Black Women's Political Thought

Jonas Faust, Allen Ginsberg's Prophecy, Messianism and the Making of a Future America

AESTHETICS AND POSSIBILITIES OF VERSIONING: Transgenerational Storytelling

Chair: Verena Adamik

Lucija Periš, Ghosts of the Past: Magical Realism and Transgenerational Trauma in August Wilson's *The Piano Lesson*

Tatiana Konrad, The Legacy of American Slavery: Contesting Blackness & Re-envisioning Nationhood in *Kindred: A Graphic Novel Adaptation*

Kristina Seefeldt, The Civilian-Military Divide: How the US Military is Perceived Through a Multi-generational Lens in Todd Robinson's *The Last Full Measure* (2019)

SPECULATIVE (CULTURAL) POLITICS: Migration, Mobilities, and Modes of Belonging

Chair: Marijana Mikić

Klara S. Szlezák, Mary Antin's *The Promised Land* and Maurice Fishberg's *The Jews* – Two Versions of America as a Home for Jews

Julia Machtenberg, "Let's pretend your city // is Evanescence –" Agha Shahid Ali's Translocal Reconfiguring of the North American Continent

Philine Schiller, *Cooking Up America: Culinary Versions of America in Contemporary Chef Memoirs*

13:00-13:30 Closing remarks & Farewell

POST-CONFERENCE

13:30 Meeting of the new board