

JT Berlin Workshopliste

1. **Hannes Bergthaller (Taipei / Taiwan) / Christine Gerhardt (Freiburg):** “All the varied lands and all the growths and products”: The Economy of Nature, the Nature of Economy, and America’s Politics of Representation

“In the beginning, all the world was America,” John Locke famously proclaimed in his second *Treatise on Government*. Locke’s argument tied together the New World’s primal wilderness and the ‘natural’ right of the individual to accumulate property through labor. This linkage between physical nature and individual freedom not only became a defining characteristic of the symbolic and real *economy* of the US, it has also been at the heart of America’s complex approach to *nature* as symbolic system and living environment. Indeed, much of North America’s cultural and literary history can be reread as a history of shifting perspectives on this junction between economy, ecology, and representation, with each shift refashioning the basic assumptions of what environmental historian Rolf-Peter Sieferle describes as the “symbolic field” of the *oeconomia naturae*. Against the background of this tropological matrix, socio-economic and natural processes appear as metaphoric twins: while apologists of unfettered capitalism from Herbert Spencer onwards have cast economic competition as an extension of natural selection, environmentalist thinkers such as Aldo Leopold and Rachel Carson have critiqued the human despoliation of ecosystems by likening it to the disruption of liberal society’s capacity for self-regulation.

This workshop seeks contributions that explore the relationship between economic and environmental concerns in American cultural and literary history, and develop new models of thinking about how discourses of nature and economy have informed, mirrored, critiqued, or impeded one another. What has been distinctive about American representations of the economic and the natural world and the relation between the two in literature, the arts, philosophy, and politics? What happens when economy and ecology are considered to be disparate and even mutually exclusive fields of inquiry? How are notions of an original, natural language relevant for the representation of economic concerns, and how do monetary narratives of cost, loss and gain inform environmental narratives? Since economics and ecology function both as descriptive, ostensibly value-free and as normative, openly political discourses, questions about cultural representations of the two realms are ultimately also questions about the links between science, ethics, and aesthetics.

Proposals should be sent via email to:

hbergtlr@ntut.edu.tw and direktion@carl-schurz-haus.de

Dr. Hannes Bergthaller
Associate Professor
Department of English
National Taipei University of Technology
1, Sec.3, Chung-Hsiao E. Rd.
Taipei 106
Taiwan, R.O.C.

PD Dr. Christine Gerhardt
Deutsch-Amerikanisches Institut /
Carl-Schurz-Haus
Eisenbahnstr. 62
D-79098 Freiburg

2. **Sladja Blazan / Eva Boesenberg (HU Berlin): Money and Gender in North American Literature and Culture**

Gender is now generally understood as a social construction, but it is not always recognized that economics are a major factor in its constitution. In the mid-nineteenth century ideology of separate spheres, remnants of which still resonate in today's gender discourses, economics were defined as part of the male "public sphere" with which "true women" ideally had little or no contact. Yet, this compartmentalization, which was based on a white middle-class heteronormative model of the nuclear family, was already contested in the literature of the 1850s, for instance in Fanny Fern's *Ruth Hall* (1856) or Harriet E. Wilson's *Our Nig* (1859).

Since then, the nexus of money and gender has been revised in many different ways in North American culture – femininity and gainful employment appear to have become more compatible (as well as femininity and property ownership), while it is not yet clear to what an extent early twenty-first century notions of masculinity still depend on financial success. Since the role of the sole family provider is no longer accessible to a large majority of men (if it ever was), more flexible, alternative constructions of sexuo-economic relations are urgently needed.

If economics inform gender, the reverse also holds true. Gold and money have long symbolized masculine fertility, and despite the fact that Richard Nixon's termination of the U.S. dollar's convertibility into gold in 1971 officially established money as a symbolic system independent of any material substance that certified its value, money continues to be inscribed with distinctly gendered meanings. Wall Street culture in particular reiterates conservative discourses of male financial potency and female objectification.

The workshop addresses representations of money and gender in North American literature, film, and popular culture, with a particular emphasis on texts and artworks that revise established binary notions of gender. It explicitly invites contributions from historians and political scientists as well as scholars in gender studies and literary and cultural critics, for an interdisciplinary dialogue holds the greatest potential for elucidating the complexities of the subject.

Proposals should be sent to:

eva.boesenberg@staff.hu-berlin.de

and

sladja.blazan@staff.hu-berlin.de

3. **Florian Böller / David Sirakov / Jürgen Wilzewski (TU Kaiserslautern):**
Privatization of Security: Patterns of State-Industry Relations in a Post-Heroic Society

Since 9-11 the United States has been engaged in two asymmetric and costly wars with over 4,000 casualties in Iraq and about 700 in Afghanistan so far. Although U.S. forces outnumber and overpower any other military machinery in the world, there is an increasing number of *Private Military and Security Companies* (PMSC) and civil contractors supporting the U.S. military engagement in both theaters. The *Privatization of Security* has boosted a private security industry that conducts formerly exclusively state-run functions, such as training military personnel or protecting members and buildings of government institutions.

This development has led to considerable debate since the Bush administration officially proclaimed the need for privatized security after 9-11, and the scandal about war crimes by PMSC in Iraq broke out. Nevertheless, PMSC are working in battleground theaters worldwide. According to the *Congressional Budget Office*, civil contractors of the Department of Defense (DoD) made up about 50 per cent of the workforce in Afghanistan and Iraq in 2009. DoD spending mounted to almost \$19 billion for both theaters in the fiscal year 2007. Thus, privatized security emerged as a growing economic sector.

The issue of a privatization of security raises a number of questions from an interdisciplinary perspective. Seen from a political science point of view this development questions the traditional understanding of the state and its legitimate monopoly of force, conventionally a centerpiece of state sovereignty. Furthermore, there is the question of democratic control when security is no longer exclusively produced by state institutions.

There is also a lively debate on the causes for the privatization of security. Sociological and cultural studies are essential in identifying changing societal patterns that accompany the outsourcing of security by the state. This development might be an effect of a post-heroic society that drops its support for military endeavors which cause substantial loss of American soldiers. For policy-makers privatized security could help bypassing official casualty statistics. From an economic perspective it is disputed to which extent industrial actors should influence security decision-making processes.

The workshop encourages papers from various disciplinary perspectives on the *Privatization of Security* that challenges the traditional patterns and relations between economy, politics, and society.

Contact

Florian Böller/David Sirakov/Jürgen Wilzewski

TU Kaiserslautern, Politikwissenschaft II (Internationale Beziehungen/Außenpolitik)

Erwin-Schroedinger-Straße, Gebäude 57

67653 Kaiserslautern

Phone: +49 (0)631/205-4781 (Florian Böller)

Mail: boeller@sowi.uni-kl.de

4. **Christa Buschendorf / Stephanie Müller (Frankfurt):** Property – Belonging – Autonomy: Economies in (Neo-) Slave Narratives and Fictions of Slavery

The collective experience of having been part/the object of an economic economy, the experience of having *been* property, is a central issue in literature that deals with slavery and its aftermath. Often the texts explore the ambiguities of ‘belonging’ – the need to belong to a family or a lover and the dangers inherent in social belonging (such as between mothers and children); the humiliation of being someone’s belonging and the significance of holding belongings. A recurrent issue in this context is the symbolic power of language: whether legal, economic, or religious discourses. As a result, the texts often portray their protagonists’ struggle to gain autonomy and the strategies with which they try to undermine or subvert the logic of property – be it in slave narratives, (African) American historical novels (“neo-slave narratives”), or fiction of the 19th century dealing with slavery. What becomes apparent is that the end of institutionalized slavery usually did not mean the disappearance of this economy but its concealment. Thus both slave narratives and fictional accounts often depict the struggle for recognition in a remaining symbolic economy.

We encourage participants to concentrate on recent (African) American fiction that highlights legal and economic issues of property (e.g. Toni Morrison, *A Mercy*, 2008; Valerie Martin, *Property*, 2003; Edward P. Jones, *The Known World*, 2003). But we also welcome ‘economic’ readings of slave narratives or fictions of slavery, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Dred* (1856), or Frederick Douglass’s *The Heroic Slave* (1852).

Potential questions include, but are not limited to:

- How does the proprietorial logic affect kinship ties? If property claims can overrule kinship claims, is *belonging* possible? How is the ambivalence of belonging negotiated in literature?
- The logic of property was supported by a legal construction of human beings as chattel: what tensions, but also, what strategies of subversion do novels/narratives depict? What is the role of language and literacy in this context?
- Both autobiographical and fictional accounts of life in and after slavery often highlight the particular plight of women in slavery, whether it is the trauma of sexual abuse or the mixed blessing of parenthood. As a result, do strategies to gain and affirm autonomy differ between men and women in and after slavery? Is ‘freedom’ itself perhaps defined differently by women in slavery?
- Given the obvious paradoxes of the institution of slavery, does the status of slaves as property hold at all even during slavery? What are the conflicts that arise from the paradoxical construction of ‘human capital’? What are the means by which the holders of property try to maintain their status?
- In which way are narrative techniques used to reflect the logic of economy and the battle for recognition as well as the struggle of disengagement?

Proposals of 250-300 words, along with a short CV, should be sent to:

C.Buschendorf@em.uni-frankfurt.de

and

s.mueller@em.uni-frankfurt.de

5. **Thomas Clark (Friedberg) / Kristina Hinz-Bode (Kassel):** Moral Economy in the Age of the Market Revolution, 1815-1860

Ever since E.P. Thompson coined the term “moral economy” in 1971 to explain the cultural dimension of English working class protest it has become an important model for conceptualizing early modern economic discourses. At the same time, it has also come to serve as a normative paradigm for criticizing capitalism and the market economy from numerous perspectives (socialist, ecological, communitarian, feminist etc.). In US historiography the concept has mainly been applied to the colonial era in emphasizing pre-modern aspects of 18th century society and ideology, particularly the relevance of classical republicanism or civic humanist ideas in shaping Revolutionary thought, economic policies and crowd action during and after the Revolution and the long-term transformation of North-Eastern agriculture.

This workshop wants to raise the question whether “moral economy” should not also serve as a useful, perhaps even a key concept in understanding intellectual, political, economic and cultural currents in the era of the market revolution. According to Charles Sellers’ acclaimed study, this age saw the ultimate, if conflict-ridden, victory of liberal capitalism in the US and thus a fundamental transformation of American society towards its present-day shape. If “moral economy” is understood as a system in which the market is subordinated to non-economic norms and in which economic activity is seen as serving a supposedly higher end, this suggests a key role for the concept in resisting and questioning the market both as an autonomous sphere and as the dominant model of human interaction and existence.

We are particularly interested in papers that would broadly address the uses, strengths and drawbacks of a moral economic paradigm in the context of the market revolution: Is there a dialectical relationship between the two? Does the idea of a moral economy become a counter-hegemonic discourse challenging the market’s dominance, or does it rather serve as a secularized Jeremiad enabling this very dominance? Can moral economy serve as a conceptual link between political, economic, and cultural discourses? How would an application of a moral economy paradigm to the era of the market revolution feed back into redefining the concept itself and its present-day uses in political science and sociology?

Furthermore, we invite papers discussing the applicability of moral economy models in a wider range of disciplines and fields central to the period between 1815 and 1900, such as:

- women’s literature, gendered economies, and empowerment: is moral economy positively/negatively feminized; does it serve as a strategy for empowerment?
- transatlantic discourse: European societies as moral economies, transatlantic perspectives on American commerce and capitalist oligarchies.
- slavery: slavery as moral and immoral economy in pro- and antislavery writing.
- labor: the persistence of moral economy in artisan thought, early unionism, producerism.
- Jacksonianism: Bank War and expansionism as moral economic projects.
- Crisis: Moral economy as a response to the economic crises of the 1830s, 1870s, 1890s

Proposals, consisting of a brief abstract (no more than one page) should be submitted to **Dr. Kristina Hinz Bode, Universität Kassel, Georg-Forster-Str. 3, 34109 Kassel:** hinz-bode@uni-kassel.de
or to: **Dr. Thomas Clark, Leonhardstr. 21, 61169 Friedberg:** clark@uni-kassel.de

6. **Nancy Grimm (Jena) / Martina Wolff (Köln): Teaching American Economy in the EFL Classroom**

The image of America is closely connected to the perception of the United States as an economic force, which is either perceived directly, e.g. through companies, products or economic/financial politics, or indirectly, through cultural beliefs, values, and contexts where the merging of the economic with the cultural results in complex networks of meaning and dependencies (e.g. Hollywood cinema). Thus even 'outside' an immediate economic context or topic, the contact with American culture is constantly intertwined with the subtext of America as *the* capitalist society par excellence.

Astonishingly, American Cultural Studies in the German EFL classroom tend to neglect the importance of economic aspects. Especially in times of economic crisis this turns out to be doubly problematic: Not only is the relative neglect of economic core-topics regarding the US unsatisfying in itself. But the current crisis might bring about even more issues, i.e. a growing blending of anti-capitalist with anti-American attitudes, based on the sweeping and ever-repeated idea (at times even distinctly argued point) that the burst of the real estate bubble and the resulting financial market crisis in the USA is the sole cause of the unstable economic situation worldwide. In the EFL classroom teachers need to facilitate more differentiated assessments, which, of course, requires basic economic knowledge as well as a closer view at the various political and economic perspectives involved – American, German, global.

We therefore suggest the following foci & questions as guidelines for the workshop:

- 1. Assessment of the status quo:** (1) Economic core knowledge and competences in the current syllabus, textbooks, and in additional materials. (2) What contribution can already established contents in ELT like novels, short stories, poems or films make to the teaching of economy? (3) Examples from related fields (e.g. *bilingual studies*, *across the curriculum* work e.g. with subjects like social studies or politics).
- 2. Which topical cultural products are especially relevant in this context for German students and should be included in the future? How do they represent US economy/economies and its/their relation to culture and society?:** (1) Films and books which bring up, criticize or even explain economic aspects (e.g. widely successful documentary films by Michael Moore, others like *The Corporation* or *Lets Make Money*). (2) Respective contents of new media like YouTube films, blogs, etc. (3) Music: musicians often take on (or coquet with) an anti-capitalist stance, either via their lyrics or diverse aspects of their personal marketing (dress, shows).
- 3. Which role should the current financial crisis play in the EFL classroom in the future? (Contributions here may be either theoretical or based on practical examples.):** (1) Could this topic be an interesting basis for discussion in the EFL classroom or is the language of the world of finance too arcane in order to be understood by the average student? (2) Should we consider the inclusion of economic issues in the EFL classroom as essential, especially in light of the fact that schools play an important role in educating the future generation of scholars, intellectuals and decision-makers?

Please contact/send your abstract (100-200 words) to

Dr. Martina Wolff
Vertretung der Professur für anglophone
Literaturen und ihre Didaktik
Universität zu Köln

Englisches Seminar II
Gronewaldstr. 2
50931 Köln
Tel: 0049-(0)221-470-4641

Dr. Nancy Grimm
Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin
Lehrstuhl für Englische Fachdidaktik
Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena
Ernst-Abbe-Platz 8
07743 Jena
Tel: 0049-(0)3641/9-44533
Mail: nancy.grimm@uni-jena.de

Mail: martina.wolff@uni-koeln.de

7. **Christina Oppel / Anna Thiemann (Münster):** Commodifying Human Rights: American Economies of Life, Liberty, and Equality

In defining “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” as the “unalienable Rights” of men, the Declaration of Independence sustains the self-proclaimed authority of the United States to enforce their ideals and values, above all liberalism and free-market democracy, on a national and global scale. Aligning these with the fundamental principle of equality, the Declaration implicates ideally harmonizing, yet practically warring ideals. This workshop explores the internal discrepancies of the American human rights discourse as well as its commodification and precarious impact in the United States and abroad. We will address tensions between moral and market values and question the complex interrelation between human rights and their exploitation in a global economic context.

Historically, the American insistence on moral rights to life, liberty, and equality on the one hand and the instrumentalist pursuit of economic interests on the other has proven problematic and logically disjunctive. Current debates about American health care and environmentalism reveal that capitalist practices often infringe the fundamental right to physical integrity and survival. American slavery, expansionism, and ongoing military interventions serve as further evidence that economic interests and the defense of life and liberty have more often than not proven to be dangerously at odds.

Because of these contradictions, the United States have struggled to realign their pursuit of political and economic interests with their commitment to human rights and humanitarian concerns. In foreign politics, this conciliation has often been achieved by implying the necessity of global intervention for the protection of American and world citizens. Within the United States, the desired aim has practically been obtained by attracting human rights narratives and commodifying them for the American market. From the American slave narrative to today’s multicultural “memoir boom,” minority literature has become both a token of human rights commitment and an economic success. While the mass distribution of these narratives certainly helps to reach and potentially mobilize a large audience, it also runs the risk of banalizing humanitarian issues and equaling ‘active engagement’ with consumption.

The workshop will investigate the ambivalent nature of human rights commodification in American politics, academia, and the U.S. entertainment industry. Suggested topics include, but are not limited to the following:

- global political and economic contexts of human rights enforcement and denial
- slavery, imperialism, and neo-imperialism and their impact on the formation of global human rights movements
- economic interests and environmental (in-)justice affecting the rights of indigenous cultures (e.g. Native American cultural patrimony)
- interrelations between economic crisis and human rights (ab-)use
- narrative and media economies in human rights discourse and their enabling function
- human rights narratives as an effective counter-discourse to the political rhetoric of clean statistics and abstract distancing
- commodification of ‘minority literature’ and human rights commitment in literary and cultural studies
- impact of academic (funding) practices on opening or closing new markets for non-canonized genres and voices
- marketing of celebrity campaigning and field work aid

Contact:

Christina Oppel

Anna Thiemann, M.A.

8. Ilka Saal (Erfurt) / Ralph J. Poole (Salzburg): Enterprise and Drama: Performing Capital on the American Stage
--

Like no other cultural form and literary genre, drama is prominently situated in the public sphere and, in this manner, particularly exposed to changing economic, political, and social environments. Since, compared to Europe, American stages are, for the most part, notoriously underfunded, they are to a large extent dependent on the commercial success of their productions – and with this also on a certain affluence of its audience as well as positive mainstream reviews. And yet, despite such delimiting socio-economic factors, the American theater has since its beginnings in the 18th century frequently and fervently engaged the political issues of its times and pushed for aesthetic innovation. It has also been home to significant avant-garde experiments, such as the Little Theater movement of the 1910s and the performance art of the 1960s. In short, the precarious positioning of American drama at the intersection of art and commerce has been more than simply a cultural predicament; it has effectively enabled drama both to function as a sounding board for prevalent anxieties, desires, and hopes as well as to shape the direction of the political and aesthetic debates of its time. To be sure, it has been embedded at the heart of the American culture industry. Yet, as Frankfurt and Birmingham critics have shown, the culture industry is far from upholding a hermetically sealed ideology, but creates its own sites of resistance, contestation and transformation. In all these (and many other) regards, American drama merits our academic attention and scholarly investigation.

This workshop aims to examine the confluence and intersection of enterprise, art, and politics in American drama from two distinct but related angles:

a) Theater as Capital

How does the American theater (Broadway and beyond!) navigate the intersection of commerce and art in times of crisis as well as prosperity? How essential is entertainment/ show biz to the success of a production? What is the role of sponsorship? In what ways is drama produced not only *on* but also *off-stage* -- that is, in advertisement, theater criticism, and commercial byproducts (tchotchkes, musical CDs, film adaptations etc.)? How essential are prizes and awards (Pulitzer, Obie, Tony, Drama Desk, New York Drama Critics' Circle Award) to the making and unmaking of a show? Finally, how does the American theater push for innovation from *within, against*, as well as *via* these various socio-economic factors?

b) The Drama of Capitalism

How does American drama stage the economic and cultural forces of capitalism in their impact on individual lives and social groups? In what ways does it portray questions of class, race, gender, and sexuality in their economic contingencies? We are especially interested in papers that discuss the ways in which drama has explored the nexus between capitalism and ethnic/racial identities and relations. How have plays and performances changed prevalent perceptions of race and ethnicity? How do ethnic writers stage capital? But also -- considering the increasing visibility of ethnic drama in the American mainstream as well as the prominence of ethnic playwrights in national award nominations (e.g. Wilson, Parks, Fornes, Cruz, Hwang) – how are race and ethnicity, in turn, staged by capital?

We are interested in contributions that address these subjects from contemporary as well as historical perspectives.

Please send a 300-word abstract and short bio to:
ilka.saal@uni-erfurt.de and Ralph.Poole@sbq.ac.at.

9. **Bärbel Tischleder (FU Berlin) / Kirsten Twelbeck (Hannover):** Alternative American Economies: Gift, Theft, Gambling

If capitalism is a profit-oriented economy that is characterized by privately controlled means of production, free-market trading and commodity culture, this workshop is concerned with economies that are governed by different principles. The United States is often considered to be the foremost capitalist country in the world, and yet alternative economies such as gift-giving, theft and gambling are also salient principles of exchange in American culture.

Gift economies have traditionally been defined in opposition to commodity culture: anthropology (Mauss, Malinowski) has distinguished the gift as a non-western form of exchange, which establishes systems of reciprocity and thus helps to maintain social ties, from commodity exchange that is regulated by the market and constitutes independent acts of acquisition. Christmas, however, as a major American holiday, conjoins the social and cultural tradition of gift-giving and the year's principle shopping season. Another, entirely different North American gift economy is the Potlatch culture of the Haida and other indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast, where gifts were ceremonially bestowed on others in order to demonstrate and manifest the social power of the donor over the donee.

Theft – by definition the illegal act of taking another person's property – disrupts the logic of the capitalist market and private property. Associated, on the one hand, with violence and crime, theft has, on the other, the romantic aura of outlaws and folk heroes, who embody an alternative American Dream and fight for a more equal distribution of wealth: Butch Cassidy, John Dillinger, Bonnie & Clyde. An explicitly feminine version of romantically associated theft is the gold digger—a woman who uses her charm and good looks to extract money or gifts from men—immortalized in Anita Loos's novel *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and Howard Hawks's film adaptation thereof.

While the capitalist economy relies on a belief in corporate profit-maximizing and the endless growth of capital, gambling is a risky form of speculation with a similar goal, but a highly uncertain outcome. Gambling is associated with the promise of circumventing hard work and effort and of rising to the American Dream by a lucky shortcut. The epitome of this dream is Las Vegas, whose fake facades represent its illusory character. Film and novels link gambling with both glamour and compulsive behavior, addiction and financial straits, often presenting it as a metaphor for a particular American pathology and individual nightmares. In Native American literature, the casino or bingo palace assumes yet an altogether different dimension.

We invite papers that discuss these alternative economies from various viewpoints:

- Contributions might focus either on specific cultural texts dealing with gifts, theft or gambling or discuss the question of these 'other' economies from a comparative and/or theoretical point of view. Further questions that might be addressed are:
- How are specific economies related to specific cultural contexts?
- What role do gifts play as a gendered economy?
- How does theft figure as a principle in fictional treatments of American history?
- Which cultural (re)significations allow theft or gambling to become positive forms of social exchange? How do such practices figure in view of the current economic crisis?
- What roles do these other economies play in transcultural contact zones, for utopian concepts of community or in alternative visions of the nation?

Please send proposals to
Prof. Dr. Bärbel Tischleder
John F. Kennedy-Institut
FU Berlin
tischleder@ifki.fu-berlin.de

Dr. Kirsten Twelbeck
Englisches Seminar, American Studies
Universität Hannover
kirsten.twelbeck@engsem.uni-hannover.de

10. **Heike Paul / Sebastian Schneider (Erlangen): Utopian Economies**

Utopische Gesellschaftsentwürfe implizieren in der Regel den Entwurf einer alternativen Wirtschaftsordnung, die im Falle einer Eutopie der Referenzgesellschaft gegenüber als überlegen und gerechter dargestellt wird. Alternative ökonomische Ordnungen können allerdings auch, im Sinne einer Dystopie, auf Missstände hinweisen, die sich in der Referenzgesellschaft nicht oder (noch) nicht entwickelt haben. In jedem Fall sind die ökonomischen Grundlagen für das Funktionieren alternativer Gesellschaftsordnungen zentral. In der fiktionalen Literatur werden ökonomische Fragehorizonte besonders in der Gattung des utopischen Romans verhandelt. Zum Thema "American Economies" lassen sich, ausgehend von utopischen Romanen wie zum Beispiel Jack Londons *The Iron Heel* (1908) oder Ursula K. Le Guins *The Dispossessed: An Ambiguous Utopia* (1974), welche realhistorische ökonomische Ordnungen problematisieren oder alternative ökonomische Ordnungen darstellen, eine Reihe von Fragen ansprechen: Welche Wechselwirkungen gibt es zwischen fiktionalen und nichtfiktionalen, gleichwohl utopisch motivierten Texten (etwa den Schriften Charles Fouriers oder Karl Marx')? Wie beeinflusst einerseits utopische Literatur realhistorische utopische Gemeinschaften, wie fikionalisiert sie andererseits solche Gemeinschaften (wie zum Beispiel im Falle der Brook Farm und Nathaniel Hawthornes *The Blithedale Romance* [1852])? Welche Zusammenhänge zwischen Reformbewegungen (zum Beispiel den Knights of Labor), politischen Parteien (zum Beispiel der Progressive Party und der Populist Party) oder anderen reformistischen Diskursen und utopischer Literatur lassen sich diagnostizieren? Welche Hierarchisierungen von Differenz finden sich in den utopischen Entwürfen? Welche Rolle spielen *race* und *gender* in denjenigen alternativen Gesellschaftsentwürfen, die primär im Hinblick auf *class* 'utopisch' sind? Welche Wirtschaftsordnungen werden imaginiert, die auf anderen als kapitalistischen Strukturen beruhen (man denke hier an Ernest Callenbachs *Ecotopia*)? Welchen Raum nimmt die Konstruktion von 'Amerika als Utopie' in den alternativen Entwürfen ein? Wird ein *American exceptionalism* in den imaginierten Gesellschaften bestätigt oder in Frage gestellt? Welche transatlantischen oder transnationalen Verflechtungen weist der utopische Diskurs auf, zum Beispiel im Falle von William Morris' *News from Nowhere* (1890) und Edward Bellamys *Looking Backward: 2000-1887* (1888)? Diese Fragehorizonte ermöglichen eine historisch breite und nicht auf den nationalen Raum der USA beschränkte Auseinandersetzung mit "Utopian Economies", zu der wir literatur- und kulturwissenschaftliche, (kultur-historische, wirtschaftswissenschaftliche sowie politikphilosophische Perspektiven in Form von *case studies* und theoretischen Beiträgen – in englischer oder deutscher Sprache – einladen.

Kontakt: Heike.Paul@amer.phil.uni-erlangen.de
Sn_Schneider@web.de

The current economic crisis is significant for understanding not only how modern capitalism works, but also how economic values are determined in modern societies. In the last quarter century, economists and mathematicians have used all their mathematical skills to determine the value of everything that can be traded – from houses to debt to esoteric derivatives. Relying on large and hardly understandable systems of equations, they tried to quantify risk – in order to price it. Risk is the mathematical probability that a certain event will take place in the future. Since the value of all kinds of assets (equities, bonds, houses, art) depends on their expected future returns, the future and the speculation about it is central to the determination of value. But – as John Maynard Keynes noted more than 70 years ago – the future is not calculable, it is fundamentally uncertain. Thus, the value of assets depends on speculation on what will or will not happen in a time about which we do know nothing. The only way to imagine the future is through stories – our narratives. To a large part, economic value depends on those stories.

Only recently and only very hesitantly, economists are beginning to rediscover this role of narratives in the creation of value. Literary and cultural studies can help to analyze these narratives; by doing so, they can also learn to tap economic narratives as an important source of social and cultural insight.

This workshop, chaired by scholars in economic and cultural studies, is interdisciplinary in outlook and invites contributions by economists, sociologists, and political scientists, as well as scholars from the humanities. Papers may want to address the role of narrative in the creation of economic value or analyze economic narratives as resources for understanding not only the American economy but also American culture. Relevant approaches may deal with discussions of the role of narrative in economics (e.g. cultural economics) or the narrative analysis of representations of economic developments (from histories of the American economy to daily stock market reports in, e.g. the *Wall Street Journal*); from the perspective of the humanities, possible topics may include analyses of literary or media representations of speculation and/or of the way in which narratives create value.

Prof. Dr. Winfried Fluck
John-F.-Kennedy Institut
Freie Universität Berlin
winfried.fluck@fu-berlin.de
Fax: 030 838-52850

Fabian Lindner
Freie Universität Berlin
lindner@gsnas.fu-berlin.de

12. **Antje Dallmann (Leipzig) / Sunčica Klaas (HU Berlin): Economies of Health – Healthy Economies**

Examining the structure of contemporary economies in his ground-shifting book *Biocapital* (2006), anthropologist Kaushik Sunder Rajan calls for a re-evaluation of capitalism under the impact of biotechnologies and the life sciences in general. “We live in a world of rapid changes,” he contends, “many of which force us to ask afresh what we mean by the words that are an integral part of our lexicon, words like ‘life,’ ‘capital,’ ‘fact,’ ‘exchange,’ and ‘value.’” Thus, biotechnology contributes, according to Rajan, to a commodification of “life itself” as information (15-16). The analysis undertaken in *Biocapital* extends the premises of earlier studies focusing on modern notions of the body as intricately linked to economic conceptions of the world under capitalism, studies ranging from Marxist approaches dealing with the embedment of “life” within fields of market and production forces to theoretizations in a Foucauldian vein of the role of scientific medicine in modern societies. Taken together these studies provide us with a complementary new framework for understanding modern economies by forging the link between economy and life sciences in both material and symbolic terms. Incidentally, President Obama’s latest attempts to modernize the American health care system are also part of ongoing attempts to “heal” present-day American economy. In this very context, our workshop proposes to look at symbolic and “real” levels of the medicalization of society since the 18th century, its further transformation under the impact of new life sciences, and the growing influence of “biocapital” on discussions of the US economy. In this respect, papers are invited which address critical discussions and theoretizations

- of the link between modern society, economy, and medicine within literature, film, and other cultural narratives;
- the cultural work provided by generic fiction (such as mystery, hospital romance) in understanding and/ or naturalizing economies within medicalized societies;
- of the relation of medicine and economy in the work of canonized and non-canonized authors, with particular emphasis on issues of gender, race, and ethnicity;
- of sickness and health as metaphors of the “undesirable” and “desirable” body politic and economic: from the “yellow threat” with its relation to the “yellow fever” to “inflation”/“depression,” “consumption,” and the scare of “viruses” and “infection” to this day;
- of challenges to the stability of national borders and national economies under the impact of alien “germs,” “viruses,” and global biocapital.

Please submit proposals of 300 to 500 words and a short academic biography by e-mail to

dallmann@unileipzig.de

and

suncica.klaas@staff.hu-berlin.de

Dr. Antje Dallmann
American Studies
Universität Leipzig
Beethovenstraße 15
04107 Leipzig

Sunciča Klaas, M.A.
Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Unter den Linden 6
10099 Berlin

13. **Sascha Pöhlmann / Torsten Kathke (München): PGF**

The organizers of the 2009 Postgraduate Forum in Munich would like to continue the tradition of PGF workshops at the annual DGfA convention by inviting the keynote speakers to join postgraduate students for a group discussion.

The participants of the PGF in Munich have discussed possible improvements to the workshop, and agreed to move away from the format of direct response papers to the keynote speakers. Instead, we plan to address their lectures in a panel discussion that will allow all audience members to ask questions. Several PGF participants have already volunteered to prepare questions to set off the debate and more contributors are welcome; for this reason, we will ask the keynote speakers to send us their lectures in advance, which has worked well in earlier PGF workshops. The organizers of the Munich PGF will moderate the discussion.

Torsten Kathke / Sascha Pöhlmann
LMU München
Amerika-Institut
Schellingstraße 3 / VG
80799 München
Tel.: 089/2180 5820
torsten.kathke@lmu.de / poehlmann@lmu.de
www.amerikanistik.uni-muenchen.de

14. **Ingrid Gessner / Juliane Schwarz-Bierschenk (Regensburg):** Potentiale und Realisationen neuer Publikationsformen in der deutschen Amerikanistik

Innerhalb der letzten 10 bis 15 Jahre sind elektronische Publikationsformen zu einem integralen Bestandteil der Wissensgesellschaft und der Wissenschaftslandschaft geworden. Vernetzung, weitreichende Zugänglichkeit von Quellen (u.a. *open access*) und die Möglichkeit, Forschungsergebnisse zeitnah zu diskutieren, sind nur einige der unmittelbaren Vorteile des Mediums. Besonders der wissenschaftliche Nachwuchs profitiert von den Möglichkeiten des elektronischen Publizierens, sei es, dass erste Schritte auf das Terrain wissenschaftlichen Schreibens gewagt werden, sei es, dass über etablierte Nachwuchsforen und -konferenzen hinaus eine dauerhafte Möglichkeit des Austauschs unter *peers* geboten wird.

Das im Juni 2009 auf der Jahrestagung in Jena zum ersten Mal angebotene Forum „Potentiale und Realisationen neuer Publikationsformen in der deutschen Amerikanistik“ hat deutlich dazu beigetragen, den dynamischen Bereich elektronischer Publikationsforen im Bewusstsein der *Academic Community* zu verankern. Mit *ASJ*, *aspeers*, *COPAS*, *EESE*, *FIAR* und dem *Nabokov Online Journal* wurden sechs unterschiedliche Publikationen einem großen und interessierten Publikum vorgestellt. Insgesamt diskutierten zehn Herausgeber/innen und Redaktionsmitglieder und drei Respondenten miteinander. Den begonnenen Erfahrungsaustausch möchten wir in Berlin gerne fortsetzen. Die folgenden Punkte haben sich als zentral herausgestellt und sollen auf der Jahrestagung 2010 wieder aufgenommen und weiter diskutiert werden:

- Institutionelle und finanzielle Fördermöglichkeiten / Funding
- Aufbau und Ausbau von Netzwerken und Verweisnetzen
- Profilscheidungen: Print vs. Online bzw. hybride Publikation
- Potential von Publikationsformen mit besonderer Affinität zu Wissensproduktion und -vermittlung einer transnational ausgerichteten Amerikanistik (Podcast, Video, Wikis, Blogs)
- Akzeptanz, Nutzung (Zugriffsstatistik und Leserverhalten)
- Möglichkeiten zur dauerhaften Archivierung von Inhalten
- Besondere Herausforderungen bei multilingualen Publikationen
- Potential und Probleme von Publikationen, die eine Vielzahl an Genres präsentieren (Forschungsbeiträge, Essays, Interviews, Literatur, Rezensionen)

Die Veranstaltung soll den Stand der unterschiedlichen Publikationen nach einem Jahr abbilden und Impulse zur weiteren Vernetzung geben. Wir möchten alle Mitglieder ganz herzlich zur Teilnahme an diesem Forum einladen und würden uns sehr freuen, wenn weitere Herausgeber/innen sich angesprochen fühlen und ihre Publikationsprojekte im Rahmen dieser Veranstaltung vorstellen und mit diskutieren würden.

Wir bitten um Kontaktaufnahme:

Ingrid Gessner: ingrid.gessner@sprachlit.uni-regensburg.de

Juliane Schwarz-Bierschenk: juliane.bierschenk@sprachlit.uni-regensburg.de