

Organizing Team TU Dresden

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American Studies with a Focus on Diversity Studies

Institute of English and American Studies

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DeMarg

European Research Network
on Discourses of Marginality
and Demarginalization

DeMarg 5: Tracing Forms of De/Marginalization

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DeMarg 5

In its fifth installment, the European research network on discourses of marginality and demarginalization (DeMarg) is dedicated to tracing forms of marginalization and demarginalization, including aspects of centralization and decentralization. At Tu Dresden, Germany, we provide a three-day platform for questions of discursive dynamics and their formal manifestations.

The DeMarg Network

DeMarg is a discourse-analytically oriented network of five European universities in Finland, Germany, Poland, and Sweden. Our scholarly interests focus on questions concerning the discursive positioning of subjects and groups. In a variety of events, we focus on different social fields and promote plural debates about issues and practices of discursive (self-)positioning.

Gisela Febel

U of Bremen, Germany | Portrait and Self-portrait as a Means of Deconstructing Stereotypes of Alterity and Marginalization

BIO

Gisela Febel is an emerita professor of Romance Literatures and Cultural Theory at the University of Bremen, Germany, and founding member and ancient director of the INPUTS (Institute of Postcolonial and Transcultural Studies) and member of the interdisciplinary research platform WOC (Worlds of Contradiction). Her research focuses include postcolonial and francophone literatures, diaspora studies, contemporary novels and poetry, literatures of the early modern period, theories of modernity, the relations of literature and philosophy, cinema studies and the study of intermedial links between text and image, transcultural studies and transmedial questions of aesthetics.

ABSTRACT

Portrait and self-portrait as a means of deconstructing stereotypes of alterity and marginalization.

In this paper, I would like to discuss how the genre of portrait and self-portrait is used in contemporary photography, painting and performance art as a special means of (self) positioning. The reference to the traditional genre and its philosophical implications will be addressed by a phenomenological approach (Merleau-Ponty 1969) and the deconstructivist analysis proposed by Jean-Luc Nancy (2000; 2014; Meer 2021) who examines the practice of portraits as a way in to grasping the paradoxes of subjectivity. Thus, the portrait is suspended between likeness and strangeness, identity and distance, representation and presentation. In combining this approach with postcolonial critique, I will ask for the asymmetries between the painting/painted subject and the viewer, analysing especially the function of mimicry to create an irritating disruption between representation and (self-)presentation. As the genre emphasize self-awareness, self-presentation, and the social construction of the self and the other, these dynamics imply a complex relationship between invoked stereotypes of identification and their deconstruction by various artistic strategies. This process of disruption of the stereotype dialectics of the other and the real inscription of the other in the majoritarian perception habits (and symbolic discourse) will be demonstrated with regard to four artists: The US-American photographer Cindy Sherman (*1954), the Cameroonian photographer Samuel Fosso (*1962), the French performance artist Orlan (*1947) and the afro American painter Kehinde Wiley (*1977).

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *La Prose du monde*, Paris: Gallimard 1969, [*The Prose of the World*, trans. John O'Neill, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973; London: Heinemann, 1974].

Jean-Luc Nancy, *Le regard du portrait*. Paris: Galilée 2000, and id., *L'autre portrait*. Paris: Galilée 2014 [*Portrait*, Fordham University Press 2018].

Julia Meer, „Between Blindness and Touching. Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Nancy on the Self-Portrait“, in *Labyrinth* 22(2):60, February 2021, DOI:10.25180/lj.v22i2.237.

Anindya Sekhar Purakayastha

Institute of Language Studies and Research, Calcutta, India. | Dalit-Muslim Self-positioning for *Affirmative Sabotage* of Majoritarian India: Study of Shaheen Bagh, Bhima Koregaon Mobilizations and 'Bulldozer-Justice'

BIO

Anindya Sekhar Purakayastha, currently with the School of Translation and Cultural Studies, Institute of Language Studies and Research (ILSR), Calcutta, India has been a professor of English at Kazi Nazrul University, India. He was a Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies of the Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main in 2022. His recent co-edited and authored books include, *Deleuze and Guattari and Terror* (Edinburgh University Press, 2022), *Social Movement, Media and Civil Society in Contemporary India* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022). He is one of the founding members of the Postcolonial Studies Association of the Global South (PSAGS)

ABSTRACT

This project identifies recent inroads made by affirmative subaltern positionings to deconstruct Hindu majoritarianism in contemporary India that unleashes brutal sociopolitical repression to peripheralize lower caste Hindus and minority Muslims. It, therefore, attends to ongoing modes of internal decolonization that subverts the hegemon of coercive Brahminical Hindu supremacist epistemes. Mob-lynching of poor Muslims for their alleged beef consumption has been a regular affair in recent years in India – an act of barbarity, openly advocated by Hindu far right groups in the name of majoritarian cultural values, rendering the entire Muslim population in India into religious precarities, traumatized and threatened to toe the majoritarian discourse. The cow, considered a sacred animal and sanctimonious symbol for upper caste Hindus, they routinely legitimize the persecution of poor Muslims for alleged cow slaughter and violation of the Hindu codes of living. The new Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA, 2019) in India also allegedly targets Indian Muslims to otherize them as “infiltrators”/ “termites”, etc, generating fear of forced deportation and marginalization among the Muslims. All these attempts to fanatically Hinduize secular and pluralist India at the cost of its Muslim population has however reinforced Muslim selfpositioning, something that constantly sabotages attempts of majoritarian hegemony. Orthodox Hindu social engineering and violence have invoked complex forms of Muslim self-fashioning and self-assertion as witnessed during the 2020 Anti-CAA and Anti-NRC movement at Shaheen Bagh, New Delhi and at the Jamia Milia Islamia University campus and during the 2021 Hijab controversy in Bangaluru. This paper empirically analyses these unique archives of Muslim self-assertion that fortify the pluralist and diversity-oriented character of India. Similarly, Dalits, or the so-called “lower castes” of India suffer identical social precarity because of consistent upper caste domination over them, leading to murder and sexual assaults and other forms of stigmatization of the Dalits. The obnoxious Indian caste system however, failed to completely subjugate the Dalits who continue thwarting upper caste supremacy through literary and cultural self-assertion and political resistance, something that happened in recent times during the Bhima Koregaon protest movement in which Dalits were brutalized by the state machinery. As a strategic ploy, Hindu majoritarianism has recently glorified the ‘Bulldozer’ and traditional religious tools like the “Trishul” as symbolic majoritarian weapons in coercing Dalit-minority voices, using the Bulldozer as a potent tool of fear-mongering and state-bullying. Incidents of extra-judicial public demolition of houses and properties of poor Muslims to punish alleged illegal encroachment, flaunted the bulldozer and the Trishul as symbols of muscular state power of majoritarian justice to generate grand spectacles of liquidating all illegal miscreants/“termites” (read Muslims). Such macho majoritarian state oppression elicits collective Hindu upper-middle caste support and violates all legal norms. This paper enquires how Dalit-Muslim associations and digital solidarity platforms, Dalit literary articulations and legal activism have asserted their voices while confronting such regular regimes of majoritarian hegemony.

Jessica Aiston

Lancaster U, UK | My Wallet, My Choice: Resistance to 'Gynocentrism' within an Online Male Separatist Community

BIO

Jessica Aiston is a PhD researcher and Associate Lecturer in the Department of Linguistics and English Language at Lancaster University, where she also co-convenes the Language, Ideology and Power research group. Her PhD thesis investigates how users of an online forum of 'male separatists' justify and legitimise abstaining from relationships with women and holding antifeminist beliefs. Her broader research interests include critical discourse studies, argumentation, and language and gender online. She can be contacted at j.aiston@lancaster.ac.uk or on Twitter @jess_aiston.

ABSTRACT

Taking a discourse-historical approach to critical discourse studies (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016), in this presentation I aim to examine the discourse and argumentation of an online community known as 'Men Going Their Own Way' (hence MGTOW). As part of the antifeminist 'manosphere' (see, Marwick and Caplan, 2018), MGTOW argue that heterosexual marriage and relationships are toxic for men and consequently should be avoided. Based on qualitative analysis of data taken from Reddit, I critically analyse how members of this community represent themselves as a marginalised group in society.

Findings show that r/MGTOW users construct the dominant social order as that of 'gynocentrism' and 'misandry' (i.e., discrimination against men), as opposed to patriarchy or misogyny. In addition to the institution of marriage, I find that users also construct the workplace, academia, and particularly the legal system, as sites of men's oppression. Furthermore, users represented themselves as resisting the perceived feminist status quo. However, instead of calls to collective action (see also Wright et al., 2020), I find that users prioritise personal action frames. Rather than seeking to improve men's collective lives, users seek to improve their own individual lives and maintain their self-sovereignty through acts of self-care and particularly, through making consumer purchases.

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Oluseun Tanimomo

U of Ghent, Belgium | Effacing the Margins: On Focalization and Narrative Agency in *Òlòtūré*

BIO

Oluseun Adekunmi Tanimomo recently completed his doctoral research at the University of Bremen, Germany and is presently a postdoctoral fellow at Ghent University, Belgium. His research cuts across postcolonialism, environmental literature, migration literature, transnationalism and risk theory. Email: Oluseun.tanimomo@ugent.be.

ABSTRACT

EbonyLife Media's 2019 movie, *Òlòtūré* (directed by Kenneth Gyang), attempts to show the horrifying details of human trafficking from Nigeria to European countries by depicting some exploitative and violent aspects of sex work. Reacting to the film, several reviewers have commented that the spatial settings, the lifeworld of the sex workers, and their linguistic profiles are depicted as closely as possible to 'real life' situations. However, in aiming to achieve a true-to-life account of sex work through events that are sympathetic to an undercover journalist, the movie arguably fails to capture adequately the voices and experiences of sex workers. I argue that this is an act of cinematic silencing that opens up the sex worker characters to the voyeuristic gaze of the viewers while intensifying empathetic affect for the eponymous journalist character, *Òlòtūré*. Considering the movie in terms of a structuralist narratological analysis, my paper will examine the implications of characterization and focalization to argue that this representation raises an ethical conundrum on who can narrate and on whose behalf the narration is. Essentially, camera angles like close-ups and medium shots are deployed majorly to heighten empathetic affect for the titular character *Òlòtūré* who, primarily, is not a sex worker. This formal filmic positioning has implications that bear on the fungibility of sex workers, class dynamics, and raises questions on the 'mournability' of certain subjects. It will be demonstrated that erasure is here a form of marginalization as the formal components of the text center a middle-class, adventurous journalist character as an impulse to arouse moralistic spectatorial pathos. Within the lines of purportedly raising awareness against sex work and the formal de-centralization of 'real' sex worker characters in movie time, the contradictions that ensue arouse discursive inequality about lives that (do not) matter.

Alessandra Ferrini

U of the Arts London, UK | Gaddafi in Rome: Dissecting a Neo-colonial Spectacle. On Presence, Enunciation, and Positioning through Essayistic Practice-based Research

BIO

Alessandra Ferrini is a London-based artist, PhD candidate at the University of the Arts London, Research Fellow at the British School at Rome. Experimenting with the expansion and hybridization of the documentary film, her research questions the legacies of Italian colonialism and Fascism. She has exhibited internationally, including: Manifesta 13 Les Parallels du Sud, Sharjah Film Platform, Villa Romana, 2nd Lagos Biennial, Istanbul Biennial's collateral at Depo, Manifesta 12 Film Programme. She is the winner of the Maxxi Bvlgari Prize 2022 and was the recipient of the 2017 London Film Festival's Experimenta Pitch Award. Her writing has been published on the Journal of Visual Culture, Harun Farocki Institut, by Sternberg Press and Manchester University

ABSTRACT

As part of my practice-based PhD project – Gaddafi in Rome: Dissecting a Neo-colonial Spectacle I am working towards the realisation of a feature-length essay film, through a series of media translation experiments: a performance-lecture (Gaddafi in Rome: the Expanded Script, 2019) and an installation (Gaddafi in Rome: Notes for a Film, 2022).¹ The project attempts to devise a set of tactics for the dissection of a twenty-first century media event that spectacularised neo-colonial relations between Italy and Libya. It strives to deploy how the essayistic – with its hybrid format relying on performativity, reflexivity and fragmentation – can shed light on the temporal structure and afterlife of contemporary, instantaneous news forms, to address the gaps and lacks inherent to this news format when Gaddafi visited Rome in 2009. This process of investigation employs Critical Discourse Analysis and Foucault's genealogical method (a 'methodology of suspicion and critique'² of systems of power) in order to unpack the news updates and create a counter-narration focused on unveiling colonial continuities and the manipulation of History at its basis. To this end, I am devising a strategy that is inspired by the early history of medical public dissection, a practice that is inherently performative and discursive but also reflexive, analytical, and fragmented – thus sharing many of the characteristics and concerns of the essayistic. In particular, dissection (as a strategy) allows to explore the tension between the topical (the news and its spectacle's surface) and the systemic (neo-colonial politics and colonial memory). Building on and departing from the roles of enunciation and presence in late medieval public dissection, I wish to unpack the way my positionality has affected the research process and the way it has led to the development of a situated and selfreflexive voiceover that engages with decolonial and critical whiteness studies.

¹ You can access the full documentation installation here: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/9884253> PASSWORD: omar

² Bowman, B. (2007). "Foucault's 'philosophy of the event': Genealogical Method and the Deployment of the Abnormal". In: *Foucault, Psychology and the Analytics of Power. Critical Theory and Practice in Psychology and the Human Sciences*. Palgrave Macmillan, London. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230592322_5

³ I have previously reflected on questions of whiteness in the colonial archive in: Ferrini, A. (2020). "(Re)Entering the Archive: critical reflections on archives and whiteness". *From the European South*, v.6, 137-146. <https://www.fesjournal.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/10.Ferrini.pdf>

Simon Maier-Vieracker and Ulrike Pfeifer

TU Dresden, Germany | Doing Being at the Cutting Edge: (Self)positioning of Open Science in Digital Infrastructures

BIO

Simon Meier-Vieracker, Prof. Dr., is professor of Applied Linguistics at TU Dresden. His research interests include discourse analysis, media linguistics and corpus linguistics.

Ulrike Pfeifer, B.A., is currently working on her master thesis in Applied Linguistics at TU Dresden. From February 2023, she will work as a research assistant in the DiaDisK project

ABSTRACT

The digital transformation of science as the basis for Open Science is often described as a disruptive innovation which destroys traditional orders of knowledge production and transfer on the one hand while creating new opportunities for participation, inclusion and transparency on the other (Dickel/Franzen 2015; Franzen 2019). Open Science is therefore invested with political values and the “politics of openness” (Hartley et al. 2018) are considered to be an appropriate guideline for the democratisation of science. Along with this, proponents Open Science often position themselves as pioneers (Hepp 2016) at the cutting-edge who are visionary and future-oriented enough to leave the outdated structures and practices of ‘closed science’ behind. This is remarkable in that this is already mainstream, since Open Science has long been arrived on the centre of science policy guidelines.

In our talk, we will look at the (self)positioning of Open Science, its theorists and its practitioners, from a discourse-analytical perspective. We will ask how Open Science, despite being an institutionally and infrastructurally supported policy, is still trying to maintain its position as innovative and disruptive, e.g. by distinguishing itself apart from commercialized publication systems and, at the same time, concealing the shady sides of fully metrified science. We therefore will take a closer look to a selection of digital platforms serving as infrastructures of Open Science. We will show how through their design and functional affordances (Hutchby 2001) as opposed to more traditional academic genres, these platforms and their uses are perceivable as formal manifestations of (self)positionings as being at the cutting-edge which systematically downplay their own ideological underpinnings.

Our talk is based on research conducted within the project “Digitalisierung als Disruption von Wissenssystemen – Open(ing) Knowledge (DiaDisk)” as part of the EXU measure “Disruption and Societal Change (TUDiSC)” at TU Dresden

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Christina Lentz

Arctic U of Norway | Negotiating Position in a Graphic Novel: Jerry Craft's *New Kid*

BIO

Christina Lentz has studied history and German language and literature at the universities of Regensburg, Germany and Pisa, Italy. In 2015 she finished her PhD in Early Modern History. After professional stops in adult education in the US (Saint Mary's College, Moraga, CA) and in-service teacher training research (University of Hildesheim), she has been employed as a lecturer at UiT - The Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø since 2020. Her research focuses on in-service teacher training, information literacy and schoolbooks, with a focus on underrepresented groups.

ABSTRACT

The focus of this analysis is Jerry Craft's graphic novel *New Kid* (2020), which tells the story of African American Jordan Brown, who is a new student at the affluent, elitist, and mainly white Riverdale Academy. Being accused of teaching critical race theory (CRT) in several U.S states, the book was banned from many school libraries as a consequence. Meanwhile, the author, Jerry Craft, claimed to not even know what CRT actually was and that he only wanted to create the African American role model he had never had as a child. While racial discrimination mattered when writing the book, he did not share the sole racial focus of his critics.

New Kid's humorous, sarcastic, and sophisticated style likewise forbids easy labels when it comes to the book's content. Jordan, the protagonist, moves between a White academic world and his Black neighborhood. His skin is bright compared to his previous classmates, but dark compared to his new ones and the new academic surrounding separates him further from his old peers, while he struggles to fully integrate into the new academic environment. His situation is not only defined by his race, but also by his social background and other, individual factors.

The analysis shows, how graphic novels with their visual layer can serve as a means of positioning for the literary "I". "*New Kid*" in particular can be taken as an example of how author and story alike withdraw from the dominating discourses in order to open up to new narratives.

Chris Katzenberg

Ruhr-U, Bochum, Germany | Patterned Forms, “Collective Impact”? Nonprofit Mission Statements as a Genre for Scripting Social Inclusion in American Cities

BIO

Chris Katzenberg holds an M.A. in English / American Studies and History from the RuhrUniversity Bochum, Germany. Since late 2018, he has been a PhD candidate in American Studies at RUB in the graduate research group “City Scripts,” funded by the Volkswagen Stiftung. He is currently completing his dissertation project, which traces the trajectories and transformations of “Collective Impact,” an influential American model for inclusion at the intersection of nonprofit work, urban education and social reform in a Transatlantic perspective. Most recently, with Kornelia Freitag, he is the joint author of an article on “Scripting the Inclusive City, Narrating the Self: Contemporary Rust Belt Memoirs in Poetry and Prose,” forthcoming in a collected volume with the Ohio State University

ABSTRACT

I will analyze discourses of collective institutional self-positioning in the mission statements, broadly defined, of a small number of contemporary education reform initiatives in American cities. Though they may use different terminology, the initiatives all characterize their work as seeking to end disadvantaged urban students' marginalization, ultimately envisioning demarginalization for all, in an imagined future city that is somehow still diverse, but no longer unequal. Their positioning practices and future “blueprints” (Buchenau and Gurr) however do not remain without contradictions, producing discursive marginalizations of their own, most strikingly articulated in which forms of marginalization they (do not) name and center.

The initiatives I will study all work within a shared collaborative form, an institutional framework from the US nonprofit world called “Collective Impact” (Kania and Kramer). I interpret this formalized model wrapped up in persuasive discourses as a “city script,” an “artful combinatio[n] of narrative, medial as well as figural acts of framing, inscription, description and prescription” (Buchenau and Gurr 142).

I will argue that, within “Collective Impact”'s larger scripted form, the mission statements under study constitute a “formalizing strategy of discourse” in their own right, the sub-genre of the Collective Impact mission statement. They serve as instruments of collective self-positioning for their authors, and, as a consequence of the directedness of this interventionist text type, also relationally position whom and what the authors construct as their other(s), the abstract enemies and supposed beneficiaries of their reform efforts. This again produces effects in urban discourse that are much more contradictory than these texts themselves purport: They operate as positioning instruments within a diversity regime in the American city that easily curtails and co-opts interventions for more equity into neoliberal pathways, so that demarginalization may for instance become scripted narrowly as a pipeline from “Cradle to Career” (Strive Together).

Buchenau, Barbara, and Jens Martin Gurr. “‘Scripts’ in Urban Development: Procedural Knowledge, Self-Description, and Persuasive Blueprint for the Future.” Jens Martin Gurr. *Charting Literary Urban Studies: Texts as Models of and for the City*. Routledge, 2021, pp. 141–163, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003111009>.

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Rostand H. Ngouo

U of Maroua, Cameroon | Free Speech and Marginal (Self) Positioning: An Analysis of the Contradictory Discourses of Uju Anya's and Jeff Bezos (and Their Followers) About Queen Elizabeth's Global Role

BIO

Herbert Rostand Ngouo, PhD is a lecturer in Linguistics in the Department of Bilingual Letters of the University of Maroua in Cameroon. His research interests include: discourse analysis (political rhetoric, electronically mediated discourse, pragmatics); applied sociolinguistics (language endangerment, ethnolinguistic vitality assessment, language policy and planning; bilingual education); and intercultural and multilingual communication.

ABSTRACT

This study combines the socio-cognitive approach (Van Dijk 2014a, b, 2015a, 2018), and approaches of contradiction and marginality studies (Acke and Warnke; Warnke, Bonacchi, and Seiler Brylla) to analyse contradictory (polarised) world views expressed in two discursive positioning, on Tweeter, with regards to the British Monarchy. Uju Anya's vitriol against the agonizing British monarch on September 8, 2022, and the reactive discourse of social media users to the statement.

The study analyses the contradictory views regarding the deceased queen as a moral authority, as well as a global figure. The data were collected principally from Tweeter, and other social media and online news outlets. The analysis of the data leads to the argument that Uju Anya's marginal statement (just as those supporting her) reflected latent animosity and hatred towards the queen, developed from her subjective appraisal and perception of the queen's role in the Biafra war and Biafra ethnic nationalism. On the other hand, Bezos and his followers' formulation and interpretation of opinions about the British monarch depict a different representation and knowledge of the British monarchy on the basis of either personal experience, or popularized and not necessarily globally shared view. The study helps to highlight the intersection between free speech and political correctness, and the perils of using the social media as an activist to voice one's opinions in a context of diversity of views.

Keywords: vitriol, social media, free expression, flaming, web activism, self-positioning, contradictory discourse

Tamara D. Imboden

U Basel, Switzerland | “Slowly Becoming Everything”: Novel Spaces and Characterisation in Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

BIO

Tamara Imboden is a doctoral assistant at the chair of North American and General Literature at the University of Basel, Switzerland. She completed her BA and MA studies at the University of Zurich, and conducted an exchange semester at the University of Vienna in Autumn 2021. Following the completion of her MA in summer 2022, Imboden has drawn together her interests in postcolonial theory, migration and literary spaces to investigate representations of cities in English literature, exploring the potential of cities as a narrative tool of characterisation in a dissertation titled “Reflected in the City: Reading Identity through City Spaces.” Focusing on works such as Teju Cole’s *Open City* (2011) and Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017), the project connects questions of trauma, migration and the subaltern with those of spatial representation. As a research assistant, Imboden is currently teaching a BA course titled “Reconstructing the Past: Memory and Literature.”

ABSTRACT

According to Arundhati Roy, her 2017 novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* has a deliberately convoluted structure that represents “looking at a city whose plans are ambushed” (Interview with *The Nation*). The form of the novel, she suggests, is crucial to her project of representing Delhi following India’s Partition in 1947. This paper will explore how this foregrounding of space in connection with form contributes to characterisation. Drawing on Homi Bhabha’s concept of the Third Space, I will focus on the development of the character Anjum, who, as a Muslim Hijra amidst religious upheaval and superstitious violence, struggles against the societally defined norms imposed upon her. The various spaces Anjum inhabits are not merely a backdrop to set the scene of her story. Instead, bringing Bhabha into contact with Michel de Certeau’s *The Practice of Everyday Life*, I will show that they are constituents of her character. The “House of Dreams” in which she finds her Hijra identity, and the cemetery in which she builds a refuge for the downtrodden help us understand Anjum’s changing relationship to binary definitions, and her ultimate rejection of not just religious and bodily boundaries, but also of those between life and death, and between the self and the other. The paper contributes to a larger project on the uses of urban space in literature as tools of characterisation, contributing to how we understand the role of cities in discursive practice and identity formation.

Jonas Trochemowitz and Hagen Steinhauer

U of Bremen, Germany | Anti-Genderism in France and Germany: A Transnational Illiberal Practice?

BIO

Jonas Trochemowitz, MA Research interest: Religion and Language, Queer-Linguistics, Contradiction Studies 2015–2018 Bachelor German Studies and English-Speaking Cultures (University of Bremen) 2018–2021 Master German Studies (University of Bremen) Since 2021 Research Assistant and Doctoral Candidate at the Department of German Linguistics at the University of Bremen Since 2022 Fellow at the Research Training Group Contradiction Studies at the University of Bremen

Hagen Steinhauer, MA Research interest: Democracy and Authoritarianism, Language and Fascism, Discourse Analysis 2011–2015 Bachelor German Studies and Political Science (University of Bremen and Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris III) 2015–2017 Master Language Sciences (University of Bremen)

Since 2019 PhD-Researcher and member of the Research Group Soft Authoritarianisms at the University of Bremen.

ABSTRACT

Anti-genderism denotes discourses and movements that present gender and sexuality within feminist and lgbtqia+ contexts as dangerous ideologies (see Hark and Villa 2017). In France, one of the main political actors that tries to implement an anti-genderist agenda is the *Manif pour Tous*. Established in 2013, this movement aims at preventing the legalization of same-sex marriage and adoption rights. They also oppose what they call ‘gender ideology’. In 2014, the German equivalent *Demo für Alle* came into existence, adopting the political practices of *Manif pour Tous*.

Examining these two case studies from France and Germany, we present a comparative discourse analysis of both movements. More specifically, we highlight the differences and similarities in their selfpositioning with respect to sexuality and gender. To this end, we use corpus analytic methods to analyze the organizations’ topoi and argumentative strategies (see Wengeler 2003). We argue that both movements instrumentalize the natural and social sciences (especially biology) to disqualify gender studies as a threat to traditional family values and the integrity of the nation. In this respect, they conflate illiberal reproductive politics and anti-intellectualism with racist stances on issues of migration (see Fassin 2020).

This collusion is a key characteristic of current soft authoritarian attacks on liberal democracy. For instance, the illiberal transformation of several European states is marked by an inherently gendered *modus operandi* where anti-genderism plays a vital role in uniting far-right, conservative and clerical actors behind one umbrella term (Grzebalska & Pető 2018).

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Sarah Ganss

Friedrich-Schiller U, Jena, Germany | Queer Illusions about Practices and Possibilities of De/Marginalisation in Pedagogy

BIO

Sarah Ganss, MA/MLitt, is a doctoral student at the Institute for Bildung and Culture (Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena). Her field of interest include philosophy of education and anthropological pedagogy. She recently worked on Queer Pedagogy and a literaturetheory based notion of Reception Theory and Reading.

ABSTRACT

When thinking about possibilities of de/marginalisation, schools, extracurricular activities, or child-care centres need to be included in the critical analysis. With a focus on queer, this contribution aims to reflect about experiences of (self)positioning in the field of education. Two correlating perspectives, form and content, will be highlighted:

Firstly, practices of (self)positioning touch upon questions of appropriate cultural representation and visibility. Mass media like TikTok or popular TV formats like dating shows suggest a harmonious coexistence and authentic representation of sexual orientations and identities. They offer the possibility of low-threshold disclosure and can thus help to self-position. However, this should be viewed with caution, as often enough its relative openness can also give way to new forms of marginalisation or reproduction of dangerous stereotypes. One example can be the medial representation of polyamory as portrayed in *You Me Her or Wanderlust*.

Secondly, institutions and their structures need to be critically questioned – with a special focus on the role of norms as at the same time stabilizing and constricting. Pedagogical spaces offer the possibility to think broadly about subjectification processes despite or in the margins: children and young adults are constantly addressed as already responsible, autonomous subjects but are (still) allowed to change and experiment; social roles and their rejection or acceptance play a crucial role in pedagogical interactions, for example the legitimacy and status of different kinds of knowledge or the student-teacher-relation. Thinking and talking about practices of de/marginalisation are hence not only necessarily ethical discourses, but also fruitful and dynamic tools to re-examine the very roots of the fields of cultural criticism and education itself.

Natalia Borza

Pázmány Péter Catholic U, Hungary | Discursive Forms of Representing the Violence of Social Actors

BIO

Natalia Borza holds a PhD in English Applied Linguistics from Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest (2017). She has worked at the Institute of International Studies and Political Science at Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Hungary, since 2013, currently as senior lecturer. She has published several register analytical articles investigating the characteristics of academic English. Her discourse analytical research interests embrace discursive legitimation, discursive identity formation, critical discourse analysis of media discourse, and the sociolinguistic aspects of political correctness. Besides applied linguistics, she has pursued doctoral studies in aesthetics and philosophy, in which fields she has also been actively publishing.

ABSTRACT

In the city of Chemnitz (formerly known as Karl-Marx-Stadt), which is located in the vicinity of Dresden in Saxony, a murder connected to immigration occurred in 2018, which caused a series of domestic reactions in Germany. A peak of the events was the call by Heiko Maas, then German foreign minister, to a rock concert organised in Chemnitz to celebrate nonviolence.

Following the Critical Discourse Analytical (CDA) approach, which considers language as a social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) and aims at disclosing what is implicit or hidden in relations of discursively enacted dominance (van Dijk, 1995), the present qualitative casestudy investigates the positioning patterns of social actors that were narrated in the Chemnitz events in English-language news media discourse. The research seeks to find the characteristic features of the discursive representation of violence regarding the centrality and the marginality of the various social actors and the related social actions in the narration of online newspaper articles (RQ). The study draws on the English-language quality media outlets (The BBC, The Guardian, The Telegraph and The Times) that reported on the concert promoting the culture of non-violence (2 September–4 September 2018), which built a nearly three-thousand-word word corpus (N=2890).

To unveil the characteristics of discursive representations, van Leeuwen's (2008) sociosemiotic inventory was applied. Van Leeuwen's taxonomy characterizes the narration of social actors along the inclusion – exclusion divide, where the latter embraces the discursive strategies of backgrounding and suppression as well. Besides, the taxonomy differentiates the repertoire of the narration of social actions along the activation and deactivation axis. That is, a dynamic representation (where the social actor is placed in the centre) is contrasted with the creation of a more static discursive account (where the social actor is backgrounded or marginalized). The results of the research suggest that the five groups of social actors (the farright, immigrants, the far-left, "we", and the police) were positioned differently with regard to violence in the media discourse. The paper explicates the array of narrative devices with which certain groups are foregrounded, while others are backgrounded. The paper also sheds light on the patterns how language use activates or deactivates the actions of particular groups of social actors.

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Can Aydın

TU Dresden, Germany | Strata of Bodies: Dynamic Positionings in Kent Monkman's Paintings

BIO

Can Aydın is a research associate who is currently working on his PhD at TU Dresden in American Studies. His dissertation focuses on the ways of reading contemporary poetry, painting and performance art created by queer indigenous artists and poets such as Billy-Ray Belcourt, Tommy Pico and Kent Monkman through a queer phenomenological lens.

ABSTRACT

Strata of Bodies: Dynamic Positionings in Kent Monkman's Paintings

In this contribution, I analyze Cree artist Kent Monkman's paintings as spaces of dynamic demarginalization. By appropriating the form of the nineteenth century American landscape painting and arguably its most famous settler painters, George Catlin and Albert Bierstadt, Monkman subverts and reverses the hierarchy between centrality and marginality, between colonizer and colonized, between settler and native. He 'revisits' some of Catlin's and Bierstadt's paintings that featured indigenous rituals against the background of vast landscapes which are conceptualized through the discourse of the settler-colonialist romanticization of the 'Indian' as the 'vanishing race'.

In Monkman's work, the nineteenth century American landscape painting as a form ceases being the "rationales and tools of empire" (Livingston 108). It is reconstructed as a dynamic site in which the stratification of society is constantly rearranged. Monkman is not only the artificer but also part of the artifact as he places his alter ego Miss Chief Eagle Testickle into his paintings. "History is Painted by the Victors" (2013) is an imaginary scene in which Miss Chief as the center figure has a canvas in front of her surrounded by Colonel George Custer's naked troops on a lakeside. Miss Chief is naked except for a pair of red high-heeled leather boots. The first two soldiers in front of the canvas lie on earth in a way which indicates that they are willingly to pose for Miss Chief. Besides the overt subversion of Western gender binarisms through Miss Chief's fluid sexuality, Monkman also positions his alter ego as the one in control by reversing the colonial gaze. Furthermore, the painting depicts a willing transaction from both sides. The settler soldiers put themselves willingly as the objects, even more, as objects of desire. Thus, the central/margin binarism gets complicated in the painting form. Moreover, Monkman targets the societal power dynamics by positioning himself as both the subject and the object to be observed.

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Oyeshi Ganguly

Hertie School of Governance, Berlin, Germany | Breaking the Untouchable Looking Glass: Analysing Meta-cognition of Dalit Womanhood in Contemporary Indian Society

BIO

Oyeshi Ganguly is an Indo-German Young Leaders Forum Scholar, currently pursuing her Master's in International Affairs at the Hertie School, Berlin, Germany. She obtained her bachelor's degree in Political Science from the Department of International Relations at Jadavpur University, India. She has previously worked as a Project Manager for the Cultural Studies Project at the Institute for Asian and African Studies at the Humboldt University of Berlin. Her work on the marginalization of the Dalits and Untouchables in India led to the presentation of her academic paper titled 'A Tale of Broom and a Bucket: Chronicling the Lives of Human Excreta Handlers' at the conference 'Everybody's Business: Toilets as a Contested Space' organised by the Humboldt University of Berlin and the University of Bonn in November 2021. She is the co-founder of the archival research project Agnijug Archive which documents the oral history of the Indian anti-colonial revolutionaries. She has co-authored the paper "The Schoolchildren's Anti-Colonial Rebellion: Looking back at the Chittagong Armoury Raid of 1930", to be published in the *Itihasology Journal* Volume II (reviewed by Dr. Kumkum Roy, Dr. Catherine B. Asher, Dr. Daud Ali, Dr. Manan Ahmed, Dr. Sucheta Mahajan and Dr. Amrita Tulika) in January 2023. She has co-authored the paper *One Nation, One Language : Examining (H)india's No-English Policy in a Globalised World* to be published in the *The Public Sphere : Journal of Public Policy* 2023 published by the London School of Economics and Political Science. Her research focuses on South Asian Studies, history of post-colonial societies, politics of memory, and cultural studies.

ABSTRACT

How does your birth qualify you as an 'untouchable'? The term 'Dalit' literally translates to 'oppressed'. In the Indian caste hierarchy, the term refers to the social groups such as Shudras and Ati-Shudras that lie at the lowest rung of the four-tier social stratification known as the Varna System. What place does this ascribed identity have in a democracy that ensures equal developmental opportunities for all its citizens? To further problematize the existing discourse, the paper adopts an intersectional approach between caste and gender and views exploring the lives of the 'marginalized among the marginalized' -the Dalit women. This concern, which has been at the heart of postcolonial feminism in South Asia has gained new importance with the untouchable women reclaiming their Dalit identity after years of hiding it in fear of social ostracization and discrimination. The paper explores the self-positioning of the Dalit woman in representative creative expressions, in opposition to her depiction in the popular culture espoused by non-Dalit authors. Drawing on four Dalit autobiographical literature texts Sujatha Gidla's *Ant Among the Elephants* (2017), Shantabai Kamle's *The Kaleidoscopic Story of My Life* (1983), Yashica Dutta's *Coming out as Dalit* (2019) and Gogu Shyamala's *Father maybe an Elephant and Mother Only a Small Basket, But..* (2012), this paper re-memorizes a personal history of the women who have been marginalized by their men, who are themselves the most discriminated against in society. Analysing the critical selfreflexivity of these narratives, this paper argues that the autobiographies of the Dalit women assert their agency through the expression of their unique experience of 'double discrimination. It concludes with a comparative analysis of the portrayal of the Dalit woman in her own stories marked by identity assertion as an attempt at demarginalisation against the retellings of their experience by non-Dalit storytellers which reduce them to passive victimhood.

Laura Handl

TU Dresden, Germany | *Interview with the Vampire* (2022-): Reframing the Queer Vampire

BIO

Laura Handl is a research associate at the TU Dresden in the field of American Studies. While working on a dissertation on the literary form of the manifesto, further research interests include queer media studies and critique.

ABSTRACT

The hold of the vampire on popular culture has been unrelenting in the last decades, with the new TV adaptation of Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* (1976) as the latest example. This contribution looks at how the series advances a discussion of queer marginality through the vampire genre.

While the vampire has been continually used as a social metaphor in numerous ways (Gelder, *Reading the Vampire*; Auerbach), a significant shift in the narrative paradigm occurred from containing and restoring normativity in for example *Dracula* (1897) towards a portrayal of the "vampires [...] among [us,] [...] [as] our anti-heroes, our saviours, our protectors, our friends and lovers, and our storytellers" (Fhlainn 5). This development was spearheaded by the novel *Interview with the Vampire* and its sequels (Gelder, 'Southern Vampires'). The subtextual queer-ness of the protagonist Louis has been made explicit in the newest adaptation, which is one way the series not only represents the themes of the novel but further develops them. The most significant decision is making Louis not start out as a white French plantation owner in late eighteenth century Louisiana, but a Creole pimp in early twentieth century New Orleans. Furthermore, the narrative framing is changed to be a second attempt at an interview in 2020, making the series an adaptation and sequel at the same time. This enables a unique in-series reflection on the position of Louis as an unreliable narrator and the form and genre of the vampire narrative itself. Themes of repressed queer desire, intersectional discrimination, and abuse in queer relationships are negotiated within this new framing.

This adaptation follows in the footsteps of other recent vampire media in starting a process of defamiliarization within the genre through explicitly including queerness and discussing racial identities in meaningful ways. The series fresh approach gives the marginalized vampire a unique possibility of narrative agency and a differentiated portrayal of desire and violence in a queer context

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BIO

Nika Bogdanowska received her PhD in Literary Studies from the University of Silesia in Katowice. Her research interests include discourse studies and rhetoric. She published the monograph about commentary as a text type, *Komentarz i komentowanie. Zagadnienia konstrukcji tekstu* (2003, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego).

Ewa Bogdanowska-Jakubowska received her PhD and DLitt in Linguistics from the University of Silesia in Katowice. Her research interests include pragmatics, (critical) discourse studies, (im) politeness and face. Her monographic and edited publications include *Face. An Interdisciplinary Perspective* (2010, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego), *Inność/Różnorodność w języku i kulturze* (2015, WUŚ), *New Ways to Face and Social Interaction* (2016, WUŚ), *Oblicza męskości/Faces of masculinity* (2017, WUŚ).

ABSTRACT

During last ten years Polish society have been gradually descending into deepening polarization. It has happened within various frames: political, economic, moral and cultural. Some social groups which for various reasons – extra-political and extra-national – constitute minorities are getting marginalized more and more frequently. It happens both at the legislative and the executive level. Biological, psychological and cultural diversity has become the basis for creating inequality.

The aim of our study is to analyze narrations based on humorous political discourse which leads to positioning selected groups functioning on the outskirts of Polish society. We will investigate discursive strategies employed by politicians to strengthen their political position by means of increasing the integration of the party's electorate. Humor constitutes one of the key elements of this creation. It is used to shorten the distance, create an atmosphere of affinity and strengthen the sense of community. Approaching and integrating with their voters, at the same time party members marginalize – distance themselves and separate from – others. Humorous discourse can take different forms, different degrees of intensity (from subtle allusions, sharp one liners, to coarse mockery) and different rhetorical realizations (from irony, sarcasm, to diasym).

The theoretical and methodological framework of the study will be a combination of Critical Discourse Studies (Wodak & Meyer, 2015) and Positioning Theory (Harré, 2015; Lawson, 2022). We will analyze figures, tropes and topoi constituting marginalizing humorous discourse and investigate different forms of humor used to negatively define the dynamics within Polish society. The study will involve qualitative research on a variety of data (genres), e.g. public speeches, political debates, TV and radio interviews, and press articles.

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Alexandra Kuring

Sorbisches Institut, Bautzen, Germany | Feminist Movements of Ethnic Minorities: A Case Study

BIO

since 2022 Research associate at the Sorbian Institute (Bautzen), Department of Cultural Studies

2019-2022 European Studies (M.A.) at the European University Viadrina (Frankfurt/Oder)

Title of MA Thesis: "We didn't know each other before this summer" – Political

Mobilization of the Belarusian Diaspora in Germany in the course of the presidential election in Belarus 2020

2018-2019 Volunteer service "kulturweit" of the German UNESCO Commission in Tbilisi, Georgia

2014-2018 Media Studies (B.A.) at TU Dresden, study visit at Uniwersytet Wrocławski, Poland

ABSTRACT

This project focuses on feminist efforts among ethnic minorities using the example of the Sorbian minority in Germany. Feminism is thereby understood as a "movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression" (bell hooks). This approach does not limit feminist activism to a reaction to social dynamics, moreover it expands the understanding to an initiative or "engine of change". In the framework of the international conference "Tracing Forms of De/Marginalization" I will address and discuss some aspects of marginality and demarginalization among feminist movements of ethnic minorities with a special regard to the case of Sorbs.

Previous research indicates multiple marginalization of minority feminist movements. On the one hand, minorities are often essentialized due to individual practices which leads to ethnic homogenization failing to recognize minority feminist efforts in the whole societies and feminist discourse (Crenshaw, 1991). On the other hand, minority women can face intracommunity conflict as their efforts are perceived as a contradiction on cultural practices of the minority group (Oprea, 2005). Finally yet importantly, minority feminist movements can be subject to a dilemma of intersectionality, as identity formation is exposed to (apparently) mutually exclusive constructions of gender and ethnicity (Nagel, 1994; Oliver, 2017).

The aim is to examine a positive approach on minority-specific feminist efforts based on the Sorbian minority. Recently there can be observed a diverse commitment to gender issues ranging from debates about a gender-appropriate revision of the Sorbian national anthem, to Sorbian feminist rap and subculture on the Internet, to free art and cultural initiatives. In the overarching framework my research project is going to investigate various forms of self and group positioning around feminist objectives considering identity construction on the intersection of gender and ethnicity.

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Darieck Scott

African American Studies, U of California, Berkeley, United States | Superhero Comics as Templates for Queer/Black Fantasies of Self-transformation and Social Reimagining

BIO

Darieck Scott is a professor of African American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Scott is the author of *Keeping It Unreal: Black Queer Fantasy and Superhero Comics* (NYU Press, 2022), which won the 2023 Lambda Literary Award for LGBTQ+ Studies. His previous book, *Extravagant Abjection: Blackness, Power, and Sexuality in the African American Literary Imagination* (NYU Press 2010), was awarded the 2011 Alan Bray Memorial Prize for Queer Studies of the Modern Language Association. Scott is the author of the novels *Hex* (2007) and *Traitor to the Race* (1995), and the editor of *Best Black Gay Erotica* (2004). A fantasy-genre novel, *The Dream-Slaves*, is forthcoming from Brainstorm Books/Punctum. He has published essays in *Callaloo*, *GLQ*, *The Americas Review*, and *American Literary History*, and is co-editor with Ramzi Fawaz of the *American Literature* special issue, “Queer About Comics,” winner of the 2018 Best Special Issue from the Council of Editors of Learned Journals.

ABSTRACT

I offer a series of notes or meditations in which I'll try to think with you about Wakanda and the Black Panther in conceptual and theoretical terms.

First, I'll link superhero comics to theories of fantasy and of what it means to fantasize, briefly making an argument I make extensively in the book: which is that while we tend to view fantasy as the antithesis of reality or as its underprivileged cousin, I see fantasy as the very stuff of consciousness itself, and therefore argue that fantasy is important—perhaps fundamental—to our lives as conscious beings. Thus, the superhero fantasy we indulge in reading *Black Panther* comics or seeing the movie *Wakanda Forever* has an important purchase on our individual realities, and even on our shared reality. In my second note, I will consider superhero comics in terms of the concept of utopia. My third note follows from the utopian fantasy of superhero comics, and discusses how the fear of death underlies a refusal of utopian imagination, a refusal that we routinely practice when we dismiss fantasy as unimportant. And in my final note, I'll discuss how we might, as Jean-Paul Sartre says, “become fantastical” when we read superhero comics and see superhero movies: which is another way to think of how we *might*, in fact, sometimes “live” in Wakanda.

Silvia Adler and Galia Yanoshevsky

French Linguistics and French Literature and Culture, Bar-Ilan U, Israel | Tracing Forms of De/Marginalization in Ilana Zeffren's Writings

BIO

Silvia Adler is Full Professor of French linguistics in the Department of French Culture at Bar-Ilan University; member of the ADARR research group in discourse analysis, argumentation and rhetoric; associate member of the Laboratoire Ligérien de Linguistique (Orléans and Tours). She is the author of *Ellipse et Régimes des Prépositions Françaises* (2012 Peeters) as of numerous articles in French linguistics (syntax, semantics, pragmatics, multimodal argumentation; ellipsis, anaphora, linguistic economy, prepositions, prepositional quantification, scalarity, general nouns). She specializes in multimodal texts and has published extensively on strategies of meaning-making in comics and in publicity (2012-) and teaches classes on comics.

Prof. Galia Yanoshevsky is Full Professor in the Department of French Culture Department at Bar-Ilan University and a member of ADARR research group (Tel-Aviv, Bar-Ilan). She is a discourse analyst working at the crossroads of literature and journalism through a multi-modal approach combining text, image, and performance. Her early research dealt with the New Novel in France (2003-2009), manifestos (2009-), and the literary interview (2014, 2018). She investigates “un noble” genres (scam letters, tourist guidebooks, 2011-), has led an ISF funded research on the representations of collective memory in tourist guidebooks (2016-2020), and is currently working on a Digital Humanities project delving into photobooks of Israel.

ABSTRACT

In this paper we explore marginality in cartoon artist Ilana Zeffren's work through the concept of meronymy. The different relationships between the part (“meronym”) and the whole (“holonym”) – complementarity, opposition, divisibility/indivisibility, transitivity, dependence, and continuity – shed light on diverse minorities' (ethnic, lifestyle or others) self-definition, relationship to hegemony and to other minorities within minorities. Through Zeffren's graphic autobiography, *Pink Story* (2005, (her chronicle *Rishumon*), (2007-2013 and her *Petting Zoo* single vignette weekly (2013-), the author tackles the question of LGBT minorities through both the content and the form of the panels. From a thematic point of view, we show how the question of minorities is relational, with regard to both the hegemony and to other minorities. We discuss the growing delegation of criticism over time, to other non-human entities (her pet cats or other animals), who personify the authorial voice, allowing for a polyphony of voices alternative not only to hegemonic opinion, but also to silenced minorities within minorities. Finally, we demonstrate Zeffren's unique handling of comic techniques, and notably the usage of the strip's margins to promote or drive marginal opinions to the center, while opposing or even overriding what seems to be at the epicenter of common public and social acceptance.

Simone Knewitz

U of Bonn, Germany | "Art as Organizing": Tracing Forms of Collective Agency in Black Lives Matter Poetry

BIO

Simone Knewitz is Senior Lecturer in North American Studies at the University of Bonn, where she also completed her dissertation and post-doctoral degree. She has held research fellowships at George Mason University, George Washington University and Harvard University and taught as deputy professor of American Studies at the Universities of Münster and Hamburg. In her book *The Politics of Private Property: Contested Claims to Ownership in U.S. Cultural Discourse* (Lexington Books, 2021) she has explored the ways in which property narratives have historically contributed to the unequal dissemination of wealth and racebased structures of exclusion in the U.S. Further publications include the monograph *Modernist Authenticities: The Material Body and the Poetics of Amy Lowell and William Carlos Williams* (Winter, 2014), as well as numerous essays on literature and popular culture. In one of her current research projects she explores poetic interventions into political protest movements.

ABSTRACT

In a TED talk entitled “A love story about the power of art as organizing” (2018), the African American poet Aja Monet and her partner, the community organizer Philip Agnew, make the case that art constitutes a necessary component of social justice movements. Positioning themselves in the tradition of writer-activists June Jordan, Emory Douglas, Nina Simone and other artists of color, they suggest that art works must be measured by their political impact. Picking up on the tradition of the Black Arts Movement as well as of slam poetry, literary and artistic production and performances have constituted a significant component of the Black Lives Matter movement of the past decade. In particular, there has been a creative outpouring by academically trained and established poets as well as amateur writers intervening in political protest and activism. Despite the waning role of poetry within public life over the last decades, a renewed discursive investment in the alleged oppositional power of poetry has come to the fore within this and other contemporary social movements. In this context, claims about poetry as a literary genre that gives voice to outsiders and ‘speaks truth to power’ often appear within a digital media context that has recently given rise to the phenomenon of the “instapoet.” Hence, there is a direct link to assumptions about social media platforms which allegedly serve as democratizing and empowering forces and spaces of community for members of marginalized groups. In this talk, I seek to trace both the discourse on poetry as a genre conceived as particularly empowering and a form of political protest as well as the ways in which the poetry written in the context of Black Lives Matter seeks to conjure forms of collective agency. Investigating examples from internet archives such as Hello Poetry and Button Poetry, I scrutinize the cultural self-positioning of Black Lives Matter’s poetic activism within a digital media environment.

Moritz Wischert-Zielke

KU Eichstätt Ingolstadt, Germany | Playing at the Margin: Placemaking and the Production of Psychic Spatiality in Indie Video Games as Practices of Demarginalization

BIO

Moritz Wischert-Zielke (he/him) studied English, Sociology, and Psychology at the Julius-MaximiliansUniversität Würzburg, the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, and the University of Birmingham. He holds an interdisciplinary M.A. in English and American Studies and Sociology as well as an M.Sc. in Psychology. Currently, he is part of the research training group “practicing place” at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany. Within this interdisciplinary group he is preparing his Ph.D. in American Cultural Studies focusing on the role of place in the practice of play.

ABSTRACT

Since the turn of the 21st century, video games have become the largest global mass entertainment medium. Particularly AAA-titles have shown expressed tendencies to exploit and marginalize themes of mental illness. Approximately one in ten popular games of the last 20 years attempts to portray symptoms of mental illness with a majority of 75% of them in a negative and stereotypical way (Buday et al.). However, indie games have offered different, complex, and sometimes more nuanced forms of narration and play.

The present paper explores issues of positioning regarding the topic of mental health in indie video games. The approach chosen here is inspired by the spatial turn and therefore the claim that a critical perspective on discourses needs to take space/place seriously as the analytical term “discourse” is most useful when tied back to the spatial practices which constantly (re) produce its referent.¹ Such thinking as we find it in Lefebvre attempts to overcome a dualism of discourse and form/manifestation in that space is thought as a social product which always already relates the perceived, the conceived, and the lived, as well as material and semiotic aspects (Lefebvre 27-29).

Consequently, the paper reads practices of game design as well as play as entangled moments of discursive place-making and positioning. Beyond the smooth authorship of the concept of “mindspace” (Nguyen 54), indie video games as a genre aim to create discursive counter-places with a tendency to deterritorialize video game space from its margins by placing the player there - who again negotiates this placement. Game design in that it formalizes socio-cultural positions and experiences, and play in that it radically questions any attempts of formalization together accomplish what could be called the production of psychic spatialities in the course of play. The paper explores the production of depressive, anorectic, and melancholic spatialities in *Actual Sunlight* (2014), *Shrinking Pains* (2018), and *Gris* (2018) to answer the questions for how the titles try to rework epistemic configurations and thus the ascription of marginality to their themes, and which effects their chosen strategies of formalization have.

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Charlotta Seiler Brylla, Gustav Westberg and Henning Årman

Örebro U/Stockholm U, Sweden | Antisemitic Manifestations—The Semiotics of Antisemitism in Sweden and the Experiences among Jewish Youth, funded by Swedish Research Council

BIO

Charlotta Seiler Brylla is professor of German at Stockholm University in Sweden. Her research interests lie in the fields of political discourse analysis, discourse semantics, lexicology, as well as comparative language and culture studies. Currently, her research projects focus on the communication of right-wing populist supporters, the semiotics of antisemitism in contemporary Sweden, and East/West discourses in Germany.

Gustav Westberg is associate professor of Swedish Language at Örebro university. His research is anchored in multimodal critical discourse studies and social semiotics. Westberg has conducted multimodal discourse studies in relation to a variety of social phenomena and political problems, including parenthood, corona communication, commodification of indigenous identities, right-wing populism and contemporary Nazism. Currently, he is the PI of a research project on the semiotics of contemporary antisemitism in Sweden.

Henning Årman is a post doctor at the Department of child and youth studies, Stockholm University. In 2021 he published his thesis 'Political Corrections' on language activism among high school youth Sweden. In his research he combines perspectives from the field of Child and youth studies with theories and methods from linguistics and semiotics. He is currently working on a research project on fathers at BVC and also on a research project on antisemitism and the Swedish far right.

ABSTRACT

Under the heading "Research window," we seize the opportunity to present the research project titled "Antisemitic Expressions in Sweden and the Experiences of Jewish Youth." This project, funded by the Swedish Research Council, is led by Gustav Westberg from Örebro University in collaboration with Charlotta Seiler Brylla and Henning Årman from Stockholm University. The project aims to enhance understanding of how anti-Semitism is manifested in contemporary Sweden and to gain insights into the everyday experiences of Jewish young people regarding anti-Semitism. Antisemitism is a recurring phenomenon in present-day Sweden, presenting itself in various social contexts. However, existing research and reports indicate a lack of knowledge regarding the diverse forms in which antisemitism can be expressed today. For instance, educators face challenges in recognizing the symbols, imagery, and metaphors that convey antisemitism. The project combines linguistic and multimodal analysis with methodologies and perspectives from child and youth studies, theoretically and methodologically. Specifically, discourse analysis perspectives are employed in conjunction with ethnographic methods, wherein the participating young people also serve as co-researchers in the project. The presentation will provide insights into the research design, focusing on initial aspects of data collection, methodology, and ethics.

Ingo H. Warnke and Lara Herford

U of Bremen, Germany | Research Training Group 2686 *Contradiction Studies: Constellations, Heuristics, and Concepts of the Contradictory*, funded by Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

BIO

Prof. Dr. Ingo H. Warnke has held the Chair of German Linguistics including Interdisciplinary Linguistics at the University of Bremen since 2010. Previously, he was Assistant Professor at the Center for the Study of Language and Society at the University of Bern. He is spokesperson, together with Prof. Michi Knecht, of the DFG Research Training Group Contradiction Studies (GRK/RTG 2686) and the U Bremen research platform Worlds of Contradiction (WoC). Among other functions in national and international networks, he is responsible for the European network DeMarg (European Research Network on Discourses of Marginality and Demarginalizations) together with European partners. His research focuses on discourse analysis, postcolonial linguistics, and contradiction studies. He is also Chair of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg (HWK), Institute for Advanced Study.

Lara Herford studies German Studies in the MA program at the University of Bremen after completing her Bachelor's degree in German Studies and Philosophy. Her focus is on German linguistics, especially discourse linguistics. She has been working as a student assistant for U Bremen Worlds of Contradiction (WoC) since 2021 and has been part of the U Bremen ThemaTalkers since 2022. She is particularly interested in »dissent formats« and will also write her MA thesis on them.

ABSTRACT

How do people live with and against the contradictory in everyday life? In which social fields and with which effects are contradictions bound to the imperative of their resolution? How can contradiction be critically questioned and decentered as part of the foundations of Western/Northern knowledge production?

The interdisciplinary Graduiertenkolleg/Research Training Group (GRK/RTG 2686) "Contradiction Studies" at the University of Bremen, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), has been exploring the formation, negotiation, and explanatory limitations of contradiction. We start from the assumption that the ordering figure of contradiction that includes the imperative of resolving contradictions often stands in a relationship of tension to experiences of the contradictory in everyday life.

This is one anchor point of the shared work of 22 fellows, 12 participating faculty scholars and 3 international Mercator Fellows from various disciplines of the humanities, social sciences, and law. The position of the RTG and its fellows is contradictory as well. European universities are themselves a privileged part of the established orders of Western/Northern modernity. The RTG is situated at the intersection of multiple overlapping societal contradictions and conflicts. These range from contradictions of capitalism and political contradictions to the co-existence of anti-discriminatory diversity programs and simultaneously continuing mechanisms of exclusion and discrimination along "race," class, gender, sexual orientation, and other categories of difference and their intersectional effects. The RTG »Contradiction Studies« encourages its members to reflect on such contradictions together and to take them as a starting point for developing other forms of un-learning and learning, of collaboration and the recognition of diversity. These basic ideas of the RTG will be presented, with the intention to invite DeMarg 5 participants to further collaboration.

Carsten Junker and Laura Handl

TU Dresden, Germany | The Upsurge of the Manifesto in Contemporary Debates on Diversity in the United States, funded by Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

BIO

Carsten Junker is university professor of American Studies with a Focus on Diversity Studies at the TU Dresden. He considers historically situated relationalities between structural inequalities and various genres and media, as well as dynamics of subject and group positioning with respect to diverse, overlapping practices of categorization in North American literatures and cultures.

Laura Handl is a research associate at the TU Dresden in the field of American Studies. While working on a dissertation on the literary form of the manifesto, further research interests include queer media studies and critique.

ABSTRACT

At the DeMarg 5 conference, we will be presenting the project “The Upsurge of the Manifesto in Contemporary Debates on Diversity in the United States,” funded by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) since October 2022. The project is designed to contribute to foundational research in transnational American Literary and Cultural Studies by working through formalizations of current controversial debates on demographic diversity and social unity in scenarios of inequality in the US and beyond, especially by interrogating the uses of the sociopolitical manifesto and its function of positioning subjects and groups in these debates. Taking the recent upsurge of the manifesto as its cue, the project interrogates how the manifesto as a generic form highlights tensions between a decreasing tolerance for demographic diversity and urgent calls for its recognition. As a specific form of public refutation, the manifesto has been researched from various angles and through different approaches. What requires close examination yet is its function as an important instrument for the discursive positioning of manifestors, not least in the polarized landscape of the post-Obama years. To thematically map debates on diversity as carried out in the manifesto and gain a better sense of the function of the genre to position discursive actors, it is necessary to combine state-of-the-art approaches from a politicized theory of generic form with innovative conceptual and methodical approaches from research areas in Diversity Studies. The project relates questions that pertain to generic form with questions concerning recent dynamics of activism and the authorizing strategies associated with it. It thus aims to contribute both to a better understanding of how subjects and groups position themselves in debates on diversity through the strategic use of a genre, and to a theory of form that takes historical specificities and structural and discursive relations of power seriously.