

America constitutes not only a geographic entity; it is an idea that is communicated throughout the nation as much as all over the globe. The American nation has been formed not just through forces political and economic. Since its very beginning, the idea of the nation-to-be was strongly influenced by philosophical and cultural discourses. The American Revolution created an entity that would call on the responsibility of each citizen to help shape the nation, to contribute rather than just to be governed. Such participatory democracy, however, heavily relies upon an educated public able to partake in the continuing processes of creation, maintenance and re-creation required by democracy.

Based on the assumption of the specific nature of US-American democracy, our Fifth Annual Students Conference will take a look at US-American Media and their functions in the production of cultural knowledge at home and abroad. It will particularly address the subsequent issues: How is the democratic system communicated through the media that picture America? How are divergent voices integrated or included? Is the abundance of law-and-order texts just a coincidence in a jury-reliant justice system? What role do more recent shows like *The West Wing* play in a democratic system?

What happens once texts that are imminent to a specific culture are transmitted globally? When John Wayne meets Karl May and Sergio Leone? Moreover, what about constructions of the world "outside", a possible backlash that may be seen in global politics and global institutions being mimicked in movies like *High Noon* or on shows like *Babylon 5*? How are more or less specifically American themes like the frontier and horror films centering on the American nuclear family perceived in radically different cultural structures? How do non-American born American artists differ in their representation of America? How self-reflexive is America, how self-reflexive is Europe about its perceptions of America?

In which way is the emergence of a global culture accompanied by the emergence of global means of cultural production, such as the partial de-localization of texts through the internet, and internationally co-produced franchises like *Farscape* and *James Bond*? Does America thus provide a global cultural language with enabling as well as overwhelming if not omnipresent structures?

Students of all faculties are invited to present original or seminar papers on the topic, join the discussions or just listen.

This conference has been made possible by the generous support of

The American Studies Program at Humboldt-Universität
Fachschaft der Anglistik und Amerikanistik der HU

Organizers

Antje Dallmann
Philipp Kneis

The organizers would like to express their gratitude to the entire American Studies Program at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin for their support and assistance

Information

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik
Unter den Linden 6
10099 Berlin
☎ +49-30-2093 2313 / 2319 / 2488
☎ +49-30-2093 2309 / 2405

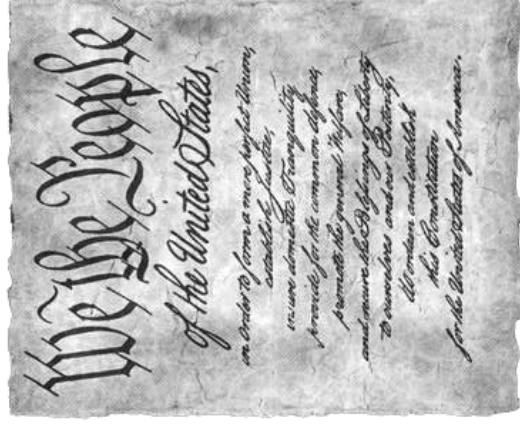
e-mail: phil@philjohn.com
antje.dallmann@rz.hu-berlin.de

For possible changes to the program, as well as for further information and background material, please consult the web site of the conference at

www2.hu-berlin.de/amerika/projects/picturingamerica

Picturing America

Domestic and Global Aspects of US Media Culture. 5th Annual Students Conference, May 20-21, 2005



The Annual Students Conferences Series

The Annual Students Conferences series sets out to support and foster the students' interest in academic exchange and discussions. It provides students of all levels (undergraduate, graduate and doctoral) with a space for the discussion of academic topics in the absence of the usual hierarchy often found in university seminars.

The topics will be related to the curricula of the American Studies Program while also incorporating different ideas and approaches, topics which are less often featured, topics which combine contemporary culture with academic interests. The conferences are thus supposed to both enrich the normal curriculum and offer a truly academic forum for exchanging ideas.

The conferences are organized by students of American Studies, the addressees are students from Humboldt Universität as well as from other universities.

(http://www2.hu-berlin.de/amerika/projects/asr_st.html)

Previous Conferences

Capturing the... Truth. Changing Strategies in Documentary Cinema Students' Conference, Berlin, February 8-11, 2005

Poietic Spaces. Communicating Landscapes of Imagination 4th Annual Students Conference, May 6-8, 2004

Multiple Cultures - Multiple Perspectives. Questions of Identity and Urbanity in a Transnational Context 3rd Annual Students Conference, May 15-17, 2003

Haunted Dreams. Nightmares in American Culture 2nd Annual Students Conference, May 23-25, 2002

Licence to Thrill. Reading James Bond as a Cultural Phenomenon 1st Annual Students Conference, May 10-12, 2001

Related Events:

The Transatlantic Students Symposia Series,
http://www2.hu-berlin.de/amerika/projects/asr_transatlantic.html

Friday, May 20, 2005

UL 6, R 2103

11:00 - 12:30: Session I

Anjie Dallmann, Philipp Kneis
Opening of the Conference

Heike Toewe
The Use of Spectatorship in Spike Lee's Bamboozled

Michael Lattek
Abduction & Adoption: Searching for the "Western Contamination" of The Big Lebowski

12:30 - 14:00: Lunch

14:00 - 16:00: Session II

Screening *Nip/Tuck* Episode + Discussion

Manuela Mangold
From Imagination to Image.
The Dissection of the Body in CSI and Nip/Tuck

Dominik Bertram
Big Brother is All Around

16:30 - 18:30: Session III

Florian Stenschke
USS Media: Entertainment - Enter/America?

Screening *West Wing* Episode + Discussion

Philipp Kneis
Communicating Democracy:
Entering the American Republic Through the West Wing

19:00 - 20:30: Reception, Art Presentation, Poetry Reading

Saturday, May 21, 2005

UL 6, R 2103

11:00 - 12:30: Session IV

Mara Dettmann, Susan Eckelmann
American Exceptionalism - Holocaust Exceptionalism? An Analysis of the Public Response to the Exhibition "Mirroring Evil"

Eddie Bruce
Surviving September 11th or Snapshots in the Dark? A Critical Consideration of two Professional Photographs as Portraits of Denial

12:30 - 14:00: Lunch

14:00 - 16:00: Session V

Screening *X-Files* Episode + Discussion

Danijela Djordjevic
The X-Files and Paranoia

Richard Martin
Fictional Representations of the American Criminal Justice System

Concluding Discussion

(all times s.t.)