

Issue 23, August 2017

# NEWSLETTER



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# GRADUATE SCHOOL



## New Doctoral Candidates

On April 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> this year, ten new doctoral candidates were selected. They will start their doctoral studies on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. This year's PhD students come from Belarus, Germany, the Netherlands, and the USA. We are particularly pleased to welcome candidates from all six disciplines of the Kennedy Institute.

## Dahlem Postdoc Fellows

In June, the Dahlem Research School (DRS) held interviews for 15 postdoctoral positions. Eight candidates nominated by the Graduate School were shortlisted for the interview stages, two of which will start their fellowships in November.

## Interdisciplinary Forum

The postdoctoral candidates **Paola Andrea Rodriguez-Castaño** (Sociology), **Sean Bonney** (Literature), **Chris Jefferis** (Politics), **Simon Strick** (Culture), and **Andreas Beer** (History) have continued to hold the Interdisciplinary Forum on a bi-weekly basis. The forum aims to encourage everyone below senior faculty level to present and discuss ongoing projects of various sorts – ranging from a draft chapter of a dissertation to a paper for an upcoming conference, or a research outline to a grant application. The forum explicitly invites presentations of works-in-progress, with all the accompanying uncertainties, open questions, and loose ends.

The forum started with **Betsy Leimbigler's** presentation on May 2<sup>nd</sup> titled "Inequality and Trump." On May 30<sup>th</sup>, **Paola Castaño** gave a presentation on "Space Lettuce and Disco Lights: Plant Biology on the International Space Station." On June 13<sup>th</sup>, **Sören Schoppmeier** spoke on "Playing the Black Box Society," followed by **Helen Gibson's** talk titled "A Ford Car for the NAACP: Automotivity and Anti-Lynching Campaigns, 1934-1937."

On June 27<sup>th</sup>, **Marc Adam** spoke on "Liquidating Bankers' Acceptances," and **Nitya Koch** presented her work on "One for the Boys?: Dance, Work, and Women's Mobility in the Hollywood Musical." The last session of the forum on July 11<sup>th</sup> featured **Sarah Eppings's** talk on "'Michigan in Arabia': The University of Michigan between Mission, Humanitarian Aid, and Empire" and **Andreas Beer's** lecture on "Narrating Dissent in Contemporary American Literature."

## International Graduate Conference 2017

This year saw the 10<sup>th</sup> International Graduate Conference, which was held at the John-F.-Kennedy-Institute from May 5<sup>th</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The event, titled "The Revolution Will Not Be Peer-Reviewed – American Disconnects and the Production of Knowledge" brought together activists and scholars and was organized by the doctoral candidates who had started the PhD program in late 2016. The keynote lecture on May 5<sup>th</sup> was delivered by **Larycia Hawkins** (University of Virginia). Her talk titled "Academic Freedom in the Iron Cage of the Ivory Tower" focused on the tensions between freedom of expression, freedom of religion and the practices of universities to limit those freedoms. **Chris Spannos** (New Internationalist) and **Jerome Roos** (University of Cambridge/ROAR Magazine) led a roundtable discussion on "Media, New Authoritarianism, and the Trials of the Next Left."

## Visiting Professors

This summer term, the Graduate School welcomed two visiting professors: **Teresa de Lauretis** (Professor Emerita, Department of the History of Consciousness, University of California, Santa Cruz) and **Sean Theriault** (Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin). Teresa de Lauretis taught a seminar on "Freud," Sean Theriault co-taught the interdisciplinary



seminar “Democracy in Crisis” with Christian Lammert and Irwin Collier. The two visiting professors also gave advice to the doctoral students at GSNAS. Both also gave talks during their stay. On July 5<sup>th</sup>, Teresa de Lauretis spoke on “Reading, Transference and Translation” as part of the Colloquium of the Departments of Literature and Culture, and on July 4<sup>th</sup>, Sean Theriault gave a presentation titled “Does America’s Political System Still Work?”

### Alumni

This summer term, we have had the privilege of attending a large number of doctoral defences. **Janna Odabas** (Literature), **Min Kyung Yoo** (Sociology),

**Katharina Metz** (Culture), **Sophie Spieler** (Culture), **Siofra McSherry** (Literature), **Katharina Knoll** (Economics), and **Manuel Funke** (Economics) finished their doctoral studies. Congratulations!

### 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

On October 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>th</sup>, the Graduate School will celebrate its 10th anniversary at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences. We look forward to welcoming distinguished keynote speakers Percival Everett, Paul Gilroy, Amy Kaplan, and Robert Warrior. The conference is free of charge and the program will be available on our [website](#) soon.

## JOHN F. KENNEDY INSTITUTE



### DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL STUDIES

The chair of the department, **Frank Kelleter**, is now an associated scholar of the DFG-Graduiertenkolleg (GRK 2190) *Literatur- und Wissensgeschichte kleiner Formen* at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. In May, Frank Kelleter gave a talk on “I’ve Never Seen My World Depicted on TV: *The Wire* and Its Sequels” at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK. He was also part of an event with Gerhard Kaiser titled “The Stars Look Very Different Today: David Bowie” at the Literarisches Zentrum Göttingen in January 2017, in the context of the series “Liederabend.” He also served as a panelist on a panel entitled “Canaries in the Coal Mine: Deindustrialization, Poverty, and Populism” on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017 in the context of the symposium “100 Years/100 Days: Utopian and Dystopian Visions of American Politics from Kennedy to Trump” at the John F. Kennedy Institute. He edited and published the volume *Media of Serial Narrative* (Ohio State University Press) to which he contributed three essays: with **Kathleen Lock**, “Hollywood Remaking as Second-Order Serialization” (125-147), “Five Ways of Looking at Popular Seriality” (7-34), and “Introduction: About This Volume” (1-6). Additionally, he published an article titled “From Recursive Progression to Systemic Self-Observat-

ion: Elements of a Theory of Seriality” in *The Velvet Light Trap* 79 (2017): 99-105; and a book chapter in German entitled “Aus der schönen Pophölle: The Velvet Underground & Nico” (30-51), in the volume *Younger Than Yesterday: 1967 als Schaltjahr des Pop*, edited by Gerhard Kaiser, Christoph Jürgensen, and Antonius Weixler and published with Wagenbach. Media scholar **Henry Jenkins** furthermore interviewed Frank in a four-part-series titled “All about Seriality: An Interview with Frank Kelleter,” which is available online: [one](#), [two](#), [three](#), [four](#).

**Alexander Starre** is spending the academic year 2016/17 as a visiting assistant professor in American Studies at Brown University, supported by a Feodor Lynen Postdoctoral Fellowship granted by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. During the spring term at Brown, he taught an upper-level undergraduate seminar on American knowledge cultures at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In May, he presented a paper on Willa Cather at the Annual Conference of the American Literature Association in Boston. The title of his talk was “I absolutely know this’: Cather’s Epistemic Poetics in *A Lost Lady* and *Beyond*.” He also recently published two essays in edited volumes, one on the work of novelist Jonathan Safran

Foer and the other on the epistemic function of short annotations in American library catalogs of the early 1900s.

**Sophie Spieler** is filling in for Alexander Starre during the summer term 2017. In June, she successfully defended her dissertation, supervised by Frank Kelleter and Katja Kanzler, and titled “The Wealthy, the Brilliant, the Few: The Discourse of Elite Education in Contemporary America.” She is teaching a graduate seminar on “Fun in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century,” which is also the preliminary working title of her postdoc project.

**Martin Lütke** has returned from his sabbatical leave in the winter term 2016/17. With funding from the German Research Foundation he organized a collaborative workshop on “The New Black Atlantic: Traveling Cultures in the Contemporary African Diaspora” with Robert Reid-Pharr, which took place at the JFKI from June 21<sup>st</sup> to June 23<sup>rd</sup>. In the context of the workshop, he gave a paper entitled “Approaching the New Black Atlantic.” He also gave a talk on “American Bell and American Bodies – Making and Marketing the Telephonic Body in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century” at the annual meeting of the German American Studies Association (DGfA) in Hanover in June; finally, in the context of Pride Month, he gave a talk at the Atlantische Akademie in Kaiserslautern regarding current challenges and developments for LGBTQ civil rights in the United States (“Neue Herausforderungen: Die LGBTQ-Bewegung in den USA unter Trump”). He is currently finishing an essay on MTV Cribs for an edited volume on wealth in Germany in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Simon Strick** will be postdoctoral fellow at the GSNAS until the end of 2017. In the summer term, he taught a MA-seminar on “Eugenic Culture(s)” in the JFKI’s Department of Culture. He is currently working on his habilitation project “Regressive Time: Temporality, Disability and American National Cinema”. In March 2017, Simon organized the honorary conference “Hartgesotten Hegemoniekritisch” for Prof. Dr. Gabriele Dietze, funded by the Center for Transdisciplinary Gender Studies at Humboldt Universität and the ICI Berlin. The conference brought together a range of younger scholars from the fields of cultural studies, gender and queer studies, and postcolonial studies, and celebrated the critical work done by Americanist Gabriele Dietze, who had earned her PhD at the John F. Kennedy Institute. In June, Simon gave a talk at the conference “Intersectionality and Disability” in Cologne, presenting findings from his postdoctoral project under the title “Observations on Race and Intellectual Disability”. He also submitted two articles on scientific racism, one on its relation to constructions of intellectual disability, another relating to the question of empathy.

During the academic year 2016/2017, **Kathleen Look** is a DAAD P.R.I.M.E. visiting scholar in the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She was awarded the DAAD P.R.I.M.E. fellowship, which is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the European Union, to conduct research and work on her book project – a cultural history of Hollywood remakes,

sequels, and prequels from the transition to sound to today’s franchise era.

**Terra Visiting Professor**

The renewed Terra Visiting Program started in the fall of 2016 with **Allison Stagg**, who spent the academic year at the Department of Culture. In the summer term, Allison taught her second round of highly popular classes, one in the BA and one in the MA programs of the JFKI and the art history programs of Freie Universität and Humboldt Universität, respectively. In March 2017, Allison presented on “The European Influence on early American Artists in the Late 18<sup>th</sup> Century” at the 34<sup>th</sup> Congress of German Art Historians in Dresden. In May, Allison gave a talk entitled “From Washington to Trump: Political Humor in American Art” at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, in the art history department. Allison also organized an international symposium, “At Home and Abroad: Movement, Influence, and Circulation in North American Art” at the John F. Kennedy Institute on June 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, with papers by **Nancy Siegel**, **Martin Myrone**, **Dominic Hardy**, and **Larne Abse Gogarty**. Allison furthermore facilitated and conducted four student group excursions to art collections in Berlin in May and June of 2017: to the American Embassy Art Collection, the Museum Barberini, Akademie der Künste, and the Bundestag Art Collection. Finally, Allison established close ties with the American Academy and was invited to an event with artist and distinguished visitor **Kerry James Marshall**.

## DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

On June 17<sup>th</sup>, the German newspaper *Tagesspiegel* published an article on the report “Government debt: causes, effects and limits” in its Freie Universität-supplement. The German Academy of Sciences Leopoldina had provided funding for an interdisciplinary working group researching this topic. In the article, **Carl-Ludwig Holtfrerich**, the project’s initiator and speaker, shared his views of current austerity policies in Europe and Germany.



PICTURE-ALIANCE/KOSTAS KOUFOGIORGOS

Click [here](#) for the full article.



## DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

### Personnel News

This past summer term, **Olaf Stieglitz** served as substitute for Jessica Gienow-Hecht. Olaf joined the Department from the University of Cologne, where he teaches classes in North American social and cultural history and is heading a DFG-funded research project on “Visualizing Modern Bodies in Motion,” a study that combines sports history, the history of the body, and visual culture studies.

**Jessica Gienow-Hecht** spent the summer semester in Paris, where she holds the Alfred Grosser Chair at **Sciences Po**. She will be away until April 2018, and misses her JFKI students, colleagues and, above all, her departmental team quite a bit. Thanks for keeping in touch!

**Sönke Kunkel** took up the position of assistant professor in the Department of History. This past semester, he served on the JFKI’s museum commission, the examinations board, and the teaching planning commission. He also became the Institute’s assistant spokesperson for the B.A. program.

In the summer term, the Department also welcomed **Andreas Beer** as a postdoctoral fellow. Andreas taught a seminar on hemispheric filibustering and pursued his own research on contemporary movements of dissent.

**Maximilian Klose** joined the Department of History in two functions. As an external lecturer, he is teaching a seminar on the US occupation of Germany 1945–1949. As a research associate, he is working on the application for the German-Canadian international research training group “Power & Humanity – Contesting Notions of Human Rights and Humanitarianism in North America.”

Thanks to a travel grant from the German Historical Institute Washington, D.C., **Sarah Epping** was able to go on an archival research trip to the United States from March until May 2017.

### Departmental / JFKI Events

In January, **Sönke Kunkel** was invited to speak at the Department’s research colloquium and gave a talk on “Performing the President: Nixon’s 1972 visit to China and the Legacy of Presidential Travel in American Political Culture.” He also contributed a paper to a workshop on the history of internationalism, organized by **Ilaria Scaglia** in June, and chaired a roundtable discussion on the future of the American Dream during the Long Night of the Sciences at Freie Universität Berlin.

**Olaf Stieglitz** and **Helen Gibson** contributed to

the event “100 Years/100 Days: Utopian and Dystopian Visions of American Politics from Kennedy to Trump.” Olaf served as a panelist and Helen delivered a speech at the Rathaus Schöneberg on behalf of the JFKI and the Freie Universität at large.

This semester’s **MA / research colloquium** saw the presentations of **Mara Goldwyn**, **Felix Stoßmeister**, **Marie-Theres Schätzky**, and **Timothy Woods Palma**, who updated us on their progress, and discussed their research questions and paradigms.

**Stephanie Feser**, **Helen Gibson**, **Annette Karpp**, **Sönke Kunkel**, **Hannah Nelson-Teutsch**, and **Ethan Ruby** participated in the JFKI’s program during the Long Night of the Sciences, jointly organized with the Department of Economics.

### Publications and Presentations

In the last months, **Olaf Stieglitz** published two essays related to his research project: “Die Komödie als Bewegungsstudie. Spielfilme und ihr Platz in der visuellen Welt des Sports in den 1920er Jahren,” in: Jürgen Danyel, Gerhard Paul and Annette Vowinckel (eds.), *Arbeit am Bild. Visual History als Praxis*. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, and “Horses, Cameras, and a Multitude of Gazes: Visualizing Animal Athletes, 1890s–1930s,” in: Dominik Ohrem (ed.), *American Beasts. Perspectives on Animals, Animality and U.S. Culture, 1776–1920*. Berlin: Neofelis Verlag. In June, Olaf organized a panel at the annual meeting of the German Association of

American Studies (GAAS/ DGfA) in Hanover. Under the title “Doing Modernity–American Bodies & Subjects in the Early Twentieth Century,” it brought together scholars that investigated the roles corporeal practices, from dance to writing and using the telephone, played in negotiating meanings of modernity in the United States between 1900 and the 1930s.

As visiting professor at Sciences Po, **Jessica Gienow-Hecht** taught two courses: a lecture course on the “History of Culture and International Relations in the Transatlantic World” at the Collège, as well as a graduate seminar on “Nation Branding, Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy” at the Paris School of International Affairs. In addition, she gave five presentations in the Paris area, four of which took place at Sciences Po. Most importantly, she delivered a lecture, titled “Culture and International Relations: It’s Not Always Sunshine and Rainbows,” on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the online journal *histoire@politique* on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the Centre d’histoire. Also at the Centre d’histoire, in March 2017, she gave a presentation on gender and humanitarianism in



THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

a graduate seminar taught by **Jakob Vogel** and **Mario del Pero**. She furthermore prepared two talks for graduate courses taught by **Frédéric Ramel** at the Centre de relations internationales, one on music and diplomacy in US-German relations (March 2017), and a second one in the laboratoire séminaire on music in the framework of cultural diplomacy (June 2017). Outside of Sciences Po, she delivered a lecture at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne titled “L’héritage de Mad Wolf: Diplomatie et musique amérindienne à l’Opéra royal de Berlin en 1910 – Présentation en trois actes” in the seminar “Littératures et musiques dans les relations internationales: identités, transferts culturels et réception à l’époque contemporaine,” by **Anaïs Fléchet**, **Marie-Françoise Lévy**, and **Antoine Marès** (March 2017). Together with **Carolin Viktorin**, Jessica published “Was ist und wozu braucht man ‘Nation Branding’? Versuch eines neuen Zugriffs auf Macht und Kultur in den internationalen Beziehungen am Beispiel der spanischen Diktatur unter Franco” in **Barbara Haider-Wilson**, **William D. Godsey**, and **Wolfgang Müller** (eds.), *Internationale Geschichte in Theorie und Praxis / International History in Theory and Practice*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2017. She also gave several interviews: one at Sciences Po on the state of culture and international history; on *Spreeradio*, regarding the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ronald Reagan’s appearance in front of the Berlin Wall in 1987 (“Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall”); on *Radio Bremen — Nordwestradio*, titled “Merkel vs. Trump;” on *Nordwestradio*, regarding “The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the U.S. Entry into WWI;” and on *Deutschlandfunk*, regarding “The Salem Witchcraft Trials.”

**Sebastian Jobs** was invited to give two talks in May. At the research colloquium of the Department of Anthropology and African Studies at Johannes-Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, he presented his research on the role of race and bodies in American military parades. At Universität Rostock, he spoke on the importance of rumors and so-called fake news in the era of Trump and Brexit. In February 2017, Sebastian gave a teacher-training class on “Racism in America: Historical Echoes and Current Conflicts” at Deutsch-Amerikanisches Institut (Tübingen) and at Carl-Schurz-Haus (Freiburg). Furthermore, Sebastian appeared on *Zeit Online Video* as an interview partner on the history of authoritarianism in the age of Trump, as well as on *Deutschlandfunk Kultur*, in a feature about the history of isolationism in the United States. Finally, he published an article in the exhibition catalog for the special exhibit at German Historical Museum, Berlin, celebrating Protestantism as an event in World History. His article engaged the importance of the protestant church for the debate about slavery in the United States.

**Sönke Kunkel** was invited to serve as reviewer for *Diplomatic History*, the journal of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations.

**Ilaria Scaglia** delivered a talk at the Université de Genève in February, entitled “Healing Body, Mind,

and the World as a Whole: Internationalist Emotions at the Sanatoria in Leysin, 1919-1945.” On June 6<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup>, Ilaria organized the international workshop “Making a Case for Internationalism,” hosted by the Dahlem Humanities Center and sponsored by the Volkswagen/Mellon Foundations Fellowship for Research in Germany. The workshop featured as speakers: **Carolyn Biltoft** (Geneva Graduate Institute), **Patricia Clavin** (University of Oxford), **Barbara Key** (University of Melbourne), **Daniel Laqua** (Northumbria University), **Jessica Reinisch** (Birkbeck, University of London), **Hanne Hagtvedt Vik** (Universitetet i Oslo), and **Anna-Katharina Wöbse** (Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen).

At the annual meeting of the German Association of American Studies (GAAS/ DGfA), **Andreas Beer** presented on the topic of “Occupy Wall Street’s Mosaic Mass Identities and the State of Surveillance.” Furthermore, he published the article “El Nicaraguense y los enlaces transnacionales de los filibusteros” in the journal *Humanismo y Cambio Social* in June.

**Helen Gibson** participated in the Heidelberg Spring Academy 2017 at Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg from March 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>, presenting a paper titled “Chauffeur Blues: Cars as Spaces of Social Transgression, 1895-1939.” She co-conducted a workshop, “NYLON Mixtapes: A Workshop on Critical Social Research,” with **Hannes Langguth** (TU Berlin) and **Nadja Klopprogge** at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual NYLON Graduate Student Conference, held from March 31<sup>st</sup> through April 2<sup>nd</sup> at New York University’s Institute for Public Knowledge. From May 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, Helen participated in an “Early Career Workshop in American Studies” hosted by the Center for Transnational American Studies (CTAS) at the University of Copenhagen, where she presented her current research on automotivity. In April, Helen published a review of Michael Butter, Astrid Franke and Horst Tonn’s *Von Selma bis Ferguson. Rasse und Rassismus in den USA* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2016) in *H-Soz-Kult*. The review is available [here](#).

**Patrick Milton** published three articles: “Debates on Intervention against Religious Persecution in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: European Reactions to the Tumult of Thorn, 1724-1726” (*European History Quarterly*), “Der Friedenskongress von Münster und Osnabrück als Wegweiser für eine neue Friedensinitiative im Nahen Osten” (*Osnabrücker Jahrbuch Frieden und Wissenschaft*), and “Ein Westfälischer Friede für Nahost” in the weekly *Die Zeit*. The latter two were co-authored with **Brendan Simms** and **Michael Axworthy**. Patrick presented a paper entitled “The Guarantee of the Peace of Westphalia in the Law of Nations and its Impact on European Diplomacy” at the Centre interdisciplinaire d’études et de recherches sur l’Allemagne in Paris, and participated in the following roundtable discussions: “Guaranteeing the Peace? International Actors and their Role in a Peace Settlement for the Middle East” (April 27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>), hosted by the Körber Foundation in collaboration with the Cambridge Forum on Geopolitics; and “Towards a

New Security Architecture for the MENA Region” in Istanbul on March 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup>. The latter is available online [here](#).

**Kira Alvarez** made her radio debut on *Deutschlandfunk Kultur* in June. She was the author and speaker on a program titled “Eine Faust gegen den Antisemitismus: Bronislaw Huberman, Geigenvirtuose und Gründer des Palestine Symphony Orchestra,” where she discussed the life of Bronislaw Huberman, one of the figures she examines in her dissertation.

## DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE

The Department of Literature has seen a number of changes this semester: we said goodbye to **MaryAnn Snyder-Körber**, who took up her new position as Professor of American Cultural Studies at Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg in April. We offer our most heartfelt congratulations to MaryAnn and wish her all the best. We also (temporarily) bid goodbye to Junior Professor **Florian Sedlmeier**, who has embarked on his two-year research stay in the U.S., where he continues to work on his current project “The Conditions of the Field Imagination: Realism and William Dean Howells” at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and the University of Texas at Austin (UTA). In turn, we were happy to welcome **Kathy-Ann Tan** from Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen as visiting professor, who is acting as substitute for **Ulla Haselstein**. Kathy-Ann’s research and teaching interests include Postcolonial Studies and Anglophone Cultures, Citizenship Studies and Critical Race Theory. **Thomas Dikant** (re)joined the team as a postdoctoral fellow. In April and May the department hosted a visit by Fulbright Senior Specialist and musicologist **James Martin** from Cornell College who taught classes on Rock Music and John Cage.

More guests – including keynote speakers **Colleen Lye** (UC Berkeley), **Saima Akhtar** (Yale), **Nirmala Erelles** (University of Alabama), and **Selma Siew Li Bidlingmaier** (NYU) – joined us for the concluding event of the semester, the International Workshop Symposium “Managing Racial Capital” on June 30<sup>th</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>, organized by Florian Gabriel and Jasper Verlinden of the Junior Research Group “Fictions of Management: American Naturalism and Managerial Culture, 1875-1925.” While the first day featured talks by invited speakers, July 1<sup>st</sup> brought together emerging scholars from different disciplines, giving them the opportunity to present their projects, exchange ideas and give constructive peer feedback in a more informal atmosphere.

**Ulla Haselstein** delivered the keynote lecture “Progressivism, Normalization, and the Novel” at the Annual Meeting of the German Association of American Studies in Hannover on June 11<sup>th</sup>, as well as talks in Turin (May) and Venice (June) on “Thinking Through Form: Gertrude Stein on Serial Repetition”. All talks were related to her research project, “Gertrude Stein’s Literary Portraits,” funded by the Opus Magnum Program of the

VolkswagenStiftung. After her sabbatical years, she will resume teaching in the upcoming winter semester.

Besides speaking on “Queer Expatriation and/ in Modernist Writing: Djuna Barnes’s Nightwood” at this year’s DGfA conference, **Kathy-Ann Tan** also organized the “UnDo-it-with-Others” Workshop on Decolonial and Collaborative Strategies of (Un)learning” with **Anguezomo Bikoro** and **Yaron Maïm** in June, and moderated a book discussion on “Racism(s) and the City: Neoliberalism and (Post-)colonial Urbanities” with **Noa Ha** and **Giovanni Picker** at the SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin, in May. Moreover, she co-taught a Master’s seminar titled “Case Studies in the Avant-Garde” with visiting professor James Martin that included, among other work, poetry by postdoctoral researcher **Sean Bonney**.

In February, **James Dorson** was invited to give a talk at Georg-August-Universität Göttingen for the conference “Cultures of American Conservatism.” In the talk, which was titled “The Triumph of Conservatism? On Machines, Property, and Bigness in Naturalism,” Dorson analyzed the role of private ownership in relation to the tropes of the machine and bigness in naturalist fiction. He was also invited to give a talk in the workshop “Digital Modernities: America and American Studies in an Algorithmic Age” at the DGfA conference in Hanover in June. Here he spoke about the function of natural metaphors in Big Data discourse today, in comparison with the role of the sublime in Frank Norris’s naturalist fiction. The talk was titled “Big Data/Big Fiction: Reading Frank Norris in the Petabyte Age.”

**Birte Wege**, currently postdoctoral fellow and continuing work on her research project “Scripting Reality,” has accepted the position of assistant professor (Juniorprofessorin) of North American Literature at the JFKI, to begin in October 2017. We are looking forward to welcoming Birte in this new capacity.

After one and a half years as a DAAD postdoctoral fellow in the Department of English at the University of Chicago, **Thomas Dikant** (re)joined the Literature Department. Before arriving in Berlin, he presented a paper on “Foresight: O. W. Holmes Jr.’s Time Travels” at the Twentieth Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Law, Culture and the Humanities at Stanford Law School on April 1<sup>st</sup>, and discussed a paper titled “Describing Murder: Anna Katharine Green’s Criminal Procedure” in the Eighteenth- and Nineteenth Century Atlantic Cultures Workshop at the University of Chicago on April 6<sup>th</sup>.

Both **Sean Bonney** and **David Hadar** presented at the JFKI’s “Perspectives on American Literature and Culture” Research Colloquium this semester, with talks titled “This Is the Wrong Apocalypse: Anarchist Eschatology in Diane di Prima’s ‘Revolutionary Letters,’” and “Authorial Networking in and around American-Jewish Literature,” respectively. In addition, Sean has given a number of poetry readings, both in Berlin and internationally, while David was also invited to speak on “American Literary Institutions in Israeli Literature: Anton Shammas’s



Arabesques between the Galilee and Iowa” at the Israel Studies Lecture Series, Cambridge University, in May. He also gave a talk on “Philip Roth’s Israeli Readers: Revisiting Jewish Continuity” as part of the American Comparative Literature Association Annual Meeting at Utrecht University in July.

## DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

This June, several members of the Department of Political Science attended the Annual Conference of the German Association of American Studies in Hanover. In the context of this conference, **Christian Lammert** and **Curd Knüpfer** led a workshop on “Postmodernity and the Concept of Post-Fact Society,” while **Boris Vormann** und **Julia Püschel** offered a workshop discussing “Digitalization and the Future of Work.” Christian Lammert, Boris Vormann, Curd Knüpfer, and **Betsy Leimbigger** also attended a conference in Passau, which supported their preparation of a joint publication on “Die USA nach Obama.”

The Department of Political Science welcomed several guest speakers this semester, such as **Kori Schake**, **Sean Theriault**, and **James Carville**, who spoke on the consequences of Trump’s presidency for U.S. foreign and domestic politics.

Two current staff members will leave the department this fall. While **Curd Knüpfer** will be moving to Washington D.C. to pursue a postdoctoral research project, **Boris Vormann** will join Bard College Berlin as Professor of Politics. We wish them all the best for their future.

**Christian Lammert** has frequently appeared in the media, for example on *Deutsche Welle*, *WDR*, *Deutschlandfunk*, *Radio Eins*, *Deutschlandradio*, *SRF*, *WDR*, and “Markus Lanz,” commenting on domestic U.S. politics under President Trump, his political style as well as possible implications of his presidency for U.S.-German relations. Additionally, Christian was a panelist at the DGfA Annual Conference discussing consequences of the Trump administration for science, culture, and politics. He further attended conferences and events in Passau, Frankfurt, and most recently Ingelheim, where he spoke on social inequality and the American welfare state.

Over the past few months, **Lora Viola** has given numerous talks and interviews related to the foreign policy of President Trump and continued to present her

research at academic conferences. She collaborated with the U.S. Embassy on a number of events relating to the Presidency of Donald Trump, including public lectures on Trump’s foreign policy at the Zeitgeschichtliches Forum Leipzig, at the Transatlantischer Dialog Erfurt hosted by the MDR-Landesfunkhaus, and at the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena. In May, she presented a talk on “Trump and the End of Multilateralism, Again?” at a conference hosted by the Universität Bonn. In addition, she helped organize a number of guest lectures at the JFKI, including **Michael Herron’s** talk on election fraud, **Joseph Dozier’s** on Republican campaign strategies, **Kori Schake’s** on the future of transatlantic relations after Trump, and a visit of Republican and Democratic U.S. congressional staffers. Though much of her current work focuses on Trump’s foreign policy, she continues to work on other issues, too. In April, she was invited by Jürgen Trittin to speak at the Paul-Löbe-Haus as an expert on G20 and financial regulation. In May, she traveled to Geneva to present research on “Informal Governance and Procedural Justice” at a workshop on “The Politics of Informal Governance” hosted by the Graduate Institute, Geneva.

In June, she gave a lecture at Oxford University, which addressed “Coping with the Global Power Shift: Hegemonic Strategies of Institutional Adaptation in International Organizations.” A highlight of Lora’s semester was collaborating with her colleagues to organize a celebration honoring John F. Kennedy’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on May 29<sup>th</sup>, which included a lecture by former U.S. ambassador John Kornblum. Finally, Lora published two articles: “**US-amerikanische Außenpolitik unter Trump und die Krise der Globalisierung**,” forthcoming in *Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik* (ZfAS) and “**Legitimacy and institutional change in international organizations: A cognitive approach**” in *Review of International Studies*.

**Boris Vormann** has been appointed Professor of Politics at Bard College Berlin and will leave the Department of Political Science come August. In addition, Vormann was named IPK Scholar at the Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University. Together with Christian Lammert, Boris published an article titled “Region Nordamerika.” Boris was invited to speak at the Institute of Cultural Inquiry, the Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik, the GKS Annual Conference, where he talked about “Supra-urbanization: Outline of a State Politics of Circulation,” and at the University of Passau. In addition



LORA VIOLA AT THE TRANSATLANTISCHER DIALOG ERFURT  
IMAGE: KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG.





to hosting a workshop on “Digitalization and the Future of Work” at the DGfA Annual Conference, Boris was featured in media outlets such as *The Economist*, *Tagesschau Online*, *WDR*, *DRadio*, *dpa*, and *Deutsche Welle*.

During the summer semester, **Curd Knüpfer** taught a BA class on “Political Systems & Media Regimes.” He received funding from the Department and the Forschungsförderung of the Freie Universität to write a grant application for a *DFG eigene Stelle*. In addition, he won a grant by the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen in Stuttgart for a study on the impact of the U.S. election on cultural relations between the U.S. and Germany. Curd also gave several talks: at a conference on populism by the Studienstiftung, a workshop on “Fake News” at the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, and a moderated discussion with German and American congressional staffers at the Aspen Institute Berlin. In addition, Curd gave lectures on the rise of right-wing media and populist forces in front of the Jugendoffiziere in Strausberg and the Atlantisches Forum at TU Kaiserslautern. At a conference in Passau, he presented a paper on the election of Trump and ongoing shifts in political communication via digital media. At the 2017 annual meeting of the GAAS in Hanover, he co-organized a panel (together with Christian Lammert) on “Postmodernity and the Concept of Post-truth Society,” wherein he also presented a paper on media fragmentation and competing projections of reality. Furthermore, he appeared on *WDR’s* “Aktuelle Stunde” and *Deutschland Radio Kultur*. After the current semester, Curd will be leaving the JFKI and Berlin. He will move to Washington D.C., and work as a postdoctoral researcher for **Robert Entman** at George Washington University’s School of Media & Public Affairs.

**Margit Mayer** continues her research on neoliberalism and urbanism. Aside from publishing several articles such as “**Movements and Politics in the Metropolitan Region**” and “**Whose City—From Ray Pahl’s Critique of the Keynesian City to the Contestations around Neoliberal Urbanism**,” Margit also lectured at, organized and attended panels at the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, the **Global Justice Academy** in Edinburgh, **Ruhr-Universität Bochum**, and the Institute of Cultural Inquiry Berlin.

**Thomas Greven** continues to write a column on American politics for the online journal *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft* and its English edition *International Politics and Society*. He gave a number of interviews on the Trump presidency and populism (with *Walf* *Quotidien* in Dakar, Senegal; *Kristeligt Dagblad*, Denmark; and the *Nuevo Herald/Miami Herald*) and commented on the rise of right-wing populism for *Carnegie Europe*, among others. Thomas was also commissioned to prepare a **study** on right-wing populism and authoritarian nationalism in the U.S. and Europe by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung’s Washington office. He gave talks based on this paper at international conferences in London and Ponta Delgada, Portugal, and at a public forum in Berlin. He also spoke on comics and religion at Humboldt-Universität

zu Berlin, and on the Trump presidency at the IG Metall in Frankfurt/M. In addition, Thomas published articles on recent German history in comics and on the representation of religion in comics in *Comixene. Fachmagazin Comic + Cartoon*.

**Betsy Leimbiger** kept quite busy this past semester, presenting at several conferences. She spoke on “The current state of health care in the U.S. after Obama” at the Universität Passau and is preparing to publish a paper on the same topic. In May, Betsy was selected by the GSNAS Executive Board to represent the GSNAS at a conference on “Trump’s America” at the University College Dublin, Ireland. She gave a talk titled “Donald Trump and the Reproduction of Inequality.” At the conference “The United States of America – a failing democracy?” at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, she presented her work on “Social Inequalities in the U.S.: Disparities and Social Determinants of Health.” At a conference held by the Austrian Young Americanists, she presented a paper on “Welfare and Health Care’s Role in Creating and Maintaining Inequalities.” In June, she taught a half-day seminar for Master’s students at the Institut für Klinische Pharmakologie und Toxikologie of the Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin. The title of the seminar was “Das Gesundheitssystem der USA - Geschichte, Obamacare, Institutioneller Rassismus.” Finally, in an **interview** with *Deutsche Welle*, she spoke on the failed Republican health care bill.

**Matthias Großklaus** recently published an article titled “**Friction, Not Erosion: Assassination Norms at the Fault Line between Sovereignty and Liberty**” in *Contemporary Security Policy* and contributed an article called “Appropriating Gender: The Ambivalent Effects of Nigeria’s CEDAW Implementation” to an edited volume titled *Localization in Development Aid. How Global Institutions Enter Local Lifeworlds*.

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## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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In April, **Anne Nassauer** finished her research project on armed store robberies in the United States. A paper on her findings will be published in the *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*. She also finished a research project with Nicolas Legewie (German Institute for Economic Research) developing an interdisciplinary methodological framework for analyzing visual data (such as footage from smartphones, CCTV, drones, or body cameras). In April the *Wall Street Journal* mentioned her analysis of Donald Trump’s expressions of emotion and his display of sadness on election night. In continuation of her research project on collective emotions and crowd policing, throughout spring and summer of 2017, she accompanied Berlin police to violence-prone protests and completed a paper on these findings. In July, she presented a paper at the conference of the European Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction in Łódź, Poland. In August, she will start a

new research project with a one-month research stay at the Karisoke Research Station at Volcanoes National Park, Rwanda, to compare human aggressive and violent behavior to that of great apes in the wild. At the European Sociological Association Meeting in Athens, Greece, in September, she will present papers in the panels Sociology of Morality and Qualitative Methods. In September, she will also give a workshop on the interdisciplinary use of visual data for analysis at the “11<sup>th</sup> International Research Workshop (IRWS) – Methods for PhD” at University of Southern Denmark in Kolding.

## LONG NIGHT OF THE SCIENCES

For this year’s “Lange Nacht der Wissenschaften” (Long Night of the Sciences) on Saturday June 24<sup>th</sup>, the Departments of Economics and History developed a program centered on conceptions of the “American Dream” in the past, present, and future. An exhibition titled “In the Footsteps of the ‘Dreamers’” retold personal stories by German immigrants who had left Germany for the U.S. throughout the centuries to pursue their own American Dreams. Their paths, experiences, and hopes were presented on posters. A video collage showcasing people with such different backgrounds as Michelle Obama and Ronald Reagan speaking on their experiences with and visions of the American Dream was featured in a second exhibition, “Voices of the American Dream.” Afterwards, visitors had the chance to write down their questions, ideas, and dreams, while children were encouraged to draw their very own dreams on a big board in the entrance hall. After the visitors were provided with freshly made popcorn, they gathered in the newly painted Cafété to listen to JFKI students reading from novels centering on the American Dream. As usual, the Cafété offered culinary treats such as hot dogs and grilled cheese sandwiches to keep the visitors in good spirits. The evening ended with a panel of teachers and students debating what the American Dream may look like in the future and answering questions by an engaged audience. The debate covered historical, political, and cultural views, but also included economic statistics, thus providing a broad picture.

Although fewer people visited the institute during this year’s “Lange Nacht der Wissenschaften” than

last year, potentially due to weather conditions, it was a successful night full of interesting and enlightening contributions.

## JOHN F. KENNEDY’S 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, the Institute held a conference commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of John F. Kennedy. Titled “100 Years/100 Days: Utopian and Dystopian Visions of American Politics from Kennedy to Trump,” the program featured a keynote speech by former U.S. Ambassador to Germany, John Kornblum, a performance by the Danish JFK guys performing three of Kennedy’s most memorable speeches as well as a roundtable with JFKI faculty members moderated by Karen Ruoff Kramer, Director of Stanford University in Berlin. The photo exhibition *American Visionary: John F. Kennedy’s Life and Times* generously donated by the U.S. Embassy in Berlin has since been on display in the JFK library and the second floor of the Institute.



“100 YEARS/100 DAYS”: HELEN GIBSON SPEAKING IN FRONT OF RATHAUS SCHÖNEBERG AND THE DANISH JFK GUYS AT THE CELEBRATION OF JOHN F. KENNEDY’S 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY AT THE INSTITUTE.



Before the conference at the JFKI a group of faculty members attended the ceremony hosted at the Rathaus Schöneberg. GSNAS doctoral candidate Helen Gibson delivered a speech on behalf of Freie Universität and the JFKI following addressed by Governing Mayor of Berlin Michael Müller and Acting DCM of the U.S. Embassy Berlin Jeffrey Hovenier.

The program can be found [here](#). You will also find a collection of photos on our [Facebook page](#). If you are interested in activities that were held worldwide in memory of JFK, search by using the hashtag #JFK100.



# LIBRARY



## BOOK DONATION CAMPAIGN FOR JULIA MAYER

Several weeks ago, the JFKI Library initiated a book donation campaign in memory of Julia Mayer who, before her fatal accident, acted as library director from 2012 to 2016. Inspired by an idea brought forward by Prof. Irwin Collier, the plan is to build a small collection of books that Julia Mayer might either have read herself or would have wanted to put on the shelves of the JFKI Library. Although this campaign has already attracted lively interest, more donations are always welcome! If you would like to donate a book, please contact **Ange-lika Krieser** for more information. A bookplate designed for this purpose will be affixed to every donated book

popular primary sources by 473 comic books and graphic novels, and 238 TV-series on DVD, acquiring new titles as well as filling gaps. Additionally, the DFG supports the subscription of six U.S. and one Canadian newspaper. For nationwide and international demand, microfilms may be requested via interlibrary loan service. Due to licensing, online access is limited to the FU campus. The JFKI Library hopes that access to this collection will be expanded in the not too distant future, and the library team highly appreciates the fruitful co-operation with the DFG and SUB Göttingen.

## MIDWAY REPORT ON “SPECIALIZED INFORMATION SERVICE ANGLO-AMERICAN CULTURE”

Since 2016, the JFKI Library has participated in the three-year project “**Specialized Information Service Anglo-American Culture**” (Fachinformationsdienst Anglistik-Amerikanistik – FID AAC), funded by the **German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft – DFG)**. The service replaces the former “Sonder-sammelgebiete” for the Anglo-American region. The aim of this project is to develop infrastructures and services that will improve access to academic literature and information for scholars regardless of their location in Germany.

The JFKI Library in co-operation with its project partner, Göttingen State and University Library (SUB), has been asked to prepare a midway report by the end of June. During the first 18 months of the project, the JFKI Library has expanded its unique collection of North American



# Imprint

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