



The Image and **the Word:**

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Interactions
between
American
Literature,
Media,
Visual Arts
and Film

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Conference of the Spanish
Association for American
Studies (SAAS)



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INFORME DE LA PRESIDENTA DE SAAS 2018

Queridas/os socias/os de SAAS:

Nuevamente llega a vuestras pantallas este Boletín digital que sirve de enlace escrito entre sus socios. Sirvan estas líneas no sólo para enviaros un cariñoso abrazo de los miembros de la Junta de SAAS, sino también para hacer un poco de balance sobre el año 2018, año sin congreso, pero de preparación del próximo que se celebrará en Salamanca del 9 al 11 de abril de 2019, siguiendo la estela de la enorme cantidad de eventos que la Universidad de Salamanca ha celebrado a lo largo de 2018, año de celebración del octavo centenario de la universidad más antigua de España. Como sabéis, *The Image and the Word: Interactions between American Literature, Media, Visual Arts and Film* es el tema del próximo congreso que nos reunirá a todos los SAASeros de dentro y fuera de España.

2018, año entre congresos SAAS, no ha carecido de actividad dentro de los estudios norteamericanos. Como cada año par, se celebró el Congreso EAAS (*European Association for American Studies*) en el King's College de Londres, y esta 32ª edición de EAAS se unió a la 63ª edición de BAAS (*British Association for American Studies*), bajo las siglas EBAAS (4 a 7 de abril de 2018: <https://blogs.kcl.ac.uk/ebaas2018/files/2018/03/FINAL-PROGRAMME-28.03.compressed.pdf>). Esta presidenta acudió a dicho Congreso, y pude comprobar la alta presencia de socios de SAAS en Londres, y la alta calidad y el prestigio de los Estudios Norteamericanos en España. Gracias a la mediación de Cristina Alsina, tuve la oportunidad de despachar con mis homólogos/as de Asociaciones de Estudios Norteamericanos de otros países de Europa del Sur (Portugal—APEEA, Italia—AISNA y Grecia—HELAAS) y fruto de estas conversaciones hemos firmado la afiliación de estas tres asociaciones a SAAS. Este mundo global en que vivimos nos inclina a comprender que nuestros Congresos también han de crecer y transnacionalizarse de manera pausada, pero sin tregua. Esperamos, pues, una mayor presencia de nuestros colegas portugueses, italianos y griegos en Salamanca 2019.

2018 ha sido un año especialmente feliz para SAAS porque, tras años de sequía provocada por la crisis en España, varios de sus miembros se han convertido en catedráticos/as. Me tomo la libertad de hacer público que ya



han accedido a sus merecidas cátedras profesores/as tan destacados en SAAS como Viorica Patea, Jesús Benito, Ana Manzananas, Cristina Garrigós y Begoña Simal (no pasa desapercibido el dato de que cada vez más mujeres son catedráticas, también en nuestra área). Enhorabuena, queridos colegas. No nos cabe la menor duda de que, desde vuestras cátedras, haréis que los estudios norteamericanos crezcan y se multipliquen en España, y que nuestro prestigio internacional siga imparabile.

Por lo demás, 2018 ha sido un año complicado en la esfera nacional e internacional. Desde el movimiento #Me Too que se inició en octubre de 2017 y tuvo su máximo auge en los primeros meses de 2018, dando un vuelco al intocable Hollywood, hasta la falta de Premio Nobel de Literatura en 2018, por razones relacionadas tangencialmente con algún escándalo sexual, parece que el feminismo está más en boga que nunca, y seguirá teniendo su reflejo en la política, la comunicación y la literatura. Desde luego, el impacto y el poder de las redes sociales, los blogs, Twitter, Instagram y toda la comunicación digital ya ha llegado a nuestros Estudios, y ya no podemos desligar “the image from the word”. Netflix y HBO siguen imparables en su ascenso como nuevas formas de contar historias, y ya no hay Congreso que no incluya varios paneles sobre series norteamericanas de TV que están haciendo historia.

Y hablando del Premio Nobel, es obligado mencionar al eterno candidato que nunca recibió ese merecido premio, Philip Roth, cuya voz quedó enmudecida para siempre el 22 de mayo de 2018. Nunca entendí cómo la Academia sueca no supo darse cuenta de la grandeza de este escritor universal, algo que sí hizo el jurado del Premio Príncipe de Asturias de las Letras, otorgándole tal galardón en 2012. Sirva como homenaje *in memoriam* la reproducción de parte del discurso de recepción de Roth (ya entonces estaba enfermo y no pudo viajar a Oviedo a recoger el premio), porque no puede ser más alusivo a nuestra profesión, como americanistas. La cita es larga, pero no tiene desperdicio:

Estoy, por supuesto, encantado de recibir su Premio. Asimismo, estoy sorprendido, como es natural, de que una eminente institución extranjera se fije en la obra de uno. Soy un escritor estadounidense. La historia de los Estados Unidos, las vidas estadounidenses, la sociedad estadounidense, los lugares estadounidenses, los dilemas estadounidenses —la confusión, las expectativas, el desconcierto y la angustia estadounidenses— constituyen mi temática, como lo fueron



para mis predecesores estadounidenses durante más de dos siglos. El habla estadounidense es mi argot. Si me detengo a pensar en mi público, el público en el que pienso es un público estadounidense.

Por lo tanto, me ha dejado realmente sorprendido enterarme de que el público español también se haya fijado en mí —y lo que es más, un público español agradecido. ¿Qué pueden significar mis historias estadounidenses para los lectores españoles? ¿Cómo puede mi retrato de la vida de los estadounidenses en novelas mías como *Pastoral americana*, *Me casé con un comunista* o *La mancha humana* competir con la representación estereotipada, excesivamente simplificada de los Estados Unidos que nubla la percepción de mi país en casi todas partes? ¿Puede una obra de ficción estadounidense —escrita por mí o por cualquiera de mis más que dotados contemporáneos— penetrar en una mitología de los Estados Unidos que esta arraigada, en tantos ámbitos, en una acérrima animadversión política?

Me imagino que la concesión de este premio —así como su concesión varios años atrás a mi amigo estadounidense Paul Auster— sugiere una esperanzadora respuesta afirmativa. Sí, una obra de ficción estadounidense sería es, efectivamente, capaz de atravesar la ignorancia, la mentira y la superstición sin sentido que generalmente se combinan para mantener a raya la enorme densidad de la verdadera realidad estadounidense. “¡Mira”, puedo decirme ahora, “hay algún lugar donde he conseguido hacerme comprender!”. Y si ese fuera el caso, nada me haría más feliz.¹

Descansa en paz, Philip Roth. Tu voz siempre seguirá viva para los lectores de todo el mundo que hemos podido comprender un poco mejor a los Estados Unidos, gracias a tu ficción. No quiero dejar fuera de este homenaje a otro grande entre los grandes que también nos dejó en mayo de 2018: Tom Wolfe. No sólo la “hoguera de las vanidades” americana añorará a este hombre que, enfundado en su inconfundible sastre blanco y corbata de lunares, supo hacer la crónica satírica de la sociedad estadounidense como pocos lo hicieron jamás.

¹ <http://www.fpa.es/es/premios-princesa-de-asturias/premiados/2012-philip-roth.html?texto=discurso&especifica=0>



No quiero alargarme más. Sólo decir que del 8 al 11 de noviembre estaré en el Congreso anual de nuestra asociación americana afiliada ASA (American Studies Association) en Atlanta (el título de este año es “States of Emergence”), donde intentaré representar a SAAS como nuestra asociación se merece.

Un cordial abrazo y mis mejores deseos para unas felices fiestas navideñas y un muy venturoso año nuevo, en que nuestros socios/as sigan ascendiendo en la carrera académica, como ha ocurrido en este prolífico año 2018.

Isabel Durán Giménez-Rico
Universidad Complutense

Dear SAAS members,

Once again, this digital Newsletter comes to your screens, as a written link between SAAS members. Let these lines serve not only to send you the SAAS Board's best wishes, but also to make a little balance on the year 2018, a non-Conference year, but one of preparation of the next one, to be held in Salamanca from 9 to 11 April, 2019. Our conference follows in the footsteps of the huge number of events that the University of Salamanca has held throughout 2018, celebration year of the eighth centenary of the oldest university in Spain. As you know, *The Image and the Word: Interactions between American Literature, Media, Visual Arts and Film* is the theme of the next conference, which will gather many SAAS members from Spain and elsewhere.

But 2018, the inter-conference year, has not lacked academic activity within North American Studies. As every even year, the EAAS Conference (European Association for American Studies) took place, this time at King's College London, and this 32nd edition of EAAS joined the 63rd edition of BAAS (British Association for American Studies), under the acronym EBAAS (4-7 April 2018: <https://blogs.kcl.ac.uk/ebaas2018/files/2018/03/FINAL-PROGRAMME-28.03.compressed.pdf>). This president attended EBAAS, to be witness to the high presence of SAAS members in London, and the high quality and prestige of North American Studies in Spain. Thanks to the mediation of Cristina Alsina, I had the opportunity to dispatch with my counterparts of Associations of North American Studies from Southern European countries (Portugal—APEEA, Italy—AISNA and Greece—



HELAAS) and, as a result of these conversations we have signed the affiliation of these three associations to SAAS. This global world in which we live inclines us to understand that our Conferences must also grow and be transnationalised in a slow but relentless manner. We therefore expect a greater presence of our Portuguese, Italian and Greek colleagues at Salamanca 2019.

2018 has been a particularly happy year for SAAS because, after years of lack of full Professorships that came with the cuts in the Spanish academia, several of its members have become full Professors. I take the liberty of making public that quite a few SAAS outstanding academics have acceded to their deserved professorships: Viorica Patea, Jesús Benito, Ana Manzanás, Cristina Garrigós, and Begoña Simal (the fact that more and more women become professors, also in our area, does not go unnoticed). Congratulations, dear colleagues. We have no doubt that, from your chairs, you will make North American studies grow and multiply in Spain, and that our international prestige will continue unabated.

Moreover, 2018 has been a complicated year both nationally and internationally. From the #Me Too movement, which began in October 2017 and peaked in the first months of 2018, overturning the untouchable Hollywood, to the lack of a Nobel Prize in Literature in 2018, for reasons tangentially related to some sexual scandals, it seems that feminism is more needed than ever, and will continue to be reflected in politics, communication and literature. Of course, the impact and power of social networks, blogs, Twitter, Instagram and all digital media has already reached our studies, so that we can no longer disassociate “the image from the word”. Netflix and HBO are unstoppable in their rise as new ways of telling stories, and there is no academic Conference that does not include several panels on North American ground-breaking TV series.

And, speaking of the Nobel Prize, we must mention the eternal candidate who never received that well-deserved prize, Philip Roth, whose voice was silenced forever on May 22, 2018. I never understood how the Swedish Academy failed to realise the gigantic stature of this universal writer, something that the jury of the Prince of Asturias Award for Literature did, when it granted him such award in 2012. May the reproduction of part of Roth's speech (at that time he was already ill and could not travel to Oviedo to receive the award) serve as a tribute *in memoriam*, because it could not



be more meaningful to our profession, as Americanists. The quote is long, but it is worth the while reading it in full:

I am, of course, delighted to receive your Award. I am also surprised, as could not be otherwise, that an eminent foreign institution notices my work. I am an American writer. The history of the United States, American lives, American society, American places, American dilemmas —American confusion, expectations, bewilderment, and anguish— are my subject matter, as they were for my American predecessors for more than two centuries. American speech is my slang. If I come to think of my audience, the one I think of is an American audience.

Therefore, I am really surprised to learn that the Spanish public has noticed me —and what’s more, a grateful Spanish public. What can my American stories mean to Spanish readers? How can my portrait of American life in novels like *American Pastoral*, *I Married a Communist*, or *The Human Stain* compete with the overly simplified stereotypical representation of the United States that clouds the perception of my country almost everywhere? Can a work of American fiction —written by me or by any of my more than gifted contemporaries— penetrate a mythology of the United States that is rooted, in so many spheres, in fierce political animosity?

I imagine that the granting of this award -as well as that granted to my American friend Paul Auster several years ago- suggests a hopefully affirmative response. Yes, a serious American work of fiction is indeed capable of piercing the ignorance, lies, and meaningless superstition that generally combine to keep at bay the enormous density of true American reality. “Look,” I can tell myself now, “there is some place where I have managed to make myself understood! And if that were the case, nothing would make me happier.”²

Rest in peace, Philip Roth. Your voice will always be alive for readers around the world who have been able to understand the United States a little better, thanks to your fiction. I don’t want to leave out from this

² <http://www.fpa.es/es/premios-princesa-de-asturias/premiados/2012-philip-roth.html?texto=discurso&especifica=0> (My translation).



tribute another great one among the greatest, who also left us in May of 2018: Tom Wolfe. It is not only the American “bonfire of vanities” that will miss this man who, wrapped in his inevitable white suit and dotted tie, knew how to transmit the satirical chronicle of American society as few ever did.

This is all for now. Let me just add that from the 8th to the 11th of November I will attend the annual Conference of our American affiliated association ASA (American Studies Association) in Atlanta (this year’s theme is “States of Emergence”), where I will try to represent SAAS as our association deserves.

My warmest regards to all SAAS members, and my best wishes for a happy Christmas and a very successful new year, in which our members continue to ascend in their academic careers, as has happened in this prolific year 2018.

Isabel Durán Giménez-Rico
Universidad Complutense



ACTA DE LA ASAMBLEA GENERAL DE SAAS, MADRID 2018

El día 16 de abril de 2018, a las 16:00h, se reúne la Asamblea General de Socios de SAAS en la Sala de Juntas del Edificio de Estudiantes de la Universidad Complutense con el siguiente Orden del día:

1. Aprobación, si procede, del Acta de la sesión anterior
2. Informe de la Presidencia
3. Informe de la Vicepresidencia
4. Informe de la Tesorería y aprobación, si procede, de las cuentas del ejercicio
5. Informe sobre el Congreso SAAS 2018 en Salamanca
6. Informe sobre la *Revista de Estudios Norteamericanos*
7. Informe sobre la Beca Washington Irving (SAAS-Instituto Franklin)
8. Participación de estudiantes de postgrado en la asociación
9. Establecimiento de acuerdos bilaterales con asociaciones de Estudios Norteamericanos europeas
10. Propuesta de celebración del congreso de EAAS 2022 en España
11. Ruegos y preguntas

Asisten:

Álvarez López, Esther
Andrés, Rodrigo
Durán Giménez-Rico, Isabel
Garrigós, Cristina
Gualberto, Rebeca
Guijarro González, Juan Ignacio
Martín, Félix
Méndez, Carmen
Parra Fernández, Laura de la
Patea Birk, Viorica
Piñero, Eulalia

1. Aprobación, si procede, del Acta de la sesión anterior

Se corrige el nombre de la Dra. Diana Villanueva, que aparece como Laura.
Se aprueba el Acta por asentimiento.



2. Informe de la Presidencia

- a. La Presidenta felicita a las personas socias de SAAS que han promocionado a cátedra desde la última Asamblea General: Cristina Garrigós, Jesús Benito, Ana Manzanas, Antonio Ballesteros, Viorica Patea.
- b. No se ha recibido información sobre accesos a Titularidad.
- c. La Presidenta asistió al Congreso de EBAAS (32nd European Association for American Studies and 63rd British Association for American Studies Conference), que tuvo lugar en Londres los días 4-7 de abril de 2018.
 - Informa de la presencia de un nutrido número de participantes españoles. Destaca la relevancia concedida en el congreso a los postgraduados, con un panel dedicado a American Studies in Europe: The Experience of Postgraduate Students and Early Career Researchers, además de la celebración de otras actividades específicamente para ellos.
 - Insiste en lo anunciado en la anterior asamblea (Cáceres 2017) sobre la posibilidad de acuerdos bilaterales con otras asociaciones americanistas europeas (que trataremos en el punto 9 del Orden del día). Se podría ofrecer colaboración a las asociaciones de Grecia, Italia, Francia, Portugal y Turquía. Dado que el número de socios de la asociación francesa es muy elevado y podría suponer que presentaran muchos paneles, se sugiere que estos acuerdos se lleven a cabo por fases, iniciándose con Grecia, Italia y Portugal, dejando a Francia y Turquía para una fase ulterior. Dichos acuerdos permitirían a los miembros de las asociaciones afiliadas presentar paneles y pagar cuotas en las mismas condiciones y términos que los socios de SAAS.

3. Informe de la Vicepresidencia

Rodrigo Andrés informa sobre el envío del Boletín 2017 a los socios, al que se ha actualizado el formato y al que se ha incorporado una nueva sección de promociones, que incluye a aquellos miembros de la asociación que han accedido a una nueva categoría académica.

El vicepresidente da las gracias al webmaster y a los socios que han enviado información sobre CFP, eventos, proyectos, etc., animándoles a que sigan haciéndolo para el próximo Boletín. En septiembre se enviará un mensaje para solicitarles dicha información.



4. Informe de la Tesorería y aprobación, si procede, de las cuentas del ejercicio

El periodo del ejercicio comprende del 1 de abril de 2017 al 31 de marzo de 2018. El saldo bancario de la asociación a 31 de marzo de 2018 es de 40.168.52€. Hay una disminución de 1.973,78€, tras haber asumido la Junta gastos del congreso que antes abonaba el Comité Organizador. En los últimos doce meses ha habido en la asociación un total de 16 bajas y de 23 altas, y se han devuelto 4 cuotas.

En cuanto a los movimientos de la cuenta, donde se reflejan los ingresos y gastos propios de la entidad, el detalle de los mismos es el siguiente:

Concepto	Cantidad
Cuotas anuales (194; 14 web; 24 EAAS)	+7.760,00€
R.E.N. 20	-1.602,44€
Desplazamientos Junta Directiva	- 569,78€
Asesoría; mantenimiento web (34,15€)	-566.55€
Gastos bancarios	-578,50
Gastos congreso Cáceres 2017 (Cena bienvenida; alojamiento Junta)	-2.096,51€
Beca Fulbright 2018	-3.000,00€
Premios Congreso Cáceres 2017 (3)	-1.200,00

Como todos los años, se enviará un aviso en noviembre a todos los socios que tengan su cuota domiciliada para que adviertan a Tesorería de cualquier cambio en banco o cuenta bancaria; quienes no tengan la cuota domiciliada, tendrán que renovar su membresía, bien por transferencia bancaria o a través de la opción de pago con tarjeta.

Se aprueban las cuentas del ejercicio.



5. Informe sobre el Congreso SAAS 2018 en Salamanca

Viorica Patea, organizadora del congreso y Vocal de SAAS, informa de que la convocatoria de paneles ha sido un éxito, ya que se han propuesto 27 abiertos, además de 6 completos, uno de ellos doble, y un Talkshop sobre “Teaching Walt Whitman”, una manera de homenajear a este escritor, del que en 2019, año del congreso, se cumple el bicentenario de su nacimiento. En reunión de Junta previa a la Asamblea se aceptan todos los paneles propuestos, dada la alta calidad de los mismos y la pertinencia respecto al tema del Congreso.

Sin embargo, se explica que dos de las personas que han propuesto dichos paneles no son socias de SAAS, habiendo elegido la casilla “Processing Membership” del formulario empleado para enviar su propuesta. La secretaria se encargará de recordarles que, de no completar su afiliación a SAAS en pocos días, no podrán figurar estos dos paneles como aceptados.

Tras mirar la página web de la asociación y el CFPanels, se comprueba que no aparece explícitamente en ninguno de los dos sitios que haya que ser socio para enviar una propuesta de panel. Se acuerda añadir este requisito obligatorio a la propia página web, de manera que quede claro para quienes deseen proponer un panel en próximos congresos que es imprescindible ser miembro de la asociación.

Se trata a continuación el tema de las tasas del congreso, decidiendo la asamblea que se mantengan en las mismas cantidades que en los congresos de Madrid 2015 y Cáceres 2017:

REGISTRATION FEES	Early Bird	After Feb. 15th	Membership fee
Conference participants and attendees (SAAS or ASA members) ¹	120 €	150 €	--
Non SAAS or ASA members (see ¹)	120€	150€	40€
Postgraduate students ² (participants in panels)	60 €	75 €	20€

¹ Or members of other partner associations we henceforward establish agreements with.



Doctoral candidates (participants in the Doctoral Seminar and/or in panels)			
Graduate and postgraduate students (attendees only)	20€	20€	--

El pago se realizará **siempre por adelantado**, a través de transferencia bancaria o pago con tarjeta, de manera que no habrá posibilidad de hacerlo en la sede del congreso.

En cuanto a los sponsors, el comité organizador tratará de contar con el apoyo económico de la Comisión Fulbright, de la Embajada de los Estados Unidos, el Instituto Franklin de la UAH, además de la Universidad de Salamanca (vicerrectorados, decanato, departamento, etc.).

Los conferenciantes plenarios internacionales, un escritor y un crítico, son elegidos por el comité organizador, mientras que el tercero lo elige SAAS. El comité propone en primer lugar al escritor Paul Auster y, en segundo lugar, en caso de que Auster no aceptara, al poeta Robert Haas. En cuanto al crítico, se contactará con Charles Altieri, Sam Otter y Christopher Bigsby, en este orden.

Se volverá a organizar el Seminario Doctoral Félix Martín. Se plantea que la moderación podría estar a cargo de la persona que haya disfrutado de la beca SAAS-Fulbright, puesto que esta persona también debe presentar los resultados de su investigación durante el congreso, según se recoge en la convocatoria. Carmen Méndez expresa la necesidad de que, además, asista y participe el profesorado también con el fin de que quienes presenten su investigación reciban el consejo y el feedback del personal docente e investigador con más experiencia. Se propone que el Seminario conste de dos partes: a) presentación de la investigación por parte del alumnado de postgrado; b) puesta al día: debates sobre asuntos que les atañen directamente en el desarrollo de sus estudios en cuestiones de administración, buenas prácticas, etc.

² Certification will be required.



El Dr. Félix Martín sugiere que, para la presentación de la investigación, cada estudiante se centre en un punto concreto de su tesis, en vez de en el conjunto de la misma, con el fin de enfocar el análisis. La Junta opina que es una buena idea y se acepta.

Otro punto que se comenta es la posibilidad de que el alumnado de postgrado pueda participar en paneles exclusivos para ellos, pues de otra manera pueden sentirse intimidados. Fue una idea que los estudiantes expresaron en el congreso de EBAAS. Laura de la Parra no está de acuerdo, pues argumenta que los tribunales de tesis están formados por profesorado con experiencia y resulta más apropiado que expertos puedan aconsejar y plantear cuestiones directamente, contribuyendo a nuevos planteamientos y una mejora del trabajo del estudiante.

Viorica Patea propone que alguien del comité organizador esté siempre al frente de este seminario, junto con el profesorado asistente al congreso que desee participar.

6. Informe de la revista REN

La directora de la revista excusa su asistencia, pero envía el informe para ser leído ante la Asamblea, que se resume a continuación:

Volumen 20, 2016: La versión impresa se envió a finales de 2017. Informa de un error de la Editorial de la Universidad de Sevilla que hizo que este volumen apareciera impreso con el tipo de letra de todos los anteriores, es decir, sin incorporar los cambios que se habían propuesto en el Consejo de Redacción y aprobados en la Asamblea de SAAS de 2016 para renovar la revista estéticamente y hacerla más legible, pues los maquetadores se limitaron a aplicar la misma plantilla de números anteriores.

Volumen 21, 2017: Estará en la web en los próximos días, e inmediatamente se procederá a preparar la edición impresa, asegurándose de que salga con el nuevo formato. Este volumen incluye seis artículos y dos reseñas. Uno de los artículos aparece como Special Feature, al tener una extensión más larga de lo habitual (Carme Manuel, la autora, lo planteó y al equipo editorial le pareció aceptable), y otro, que aparecerá en una sección aparte, es una “reflexión personal” de Trudier Harris, Catedrática Emérita y miembro del Consejo Asesor. Ambos han pasado por la doble revisión correspondiente. Considera la Dra. Toda que puede resultar interesante



que, ocasionalmente, al igual que se publican entrevistas, se puedan publicar trabajos relevantes de un formato diferente al artículo académico de 4.500 a 8.000 palabras, siempre que se cumplan los porcentajes requeridos para la evaluación positiva de la revista.

Volumen 22, 2018. Se han recibido hasta el momento seis artículos y una reseña. Dos han sido rechazados, uno de ellos por excesiva coincidencia con una publicación previa de la misma persona, y los otros cuatro están en distintos estadios del proceso de evaluación. La creciente difusión internacional de la revista se refleja en que dos de estos artículos procedían de fuera de España, al igual que en el volumen anterior.

Open Journal System. La revista recibió en octubre de 2017 una Ayuda del Plan Propio de la Universidad de Sevilla para volcar los contenidos al sistema OJS. Un técnico de la empresa Scriptorium está llevando a cabo esta tarea, empezando por los más recientes; con la Ayuda convocada para este año, que también solicitará, se subirán los volúmenes restantes. Comenta que es posible utilizar la plataforma OJS simplemente para dar más visibilidad a la Revista a través de los recursos que proporciona, sin que sea obligatorio dar de alta todas las funciones para automatizar el envío, la revisión y la recepción de artículos. La directora de REN considera que, con el volumen de trabajos que reciben, resulta más práctico seguir con el sistema actual de gestionar la revista a través de la dirección de correo ren@us.es, ya que el sistema complica, más que facilita, la gestión. La página está actualmente en construcción y se notificará cuando se complete la tarea.

Otros aspectos. Se han incorporado las sugerencias que se realizaron en la Asamblea del SAAS de 2017, y que se recogen en el Acta, y se ha solicitado la inclusión del nombre y logo de SAAS en la plataforma web actual. En cualquier caso, se le dará la debida visibilidad en la nueva página del OJS. El martes 10 de abril se celebró en la Facultad de Filología de la Universidad de Sevilla la II Feria de la Investigación, con el objetivo de dar a conocer la tarea de los grupos de investigación de la Facultad. Esta cita ha servido también para la difusión de la Revista como parte de la actividad del Grupo de Investigación “Estudios Norteamericanos”.

Para concluir, M^a Ángeles Toda agradece en su informe a las personas que han contribuido a la Revista con artículos y reseñas, o como revisoras, el



apoyo de SAAS, así como la labor del comité editorial, del comité asesor y científico y de los estudiantes que trabajan para la revista.

7. Informe Ayuda SAAS-Washington Irving (Instituto Benjamin Franklin de la Universidad de Alcalá)

La Secretaria informa de la recepción de 9 solicitudes en esta convocatoria, un récord en comparación con todas las ediciones anteriores, donde se presentaban muchas menos candidaturas. Tras evaluar la documentación enviada por las personas solicitantes, se concede la ayuda a Tamara Barreiro Neira, de la Universidad de La Coruña, con su proyecto “The Uses of Humor in Native American and Chicano Cultures: An Alternative Study of their Literature, Cinema and Video Games”. Se informa a la Asamblea de que ha sido notificado el fallo a la ganadora, así como al resto de solicitantes, y que se le ha comunicado que ha de presentar su investigación en el próximo congreso de Salamanca, ya que es uno de los requisitos de las bases de esta ayuda.

8. Participación de estudiantes de postgrado en la asociación

Con el fin de incrementar la presencia y participación de estudiantes de postgrado en SAAS, la presidenta propone una reducción del 50% de la cuota de membresía a SAAS para estudiantes de Máster y Doctorado, que quedaría en 20€. Se aprueba. Asimismo, propone que se incorpore un estudiante de postgrado a la Junta Directiva, siguiendo la pauta de otras asociaciones internacionales, que represente al colectivo de estudiantes de postgrado en la asociación y en encuentros internacionales. Esto, sin embargo, no puede aprobarse porque no está recogido en los estatutos. Por tanto, se decide invitar a un representante de estudiantes de postgrado cuando se traten asuntos que afecten a este colectivo de socios.

Por otro lado, retoma la cuestión planteada ya en la Asamblea de Cáceres sobre la puesta en marcha del premio *Best Thesis in American Studies*, que saldrá en la misma convocatoria que los Premios Javier Coy. Los requisitos para solicitar participar en el premio son:

- a) ser miembro de SAAS;
- b) haber asistido, al menos, al último congreso de SAAS y haber participado en el Doctoral Seminar;
- c) haber obtenido Sobresaliente Cum laude por unanimidad;



- d) haber defendido la tesis en los dos últimos años (para la próxima convocatoria, los años 2016-2018);
- e) el tema de la tesis ha de girar en torno a los estudios sobre los Estados Unidos (o una perspectiva comparada con US Studies)
- f) Se considerará mérito tener Mención Internacional.

Se acuerda ponerle el nombre del Prof. Félix Martín, por estar este premio estrechamente relacionado con el Doctoral Seminar, que también lleva su nombre.

La Junta directiva se encargará de redactar la convocatoria para que pueda publicarse junto con la Convocatoria de los Premios Javier Coy. El premio será de 500€ y certificado acreditativo del mérito.

9. Establecimiento de acuerdos bilaterales con asociaciones de Estudios Norteamericanos europeos

Se aprueba el establecimiento de acuerdos bilaterales con las Asociaciones de American Studies de Grecia, Italia y Portugal en una primera aproximación.

10. Propuesta de celebración del congreso de EAAS 2022 en España

La Profesora Cristina Garrigós informa de que, ante la solicitud de candidaturas para la celebración de EAAS, en la asamblea de EAAS en Londres se propuso para el congreso de 2022 que la UNED, en colaboración con la Universidad Complutense de Madrid, organizara el congreso de la Asociación Europea. Asimismo, manifestó que la UNED cuenta con muchas salas para poder celebrar los múltiples paneles simultáneos del congreso.

11. Ruegos y preguntas

El Prof. Guijarro pide a los miembros de SAAS que cuando soliciten certificados de pago de membresía, cuenten al menos con una semana para su elaboración y que adjunten todos los datos completos para poder hacer la correspondiente certificación.

Sin más asuntos que tratar, se levanta la sesión a las 18:30h. De todo lo dicho, como Secretaria, doy fe.

Fdo.: Esther Álvarez López



JAVIER COY BIENNIAL RESEARCH AWARDS (2019)

SAAS wishes to recognize the research achievements of its members through the Javier Coy Biennial Research Awards. The goal of these awards is to promote high-quality scholarship in the field of American Studies, and to celebrate the originality and excellence of research carried out within SAAS. All SAAS members are eligible to submit work in the following categories:

Best Monograph: This award is open to original volumes (joint authorship is also possible) published in 2017 or 2018. A monograph is here understood as a single volume on a specific subject, containing original research material. Literary translations, as well as editions, are excluded. The endowment of this award is 700 Euros.

Best Edited Volume: This award seeks to recognize outstanding edited collections of articles published in 2017 or 2018 in book form. The endowment of this award is 500 Euros.

Best Journal Article: This award is intended to honor original research articles published in 2017 or 2018 in a specialized research journal of international scope and high impact rate. The endowment of this award is 300 Euros.

Best REN Article: This award is open to original research articles published in the *Revista de Estudios Norteamericanos*. For this particular type of award, all the articles appearing in REN since the last SAAS conference (a biennial period) will be considered, unless otherwise stated by the authors; therefore, authors do not need to send copies to the committee. The endowment of this award is 200 Euros.

The authors, who necessarily have to be SAAS members at the time of submission, should send three copies of their work—with the exception of the REN award—to the conference organizing committee:

Dr. Viorica Patea
Departamento de Filología Inglesa
Universidad de Salamanca
Calle Placentinos 18
37008 Salamanca



Only one item across all categories can be submitted by each member. Works previously submitted for other awards are excluded. Once the Javier Coy awards are announced, the volumes/articles will be returned to authors. Following the SAAS board's agreement, the composition of the jury will not be made public. The jury's decision, which is unappealable, will be made public during the members' general assembly at the biennial conference. The next deadline for submitting works is January 15th 2019, and the awards will be made public at the 14th SAAS conference, to be held at the Universidad de Salamanca in Spring 2019.



FÉLIX MARTÍN BEST THESIS IN AMERICAN STUDIES AWARD

This award is intended to recognize excellent doctoral theses by SAAS members. The endowment of this award is 500 Euros. The requirements for application are:

- a) The applicant must be a SAAS member.
- b) The applicant must have attended, at least, the last SAAS conference and participated in the Doctoral seminar.
- c) The thesis must have obtained a grade of “Sobresaliente cum laude”.
- d) The applicant must have read her/his thesis in the two years prior to the Conference (January 2017 - December 2018)
- e) The thesis must be on American (US) Studies (or on a comparative approach with US Studies).
- f) The “Mención internacional” will be considered a merit.

Applicants must contact the SAAS Secretary, Dr. Esther Álvarez (eal@uniovi.es), and send her a PDF of their doctoral thesis together with a CV (conferences, research stays, publications), and the transcript of their graduate studies and of the grade obtained for the doctoral thesis. Submission period: January 7 - March 1, 2019.



BECA SAAS-FULBRIGHT, CURSO 2019-2020 XV CONVOCATORIA



La Asociación Española para el Estudio de los Estados Unidos de América (SAAS) <http://www.saasweb.org>, en colaboración con la Comisión de Intercambio Cultural, Educativo y Científico entre España y Estados Unidos de América (Comisión Fulbright), anuncia la convocatoria bienal de una beca dirigida a jóvenes investigadores en el campo de “American Studies”. El objetivo de la misma es contribuir al desarrollo de los estudios sobre Estados Unidos y ampliar las posibilidades de investigación de calidad en centros estadounidenses, así como potenciar el conocimiento y las relaciones entre los centros de investigación españoles y estadounidenses.

BASES DE LA CONVOCATORIA

I. REQUISITOS

1. Nacionalidad española o de otro país de la Unión Europea. No pueden optar a la beca los ciudadanos de Estados Unidos, los que tengan derecho automático a la ciudadanía o los residentes en el país.
2. Estar en posesión del grado de Doctor con posterioridad al 31 de diciembre de 2009. Los títulos otorgados por centros españoles privados, o instituciones extranjeras, deberán estar homologados por el Ministerio de Educación antes del cierre del plazo de presentación de solicitudes.
3. Excelente conocimiento del idioma inglés — hablado y escrito — en el momento de formalizar la solicitud.



II. FORMALIZACIÓN Y PLAZO DE PRESENTACIÓN DE SOLICITUDES

El plazo de presentación de solicitudes es del **17 de diciembre de 2018 al 15 de febrero de 2019**, ambos inclusive.

Los solicitantes deberán rellenar y enviar electrónicamente la solicitud disponible en <http://www.fulbright.es> junto con la documentación adjunta correspondiente.

Una solicitud se considerará completa si consta de:

1. El formulario de solicitud electrónica que incluye:

- Datos personales
- Datos académicos
- Datos profesionales
- Proyecto de la beca

2. Documentación adjunta dentro de la solicitud electrónica:

- Certificado académico completo.
- Título de grado de doctor o justificante de haberlo solicitado.
- DNI o pasaporte.
- Fotografía reciente.
- “Curriculum Vitae”, máximo 5 folios.
- Carta de invitación al centro estadounidense donde se va a desarrollar el trabajo de investigación.

Se podrá requerir a todo solicitante, en cualquier momento del proceso, la presentación de los originales de los documentos acreditativos que hubiese adjuntado escaneados en su solicitud.

Las solicitudes incompletas o la falta de la documentación requerida pueden producir la anulación de la solicitud.



III. DOTACIÓN DE LA BECA

La dotación de la beca incluye una asignación única de 6.000 € en concepto de ayuda parcial para cubrir los gastos de viaje y la manutención en el centro investigador de destino.

Los becarios Fulbright participan en el único programa de intercambio avalado por los gobiernos de los dos países. Los becarios cuentan con el apoyo de la Comisión binacional y de los organismos gestores en Estados Unidos que, de forma gratuita, les prestarán los siguientes servicios:

1. Gestión y administración de la beca.
2. Servicios de apoyo, gestión y asesoría a través del organismo gestor en EEUU.
3. Participación en los seminarios y actividades culturales y científicas que se organicen en nombre de y por el Programa Fulbright, siempre que el presupuesto del Programa lo permita.
4. Suscripción de una póliza de seguro de enfermedad y accidente para el becario por 100.000 dólares USA.
5. Documentación necesaria, coste y gestión del visado “Exchange Visitor (J-1)” para el becario y los correspondientes para los familiares a su cargo que le acompañen.

IV. DURACIÓN DE LA BECA

El periodo de disfrute se establecerá en un mínimo de tres y un máximo de doce meses. La fecha de incorporación deberá estar comprendida entre septiembre de 2019 y junio de 2020 y no podrá posponerse sin la autorización previa de la Comisión.

V. RENOVACIÓN

La beca no es renovable para un segundo período de disfrute.

VI. PROCESO DE SELECCIÓN



En marzo de 2019 tendrá lugar una preselección de candidatos en la que se valorará la documentación presentada por el solicitante de acuerdo con los criterios siguientes: interés del proyecto, méritos académicos, adecuación del centro elegido a la investigación proyectada, interés de dicha investigación en el campo de los estudios norteamericanos en España y su posible desarrollo, experiencia profesional y cartas de referencia. Se dará preferencia a los solicitantes que no tengan experiencia universitaria o profesional reciente en EE.UU.

Los solicitantes preseleccionados recibirán la notificación para presentarse a una entrevista personal obligatoria con un comité de evaluación nombrado por la Comisión. La entrevista tendrá lugar en la sede de la Comisión en Madrid.

La Comisión es el órgano de decisión que confirmará o denegará la candidatura propuesta por el comité de evaluación. El candidato finalista se presentará al *J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board* de EE.UU. Con la aprobación final, el becario recibirá la notificación correspondiente.

VII. OBLIGACIONES DE LOS BECARIOS

1. Responder con dedicación y aprovechamiento a las exigencias académicas de la universidad o centro de investigación estadounidense y a las condiciones del Programa *Fulbright*.
2. Enviar los informes requeridos por el organismo gestor del Programa *Fulbright* en Estados Unidos.
3. Permanecer en el centro donde desarrolle su proyecto. Cualquier petición para ausentarse del centro o cambiar el mismo, modificar el proyecto de estudios, trasladarse temporalmente a España o regresar antes de la fecha autorizada, deberá plantearse al organismo gestor en EE.UU., para que éste solicite la aprobación de SAAS y de la Comisión.
4. Presentar una memoria con los resultados de la investigación realizada a la vuelta a España, en el marco del Congreso de SAAS que corresponda. Con este fin, SAAS le proporcionará un año gratuito de cuota de socio para participar en sus actividades a la finalización de la beca.



5. Suscribir para cada familiar que le acompañe un seguro de enfermedad y accidente, con una cobertura mínima de 100.000 dólares por enfermedad y/o accidente.

VIII. INCOMPATIBILIDADES

1. Disfrutar de cualquier otro tipo de beca o de ayuda económica, concedida por conceptos iguales o similares, sin la autorización previa de la Comisión y de SAAS.
2. Ser empleado o tener relación de parentesco de primer grado con algún vocal o directivo de la Comisión o de SAAS.
3. Haber disfrutado previamente de una beca *Fulbright*.

IX. INFORMACIÓN ADICIONAL

Comisión Fulbright
General Oráa, 55, planta baja
28006 Madrid

Teléfono: 91 702 7000
Horario de llamadas: lunes a viernes de 9 a 14 horas
E-mail: registro@fulbright.es

NOTA

Los becarios Fulbright cuentan con un visado especial, J-1, para entrar en Estados Unidos. La normativa vigente exige que el beneficiario de este tipo de visado, una vez completado el período de estudios, se comprometa a no fijar su residencia permanente en Estados Unidos hasta que hayan transcurrido dos años desde la expiración de su visado.



WASHINGTON IRVING GRANT 2019



Instituto Franklin
de Investigación en Estudios Norteamericanos

SAAS / Instituto Franklin

The Instituto Universitario de Investigación en Estudios Norteamericanos “Benjamin Franklin” de la Universidad de Alcalá (Instituto Franklin-UAH) offers the “Washington Irving” aid to assist SAAS members with their research in the field of American Studies; it covers a research stay of 15 days at the Instituto Franklin-UAH home during the month of July or the first two weeks of September.

Funding

The amount of the aid is 1,600€, to be used for accommodation (600€), transportation (200€), photocopies and office material (100€), computer material (100€) and books from the specific bibliography suggested by the applicant (600€). These books will be part of the Instituto Franklin- UAH’s bibliographical collection but will be available for the applicant during his/her research stay. A suitable place on the premises of the Instituto Franklin-UAH will also be available for the recipient of the aid to conduct his/her research.

Requirements

To be eligible, candidates should be full members of the Spanish Association for American Studies (SAAS) at the moment of the application and continue being so for at least two years after receiving this aid.

The aid is not compatible with any other financial aid or funds perceived for the same research purpose.

The grantee should mention the Washington Irving aid in any publication derived from his/her research stay. The grantee should also present the results of his/her research at the Congress following the acceptance of said aid, notwithstanding that he/she may also do so in other forums or by other means prior to the holding of said Congress.



Application Submission and Required Documents

Applications will be submitted either by email (PDF file) or postal mail, to the following addresses:

Esther Álvarez López
Dpto. Filología Inglesa, Francesa y Alemana
C/Teniente Alfonso Martínez s/n
33011 Oviedo
Email: eal@uniovi.es

Application submission will be open from **February 1** until **March 1, 2019**. Applications must include the following documents:

- 1) A statement of purpose and reasons for applying.
- 2) A signed copy of the candidate's Curriculum Vitae, in paper or as PDF file.
- 3) A signed copy of the candidate's academic record, if the applicant is a student or the beneficiary of a research fellowship or scholarship, or service record issued by the competent authority of the employer institution.
- 4) A sworn statement in paper or as scanned PDF file indicating that the applicant will not receive any other financial aid for the same purpose during his/her stay.
- 5) A brief report in paper or as PDF file of the research project, containing a summary of the state of the question that is going to be analyzed, the specific goals of the research and its relevance, and the methodology to be employed. In addition to the project's bibliography, the candidate should provide a list of the relevant bibliography to be purchased with the aid. The grantee should confirm previously that the required bibliography is not available in the UAH's or Instituto Franklin-UAH's bibliographical collections.

Resolution and Selection Process

A Commission appointed by the SAAS Executive Board and the Instituto Franklin-UAH will evaluate the proposals and publish a prioritized list of candidates. The Commission will take into account the applicants' academic, scientific and professional merits, as well as the quality of the research project presented and its feasibility. Additionally, the Commission could request any necessary advice to assess the scientific quality of the projects submitted by the applicants. The Commission's decision is non-appealable.



In case of the grantee refusing the aid, the Commission will follow the prioritized list.

The final decision will be announced by email to the candidates and published on the SAAS website (www.saasweb.org), on the Instituto Franklin website (www.institutofranklin.net), and on the SAAS annual bulletin. When the award of the aid coincides with the celebration of a SAAS Conference, it will be also announced in the assembly celebrated during the Conference.



14TH INTERNATIONAL SAAS CONFERENCE, SALAMANCA 2019

The 14th International Conference of the
Spanish Association for American Studies (SAAS)

The Image and the Word: Interactions between American Literature, Media, Visual Arts and Film

April 9-11, 2019
University of Salamanca, Spain

www.saasweb.org/INDEX.html
www.saas2019.wordpress.com/

Word and image play an important role in perception. Under the landslide of innovation in the domain of communication and representation in the last half-century, the visual turn of culture enhanced by the postmodern digital turn has fundamentally changed traditional means of understanding culture and the expression of literature, image, film, and photography. Various philosophers and theoreticians, such as James Heffernan, Wendy Steiner, Barbara Stafford, W.J.T. Mitchell, have analyzed the “pictorial turn” of our present, claiming that the long dominance of the written book is giving way to the visual image—cinema, video, photography, and other forms of pictorial and digital representation.

The mutual exchange of literature and visual arts has a longstanding history that goes back to classical debates on *sister arts* or the *paragone*. Postmodern paradigmatic changes in media culture may well rival the modernist avant-garde revolution when Virginia Woolf announced that “on or about December 1910” human nature changed radically. Modernism brought about a moment of aesthetic and media transformation based on visuality and initiated a historical moment of media transition across the spectrum of the arts. If in the nineteenth century all arts strove towards a condition of music, in Walter Pater’s words, we could safely rephrase his dictum, saying that with the modernist avant-garde all arts strove towards the condition of the visual and the plastic arts. With modernism the exchange between literature and visual arts entered an unprecedented



interaction, generating a new ekphrastic paradigm of creativity, in which boundaries between arts blurred. Postmodernism has only intensified the gravitation towards inter-disciplinarity, in which aspects of knowledge take on dynamic properties, creating social networks, webs, blogs, and fields whose inner boundaries widen in the amalgamation of different genres.

Our 21st century stands under the aegis of the image, a culture dominated by pictures, visual simulations, illusions, copies, and reproductions to the point that visual paradigms vie with and even threaten, as W.T. Mitchell contends, discursive practices. New technological achievements of the digital era have led to groundbreaking changes in the modes of communication and representation, especially in cinema, which opened new connections between literature and visual arts. Furthermore, a computerized media have penetrated all fields of aesthetics and material culture raising philosophical and aesthetic concerns as to the distinction between art and nature, the status of the original and its imitation, as well as the artistic and the artifact.

SAAS conferences attempt to be wide-ranging interdisciplinary events and we are particularly keen to see this reflected in the variety of topics discussed in relation to US culture. For the 2019 meeting at the University of Salamanca, we welcome panels that address issues of inter-disciplinarity, inter-mediality and interrelationships that lie at the foundation of literary, cultural, digital and visual representations from multiple theoretical frameworks.

LIST OF PANELS

1. “Gender and Genre in American Literature: Women Authors and Their Perception of the Gender/Genre Intersection”

Panel Chair: Aleksandra Nikčević-Batrićević

Institution: University of Montenegro

E-mail: alexmontenegro@t-com.me

The aim of this panel is to focus on women authors in American literature, who belong to different chronological frameworks and who write in different genres. A special focus will be on their auto-poetical observations about *ars poetica* in general, with examples from their works that emphasise their perceptions, doubts and transgressions of what was, in the course of their lives and their work, perceived as fixed and accepted generic expression. Criticisms of their works, published during the second part of the twentieth century, as well as postmillennial perceptions of their work, will be analysed. The aforementioned issues are taken into consideration, as they



mark the beginning of an important chronological frame of reference when critical recognition of their works expanded. This was also the time when their literary texts were re-examined and there were changes to the critical structures that remained insufficient and unwilling to include the process of evaluation that was sporadic when their most important literary works were published. Within the frame of reference of this panel we are encouraging papers on nineteenth, and twentieth-century and postmillennial American women authors, writing in a variety of genres and initiating the transitional periods in the history of American literature that significantly advanced the process of demarginalising and restructuring the frameworks proposed by the histories of American literature, as well as on critical studies by scholars that focus more on the traditional perceptions of this literature. The interdisciplinary aspect of this transition will also be taken into consideration, since the intersection of literary, visual and film techniques has, in the works of some women authors, affected the way in which they have regarded their relationship to different genres.

2. “Multimodal Perspectives on Group Identity-building in American TV and Film”

Panel Chair: Amanda Gerke
Institution: Universidad de Salamanca
E-mail: aegerke@usal.es

Film and media engage in a wide array of strategies to convey and transmit stereotypical beliefs, ideological standpoints, political leanings, and aspects of group identity-building through intonation and voice, music, visual imagery and editing techniques. Translated to identity-building, and within a sociolinguistic perspective, identity discourses “can be described as discursive orientations towards sets of features that are seen” (Blommeart & Varis 2011: 3). That is, language and identity comprise a patchwork of organized objects, directions of action, and social interaction, all of which are tied to the dynamic and complex system of micro-hegemonies within a community. The ‘visuality’ of identity-building in multimodal sources, such as films, TV series and other media, enables a reconfiguration of space and (dis)placement in the context of the diasporic identity.

Films such as *Made in L.A.* (2007), and *The Visitor* (2008), among many others, exemplify social interpretations of identity and language and their implications for the whole range of representational and semiotic modes for meaning making employed in a culture (Jewitt 2009: 2). This panel interrogates the ways in which the multimodal medium leads to a deeper understanding of social interactions at and beyond the border. It seeks to illustrate how the multimodal platform can reveal migrant realities, and in turn, provide a medium that gives place to the displaced and provide a tangible discourse to the silenced, oppressed, or otherwise marginalized.



This panel invites themes related, but not limited, to:

- Multimodal approaches in identity-building in American film and other media.
- Sociolinguistic approaches of (language) spaces and identity building in American media
- Multimodal analyses of ‘migration’ in American film and other media.
- Contemporary experience of the displaced portrayed through multimodal mediums in the American context.
- Visual representations of ideologies at and beyond the border in American film and other media.

3. “Aging Men and Masculinities in Contemporary U.S. Culture: Literary and Film Representations”

Panel Chair: Josep M. Armengol-Carrera
Institution: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha
E-mail: josemaria.armengol@uclm.es

This panel explores the representation of men’s aging experiences in contemporary U.S. fiction and cinema. While most gendered approaches to aging have focused on women (Beauvoir 1970; Segal 2013), which have contributed to the cultural invisibility of older men, the proposed panel centers on men’s aging experiences as men, thus challenging the inverse correlation between masculinity and aging. To do so, the panelists may draw on a selected number of contemporary U.S. fictional works, including both cinema and literature, which question the widely-held assumption that aging is a lesser concern for men, or that men’s and women’s aging experiences may be simply defined as opposed. The literary and film corpus may include male and female authors and film directors from different backgrounds so as to illustrate how (self-)representations of aging men vary according not only to gender but also ethnicity and sexual orientation, amongst other factors. The panel will thus seek to challenge the conventional equation of men’s aging processes with (sexual) decline, exemplifying their plurality as well as irreducible contradictions in and through contemporary U.S. fiction and film.



4. “Imaging the Sound: The Role of Soundscape and Soundscape Studies in (Re)Framing the Visual”

Panel Chair: Alessandra Calanchi
Institution: University of Urbino, Italy
E-mail: alessandra.calanchi@uniurb.it

The visual image plays a crucial role in perception. However, the “pictorial turn” of our present time does include other important forms of representation and communication. If the boundaries between arts have become blurred in modern and postmodern times, those between sight and the other senses have dramatically changed, revealing unprecedented connections and challenging opportunities. In some exhibitions (e.g., *Kandinsky-Cage* 2018), for instance, it is possible to “listen to” and to touch a number of pictures. In particular, in the last twenty years sound and soundscape studies have often interfaced with literature and visual arts, providing useful tools of comprehension and fascinating trajectories of study and research. While our twenty-first century seems dominated by pictures, discursive practices, arts, and technologies show that the soundscape is equally important, from film sound effects to car navigation systems or refueling stations and voicemails. Any technological progress has a sonic feedback which creates a totally new scenario independent from the visual—e.g., the ring of our mobiles on a train, or the total lack of noise of an approaching electric car. How does the soundscape—any soundscape—interface and interact with the visual? Is sound a competitor or is it an ally of the image? And how can inter-disciplinarity and inter-mediality help find better practices of critical analysis which take soundscape into due consideration in the arena of literary, cultural, and digital representations?

This workshop focuses on examples from US literature, cinema, and the new media that enlighten the crucial role of sound (including noise, voice, silence, music) interfacing with visual communication and representation. Literary theory, cultural studies, film studies, gender studies, multimodal studies and soundscape studies are welcome.

5. “Human and Technological Eyes in the Narrative Construction of the Posthuman”

Panel Chair: Francisco Collado Rodríguez
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From HAL’s unnerving eye in Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey* or Lady V.’s clock-eye in Pynchon’s first novel to recent popular artifacts such as Marvel’s film *Avengers: Age of Ultron*, in the last decades the (human or artificial) eye has played a relevant role in the literary and cultural



construction of humans gradually turned into posthuman beings. Along the process, binaries such as human vs. posthuman, wo/man vs. machine, body vs. information, or weak vs. powerful have been frequently informed by the symbolic use of the eye as door to the imaginary constructions of ourselves and the other. In the ideological background of such constructions frequently stand diverse critical views concerning human welfare, ecological fears, lack of social equality, traumatizing living conditions of the dispossessed, or hopes for a better future. This panel seeks contributions that explore some of the most powerful symbolic roles given to the eye in the ideological construction of the new posthuman being (either as transhuman cyborg or as processor of data), in a corpus of written or audiovisual narratives of the last decades that may have an impact on Western culture while also raising our critical eye to interrogate the type of society we are helping to change.

6. “Drawing the Line: Illustrating US Classics of the Nineteenth Century”

Panel Chair: María Ángeles Toda Iglesia
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Perhaps because, as Leslie Fiedler observed, nineteenth century US classics have a tendency to be adapted as juvenile literature, and some of them in fact were conceived as such, many illustrated versions of such works exist and continue to be published both for children and adults. From Abigail May Alcott’s drawings for *Little Women* through José Ramón Sánchez’s adaptation of *Moby Dick* as a graphic novel in 2017, to the “Clásicos Ilustrados” collection by Bruguera so familiar to Spanish readers over fifty, in which novels such as *The Last of the Mohicans* were doubly retold both in abridged prose and comic-strip format, these images provide a fertile ground for reflection on their interaction with the works they illustrate. This panel invites consideration on the multiple forms of this interaction. Some questions to tackle might include: In what specific ways does a particular kind of illustration, and/or a particular visual “packaging,” affect the reading of a text? What relation, if any, exists between authors and illustrators? What can illustrations show about a book’s publishing history and about the literary marketplace? How are the choices and practices of non-US artists over the world different from US artists when it comes to illustrating these works? What is the relevance of the scenes that are chosen for graphic depiction in terms of emphasizing themes or interpretations of the novels? What role do illustrations play in censorship or adaptation to juvenile audiences? How do they influence other forms of art, such as painting, film or theatrical versions? How do all these issues change through time and space?



7. “And the Word became *Celluloid*, and Dwelt Among Us: Hollywood and the American Novel”

Panel Chair: Dan Fyfe

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Hollywood adaptations of literary works have had varying degrees of artistic success. *Gone with the Wind* (1939) and *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940) are considered classics of the Golden Age of Hollywood, and *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962) and *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975) are counted among the greatest films ever made. But film adaptations of venerated American novels do not always succeed: John Huston's *Moby Dick* (1956) entertains but fails to do justice to Melville's masterwork, while Roland Joffé's *The Scarlet Letter* (1995) is considered one of the worst adaptations of a classic American novel ever made. *The Great Gatsby* has been adapted to the big screen three times (not counting a silent film made in 1926, now lost), most recently in 2013, with mixed results. This panel will explore Hollywood's successes and failures in some of its adaptations of literature to film. What do we find at the heart of a great American novel, and how is that essence “made celluloid”? Is adherence to the original text sacred? What about omissions? In keeping with the theme of the conference, this panel will examine cinematic adaptations of several American novels to better understand the interactions and tensions between American literature and film.

8. “The American West and Its Representation in Media and the Visual Arts”

Panel Chair: Ángel Chaparro Sainz

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The American West has been traditionally associated with a mythic and romanticized vision that is still the pervading image for many, both insiders and outsiders to the region. Recent revisionist approaches have been celebrated in academia and in the arts, vindicating a region and a culture that prove to be complex and manifold, “in constant state of flux” (Steiner 17); a region that needs to be understood “as always already transnational, a more routed and complex rendition” (Campbell 4).

Scholarly explorations of the American West are eventually implemented by studying how culture has filtered the mythic imagery and the more realistic representations of the region, its people and its history. As Nicholas Witschi has stated, “a wide array of genres have proven useful in imagining the West” (7). It is not only movies and books that become representative



cultural assets to develop our academic ruminations on the American West. Some genres, arenas and vehicles have been neglected, which is why in this panel we propose a different approach to the American West by inviting scholarship that observes the use and/or representation of the American West, whether as an ideal or a realistic setting, from a mythical or a realistic perspective, seen from an American or an international perspective, in cultural productions such as TV series and shows, mass media, advertising, graphic novels, music aesthetics, photography and/or arts.

The following list suggests a variety of possible topics but other approaches are welcome:

- The American West in mass media
- TV Shows/Series/Cartoons and Western American themes and/or aesthetics
- Graphic novels and the American West
- Western themes and/or aesthetics in graphic novels and/or comics
- Western aesthetics in music and music videos
- The American West and photography
- The American West and painting
- The American West and performance art

9. “Blurred Boundaries: The Notion of the Human and the Definition of Storytelling in the Age of the Posthuman”

Panel Chair: Sonia Baelo Allué

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A centralized tenet of posthuman theory is the non-dualistic understanding of life in which both humanist and more updated binaries such as human/animal, nature/culture, mind/body, biology/technology, born/made, organic/machine, online/offline are transgressed. Digital ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) are making us rethink Cartesian mind/body dualism and its related binaries as our sense of self and our relation to others and the world changes. We become fluid, malleable, and relational, since cognition, in our interaction with technology, is not confined to the mind but distributed along the process in which our bodies are enhanced through different technologies and prosthetic devices.

Concordant with this posthuman blurring of boundaries is the rise of transmedia storytelling. As we become fluid, malleable, and relational so do the stories writers produce, which unfold across different media platforms



(novels, films, TV series, videogames, websites, etc.), each contributing to the fluidity of the story as its content is reproduced in all kinds of handy delivery systems, like smart phones and tablets. Content is not bound to the specificity of one medium and, as is the case with the human being, it becomes fluid, adaptable, open, and relational.

This panel seeks contributions that explore this new territory where the human and the literary interconnect, a space that addresses the malleability and fluidity that both storytelling and humans share in a posthuman age of blurred boundaries and new possibilities.

10. “Western Images and Words: The American West and Film”

Panel Chair: Jesús Ángel González
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The iconic power of images of the American West has helped to turn a popular formula with limited literary value (popular Western fiction) into a film genre universally recognized as part of the cinematic canon: the Western. Without the images of the awe-inspiring, iconic landscapes of the West in classic examples of the genre it is difficult to imagine how the Western might have helped to shape the myth of the West as the ideal representation of American values, character, and exceptionalism. The core elements of the genre, “rooted in visceral images rather than abstract words, and in decisive action rather than sophisticated ideas” (Creekmur) found their perfect expression in a film genre that helped to define both American identity and cinema itself.

Although Westerns have nearly disappeared from mainstream cinema, the power of Western images and myths has persisted in post-Western films that have appeared, not only in the USA but in many other countries as well, to question and scrutinize the values and conventions of American Westerns.

We welcome papers that address the implications, contradictions, and evolution of Western cinema and films about the American West—such as (but not restricted to) the following:

- Critical perspectives on the Western genre
- “True West” vs. Westerns
- Where is the American West? Landscape, geography and the Western
- Literary origins: pre-Westerns, Cooper, dime novels, Owen Wister, Zane Grey



- The symbolic role of the myth of West and Western images in American Literature
- From words to images: Western adaptations
- From the USA to the world: transnational Westerns and post-Westerns
- From the USA to space: Space Westerns
- Western interactions: Westerns, film noir, science fiction and Western musicals
- Western soundtracks and contemporary Western music
- Contemporary Westerns, neo-Westerns and post-Westerns
- The West as setting: non-genre films about the American West
- Western identity: borders and frontiers in Western films and films about the West
- Western cities in American cinema
- Native Americans, Latinos and other minorities in Westerns and films about the West
- Western nature: the environmental perspective in Westerns and films about the West

11. “Aliens in North America: Images of Exiles and Migratory Phenomena”

Panel Chair: María Luz Arroyo Vázquez

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Geographical and socio-economic mobility have often been regarded as crucial factors in defining American literature and culture. American narratives frequently depict certain sorts of mobility that emphasize values and attitudes, such as individualism in the service of a nation. In fact, journeys of exploration into the wilderness, westward expansion, or the space race, stand as examples of representations of Americans' endeavor to achieve a “final” frontier.

It can be argued that the North American migratory phenomenon encompasses a wide range of contradictions. The images of pioneers, explorers and adventurers, cast as heroic characters in literature and cinema, contrast with the portrayal of forced migrants, such as the enslaved Africans who crossed the Atlantic, Caribbean refugees or asylum seekers.

In general terms, from 1776 to the 1920s, the US government encouraged immigration. The foreign-born enriched the United States; however, after 1880 legal limits were introduced to reduce immigration. In 1882, for the first time, the US Congress restricted immigration on a selective and biased basis. In 1890 and 1902, the policy of exclusion was extended and, finally, it



became permanent. Racists, xenophobes, anti-Catholics and anti-Semites supported quotas to restrict the flow of immigrants and preserve the Protestant and Anglo-Saxon proportion of the population.

The current situation is very complex and is often highlighted by the media. This can be seen in stories emphasizing concerns in issues as diverse as the apprehension of asylum-seekers by authorities, immigration laws that halt refugee entry and the increasing influx of immigrants crossing the US border illegally. These important topics can be analyzed in order to shed light on the migratory movement in the US.

We encourage papers that deal not only with migrations into North America but also with socio-economic mobility. Possible topics for presentations in this panel may include, but are not limited to:

- Visions of settler colonialism and US expansionism
- Canadian “Mosaic” versus American “Melting Pot”
- Racialized and/or ethnicized mobilities (e.g., internment camps, borders and immigration policies)
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Immigration restrictions and border control of transients
- Inclusion/exclusion
- Legal and illegal status
- Spatial and socio-economic mobility
- Films on migration
- Mass media on the migratory phenomenon

12. “The Lyric Sensorium in American Poetry”

Panel Chair: Jeffrey Simons

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“Among twenty snowy mountains, / The only moving thing / Was the eye of the blackbird.” So opens Wallace Stevens’s “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird” (1923), in a striking dimensional shift that goes from a vast expanse of twenty snow-covered mountains to the moving circle of a single blackbird’s small dark eye. The dimensional shift and stark contrast show how lyric poetry draws on perception—a sort of lyric sensorium—to bring about its discursive effects. Later in the same poem, the speaker just as tersely says, “I know noble accents / And lucid, inescapable rhythms; / But I know, too, / That the blackbird is involved / In what I know.” Here “I know” moves surely across the free-verse line, in an assertion of both knowing the sounds and rhythms of language and of including the blackbird in that knowing. Perception newly infuses the speaker’s propositional claims.



Within the frame of the Conference title “The Image and the Word,” this panel finds a place for the evolution of American poetry, as it evidences its singular lyric sensorium, taken to be a poetic faculty that sets the five senses, along with motion and kinesthesia, in relation to the thought and feeling of a lyric consciousness. We develop the lyric sensorium with phrases in Culler’s *Theory of the Lyric* (2015), and see that it “entails a particular form of sensory apprehension” wherein “the subject is constituted as the subject of this sensory experience” (323). The result is an “affective organization of the perceptual realm” (327) that allows the lyric poet, in evolving historical circumstances, “to participate in a restructuring of the sensuous and affective domain of life” (330).

Panel papers might address, but are not limited to, such issues as:

- The role of perception in the work of specific American poets, both as a primary referential concern and as a secondary means of lyric argumentation
- The evolving nature of perception in American poetry
- The role in American poetry of the image and of sound
- The blending of sense modalities in lyric synaesthesia
- The presence of poetry in other forms of art
- The differences between perception in life and perception in poetry and art

13. “Edgar Allan Poe and the Image: Interactions between Poetry and the Visual Arts”

Panel Chair: Santiago Rodríguez Guerrero-Strachan

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Edgar Allan Poe’s stories, such as “The Oval Portrait”, “Landor’s Cottage” or “The Fall of the House of Usher”, poems such as “The Raven” or *Al Aaraaf*, or his comments on art in *Marginalia* and *Pinakidia* indicate his concern with the visual in its most liberal sense. The relationship between Poe and the visual arts has been debated and examined for decades, most notably by Kent Ljungquist, and, more recently, by Barbara Cantalupo. Yet, the topic deserves more consideration in the light of explorations of recent theories of the picturesque and the sublime.

Poe’s comments on art interspersed in *Marginalia* and *Pinakidia* invite examinations of his relationship with artistic theories, in particular discussions that take into account Modernist and Postmodernist revisions of nineteenth century aesthetics. Modernist poetics may also cast light on the



relationship between literature and visual arts. Modernist poets used Poe's poetics as a starting point to create visual poetry. For instance, Brazilian 'concretista' poets would condense Poe's poetics in an attempt to write a fundamentally pictorial poetry. The panel encourages discussions of visual poetry based on Poe's poetics and poetry.

Poe's writings also show a strong aesthetic link with the new art of photography. Julio Cortázar remarked the connection between the photography and the short story. Other scholars have pointed out the association between photography and American aesthetics. Papers on the link between Poe's short fiction and photography will also be welcome.

14. "Unveiling the Limits of Our 'Quest for Authenticity'. Visual Aesthetics: Afrofuturism, Gender, and the African Diaspora"

Panel Chair: Silvia Castro Borrego
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Afrofuturism, a term coined in the 1990s by Mark Dery in his article "Black to the Future," describes music, literature, and art that contains elements of science fiction, fantasy, magical realism, historical fiction, Afrocentricity, and non-Western cosmologies. The genre primarily critiques past and present dilemmas faced by people of color, while also imagining futures for those groups that stem from the experiences of cultures formed as a result of the historical African diaspora. Afrofuturism introduces an aesthetic that illuminates African culture's intertwining with the cosmic (in both the technological and metaphysical senses). Afrofuturism allows us to boldly imagine the future, seizing the ever present past, thus allowing a reflection on the past as a function of the future.

This panel welcomes papers that explore expressions and examinations of music, cinema, literature and graphic art through the lenses of Afrofuturism and its cross-disciplinary influence.

15. "An Uncomfortable Truth: Women's Autofiction in American Literature and Media"

Panel Chair: Rebeca Gualberto Valverde
Institution: Universidad Complutense de Madrid
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Author Lily Tuck, following Serge Doubrovsky (1977), explains autofiction as a genre in which "the author ... tends to be both the narrator and the central character ..., uses his or her real name, describes daily life often inventing or modifying certain facts, and does so in search not only for truth and justice but for the self." Autofiction is then a combination of fact and



deliberate fiction. Well-established in countries like France and Spain, it has recently gained critical attention in the United States, where feminist criticism has turned its gaze to authors like Chris Kraus, Cookie Mueller or Siri Hustvedt, among others. These writers explore the fictional and hence public construction of the private female 'I', which, by moving from the text to the world, transgresses the traditional boundaries of confessional writing.

However, this recent rise in women's autofiction transcends the limits of the traditional narrative. It means a shift in female public authority made possible by Internet culture that allows instant access to publishing and feedback for first-person narratives (vlogs, blogs, social networks, lit-magazines, etc.) that are also invading mass media. Among these, television stands out thanks to the flourishing of highly personal TV shows, starring the same people—mostly women—who write the scripts, direct and produce stories that fictionalize their own lives (Lena Dunham's *Girls*, Pamela Adlon's *Better Things*, Issa Rae's *Insecure*, Frankie Shaw's *SMILF*, etc).

This panel invites proposals from varied disciplines within the field of American Studies that explore the subject of women's autofiction in different media, particularly on the following topics:

- Private construction and public projections of the female self
- From private to universal female subjectivity
- Private experience and public speech
- Autofiction, autobiography and memoir in female life-writing
- The Internet and the public self
- Autofiction in mass media
- Emotional autobiography and female performance
- The ethics of autofiction: the limits of (mis)representation
- Female showrunners and the rise of personal television
- Contemporary reception of autofictional narratives in America
- Intersectional approaches to women's autofiction
- Autofiction as a postcolonial strategy.
- The politics of autofiction: transforming the self to change the world
- The multiplication of autofictional genres
- Autofiction as a critical tool in American Studies

16. "On the Screen as on the Stage: Film and Theater Interplays and the (Fe)Male Gaze"

Panel Chair: Noelia Hernando Real
 Institution: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
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The influence that feminist film-making has had on feminist theatre never



seemed to have a higher impact than in the 1970s, when Laura Mulvey warned against the controlling male view that orchestrated movie structures and prevented female spectators' scopophilia. Her groundbreaking article, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975), argued that "In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. ... In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness." Mulvey's explicit call for a new avant-garde feminist filmmaking that would subvert the male gaze and present female characters as subjects, as real agents in the real world (1975), was not only heard by female directors, but also by female playwrights and feminist scholars, most notably, Sue-Ellen Case in *Feminism and Theater* (1988) and Jill Dolan in *The Feminist Spectator as Critic* (1988), who called for a reform of theatrical structures similar to Mulvey's. Applying Mulvey's criticism to theatre studies, these scholars found that in the theory of the male gaze "the controlling perspective of a theater performance [is] that of the male spectator," usually white and middle-class (Burke 1996, 3). Starting then a crusade against realism, the traditional means of conforming to the desires of the male gaze, these scholars called for a feminist use of Brechtian techniques that would turn the object of attention "from something ordinary, familiar ... into something peculiar, striking and unexpected" ("Short Description of a New Way of Acting Which Produces an Alienation Effect"). They wanted, as feminist critic Elin Diamond states, "to denaturalize and defamiliarize what ideology makes seem normal, acceptable, inescapable" (1988, 85). More than 40 years after Mulvey's thesis, and at a time when the #MeToo movement struggles to make the subjugation of female actresses visible, this panel calls for proposals that explore the mutual relationships between film and drama, ranging from film adaptations of plays to theatrical adaptations of blockbusters and the appropriation of film or theatrical techniques in plays and movies to highlight the way in which female directors/playwrights deal with the objectification of women on the screen and on the stage.

17. "Intersections between Animality, Disability and Affect Studies in American Fiction"

Panel Chair: Diana Villanueva Romero
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In Guillermo del Toro's latest film *The Shape of Water* (2017), a mute cleaning-woman, Elisa Esposito, befriends a sea creature trapped in a high-security government laboratory for testing. She connects with this nonhuman being in a way that no one else seems to be able to do, the message conveyed by this situation being that her disability becomes an



advantage when it comes to communicating with the more-than-human world. In David Wroblewski's novel *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle* (2008), the main protagonist, Edgar, is a deaf boy whose dog Almondine becomes the interlocutor he needs to make sense of the world around him.

These two narratives offer two examples of the ways in which the study of animality, disability and affect intersect in recent American fiction. They highlight the idea that nonhuman animals and the disabled are capable of transcending their image as otherized peoples thanks to the level of empathy they are capable of showing towards each other.

Drawing on the work already done on this subject by Anthony J. Nocella II and Michael Lundblad, this panel invites talks on visual and literary representations of animality and disability in which the expression of empathy creates the possibility of bridging the distance between the self and the other and redefines what it means to be human.

18. “Melville’s Architectures: Ekphrasis, Structures, and Orientations of ‘the Domestic’”

Panel Chair: Rodrigo Andrés
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One of the first semantic associations of the notion of the domestic is that of power, “for, after all, one of the derivatives of the Latin word *domus* is to dominate” (Chiara Briganti and Kathy Mezei / Marta Segarra) and, as Michel Foucault claimed in “The Eye of Power”, “a whole history remains to be written of spaces — which would at the same time be the history of powers [...] from the great strategies of geo-politics to the little tactics of the habitat”. One of the valences of power is the economy, and it is relevant that the origin of the word ‘economy’ lies “in the Greek *oikos* (house) and *nomos* (rule, law). Homes, like all social systems “are inherently conservative” (David Stea) and, whereas homes have traditionally been understood as spaces of embryonic communities of solidarity, it is undeniable that they are also sites of ideological control demanding huge sacrifices. In Foucauldian terms, therefore, the home needs to be understood as the site of power and of *resistance* to that power.

This panel aims to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Herman Melville's birth by analysing the relationship between structures, architectural forms, social meanings, aesthetics, and the experience of “the domestic” in Melville's novels, short stories and poetry. Paper proposals could contemplate, among other possibilities:



- Ekphrasis and the meaning of ornamental and decorative objects in Melville's texts.
- The troubled relationship between structures, furniture, and spatial orientations (Sarah Ahmed) and the *familial* and the *familiar* in Melville's dwellings.
- The conceptual friction between house as dwelling space and house as lineage (Mark Rifkin) in Melville's texts.
- The structure of the ship - frigate, whaleship, merchant ship — both as heterotopia (Michel Foucault, Cesare Casarino) and as a space of homosocialities in the maritime imagination.

19. "Poetry between Pleasure and Protest: Theory and Practice"

Panel Chair: Thomas Austenfeld
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From Walt Whitman to William Carlos Williams, from Phyllis Wheatley to Claudia Rankine, American poetry has negotiated its place between pleasure and protest, between aesthetic challenge and social relevance. While the New Critics championed self-sufficient works of art, another strain of American poetry that foregrounds social critique and engaged advocacy has continually been present in much of 20th- and 21st-century poetic production. Williams famously proposed to "reply to Greek and Latin with the bare hands" (*Paterson*). Protest poetry was in the vanguard of the labor movements of the 1930s as well as the Civil Rights era of the 1950s and 1960s. The Cold War and the Vietnam War marked periods of intense poetic activity. Lately, Ann Keniston and Jeffrey Gray have identified the "Poetry of Engagement" as a new movement since 2001 which has brought forth poetic voices in response to new wars, environmental degradation, and social disintegration in the United States. This panel seeks to illuminate the theories and the poetological assumptions that undergird American protest poetry from World War I to the present. Papers will easily connect with the main topics of the conference, ranging from pictoriality to resistance to representations on the written page itself.

20. "Woody Allen"

Panel Chair: Eusebio De Lorenzo Gómez
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Acclaimed as America's archetypal comedic auteur, Woody Allen has notably contributed to American visual culture for half a century. At the beginning of his career, Allen was classed as a member of the New



Hollywood: whereas trauma and violence were explored by Martin Scorsese, F. Ford Coppola, or Michael Cimino, absurdity, ridicule and irony were the preserve of Robert Altman or Woody Allen.

The aim of this panel is to explore the cinematic world of Woody Allen and interpret his contribution to modern culture. Admired as a genuinely autonomous creator in Europe but often dismissed in the US as too auteuristic, there's no gainsaying his ability to satirize Hollywood, artists, religion, love, or the urban elite. His oeuvre thus lends itself to being interpreted as a continuing exposé of American collective apprehensions and existential disquiet. Additionally, his narratives commonly exhibit the tension of contraries: rationality vs. irrationality, erotic faith vs. sexual anxiety, the meaning of life vs. experiential absurdity. Because two of Allen's staples are self-reflexivity and the artist's imagination, I would not wish for this panel to ignore the problematized relationship between Woody Allen and his cinematic persona—constructed mostly (though not exclusively) by his own character acting. Such a construction has further been compounded by personal scandals which have overshadowed his work since 1992, and which have been reactivated recently. Although it is certainly not my intention to open up the panel to celebrity gossip, Allen's biographical case is worthy of critical examination insofar as the conflation of the artist's life and his work continues to complicate the critical reception of his films.

Apart from the issues explained in the abstract, potential topics include but need not be confined to:

- Woody Allen: influences and intertextualities (his films and the literary, cinematic, philosophical canons)
- Auteur's self-fashioning, biography, autobiography
- Cinematic self-reflexivity
- Affects and emotions
- Morality and religion
- Mockery, satire, caricature
- Women characters in Allen films
- Urban landscapes

21. “Trauma and Literature”

Panel Chair: Asli Tekinay
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Today the concept of trauma is widely used to explain individual or collective responses to shocking experiences that are physically and/or



mentally shattering. One of the most influential names in literary trauma theory, Cathy Caruth, argues that the traumatic experience is often so sudden and overwhelming that it is almost impossible to put it into words. It cannot be represented for it takes place before the individual is equipped to grapple with it. In other words, trauma escapes language. A deeply traumatic experience impacts the recipient's life to its core: "The story of trauma ... as the narrative of a belated experience, far from telling of an escape from reality — the escape from death, or from its referential force — rather attests to its endless impact on life" (Caruth). As shocks that disable the psychic system, traumatic stories abound in contemporary American poetry, fiction, and drama. Be it the story of a veteran who suffered war violence or that of a civilian who experienced torture or rape, the literary accounts of trauma attest to the struggle of language to capture the psychic concussion caused by the traumatic experience.

This panel invites presentations on contemporary American literary texts that set out to convey trauma through empowered language and linguistic tools.

22. "Better to Fail in Originality Than to Succeed in Imitation": Herman Melville's Dialogue with Literature, Visual Arts and Film"

Panel Chair: María Laura Arce Álvarez
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This panel celebrates Herman Melville's Bicentenary (1819-1891) through his fiction and poetry and how his remarkable works, characters and philosophical precepts have inspired new forms of expression in the contemporary visual arts.

Together with Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville was one of the representatives of the American Renaissance whose work became fundamental for later generations of American writers. He proposed in his short stories and novels a philosophical discussion that to a certain extent explained the American existential crisis of the time, of the modern times and especially of the postmodernist era. Many postmodernist writers have looked back to Melville, his plots and characters, to rewrite and reshape their works in a postmodern context. Melville's fiction could explain the postmodern existential crisis that writers were so eager to express.

Some of his short stories, such as "Bartleby, the Scrivener" (1853), became an illumination for structuralist critics and philosophers such as Maurice Blanchot who were working with the concept of refusal, negation and the literature of silence (Hassan *The Dismemberment of Orpheus*, 1971). Indeed, Blanchot concludes that Melville, like Kafka, "gives us ... a sort of combat



through literature for literature: a struggle which is-and is at the same time-its aim” (Blanchot, *Writing of the Disaster*, 1995).

This panel welcomes papers that address and discuss how Herman Melville’s work interacts with media, visual arts and films in the following, but not limited to these, issues

- Melville’s influence in the film industry
- Melville’s works adaptation to cinema
- The linguistic discussion of Melville’s works and its contribution to the concept of image
- Melville’s dialogue with the visual arts
- Adaptations of Melville’s works into other genres
- Melville’s works legacy in postmodern theorizing

23. “Creative Ceremonies: Native Americans and the Power of Word and Image”

Panel Chair: Silvia Martínez Falquina

Institution: Universidad de Zaragoza

E-mail: smfalqui@unizar.es

Native American literary activism—which in recent years has been “at the heart of a demand for further sovereignty” (Bowers 2017: 48)—has its roots in the ceremonial or transformative motivation of Native writing, inherited from the storytelling tradition. As it denounces the effects of (neo)colonial oppression, contemporary Native literature is also a reminder that “Native stories are power. They create people. They author tribes” (Howe 1999: 118).

This panel starts from the ceremonial understanding of Native literature and expands it to approach other creative acts like movies, visual arts, media or criticism. While examining recent developments in the representations of Native Americans, we are looking for dialogues between words and images, and between Native and non-Native authors and perspectives, with a particular view on changing the focus from the overarching theme of Native authenticity to different levels of engagement (of text and readership, image and audience, of indigenous and non-indigenous ways of reading/looking). Such an engagement might come, for example, from imagining dialogues between the Native concepts of resurgence (Leanne Simpson) or research as ceremony (Shawn Wilson), and the reading of our time as the Age of Empathy (Jeremy Rifkin), the concept of Transmodernity (Rosa María Rodríguez Magda), or the view of ethics as focused on “the power of being affected, rather than affecting” (Gibson). The panel could consider among other topics:



- The power of words and images for Native American (self)representations, and the intersections of the two;
- Contemporary re-inscriptions of the “savage” in literature, film, the visual arts, or the media;
- Representations of violence on Native Americans and other forms of trauma;
- Native and non-Native critical approaches to creation.

24. “Rude Color of What an Amazing World’: Avante-Garde Art and American Poetry”

Panel Chair: Viorica Patea
 Institution: Universidad de Salamanca
 E-mail: vioricap@usal.es

“The image is the poet’s pigment,” wrote Ezra Pound. The interaction between poetry and visual arts marked the beginning of the twentieth century and has remained the hallmark of postmodernist poetics. Cubist, Dada, Expressionist, Surrealist and abstract painting articulated the technical repertoire that was later adopted by other artistic disciplines. American modernist poets such as Eliot, Pound, Cummings, Loy, Stevens, and Williams found in the technique of visual arts the key to recentering poetic expression on abstract designs that put an end to poetry’s reliance on mimetic principles. The aesthetics of twentieth-century Anglo-American poetry is based on the principles and techniques of nonfigurative arts, which it constantly seeks to integrate and translate into its own poetics.

The two *loci classici* in the history of interartistic relationship between poetry and painting go back to classical antiquity — Simonides of Ceos’s (6 BC) apothegm evoked by Plutarch, “Painting is mute poetry and poetry a speaking picture”, and by Horatio’s “Ut pictura poesis” — continued in the Neoclassical period with Lessing’s *Laokoon* (1766), a treatise that postulated the unbridgeable distinction between visual spatial arts (painting and sculpture) and the temporal verbal art (poetry), and culminated with Virginia Woolf’s dictum, “On or about December 1910, human character changed”.

In order to define their artistic endeavors artists have often resorted to an analogy with another art. The Romantics cherished the nightingale or the Aeolian harp and conceived of poetry in terms of music. Yeats aspired to the fluidity of dance. Among the modernists, Eliot conceived of poetry in terms of music, Pound and Loy sought the solidity and dynamism of sculpture and painting, and Williams, Moore, Cummings and H.D. resorted to painting, photography and cinema, while Wallace Stevens invoked the eye that paints and the mind that composes.



The modernist aesthetic is characterized by an increasing tendency to transgress and displace the boundaries of different genres and art forms, a tendency conducive to postmodernist forms of intermediality further generated and explored in the more recent works of the New York School, the Black Mountain poets, LANGUAGE poets, and Hybrid poets.

This panel invites consideration on the multiple forms of interaction between American poetry through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and other artistic forms.

25. Miscellanea

Panel Chair: Viorica Patea, Eulalia Piñero
vioricap@usal.es
eulalia.pinero@uam.es



Full Panels

1. “Illness as Metaphor? The Limits of Language in US Cancer Narratives”

Panel Chair: Marta Fernández Morales
Institution: Universidad de Oviedo
E-mail: fernandezmmarta@uniovi.es

Susan Sontag’s *Illness as Metaphor* (1977) is a classic in the analysis of illness narratives and their language. Her criticism of the metaphorical uses of cancer is a point of reference for both creative authors and scholars. Likewise, Elaine Scarry’s *The Body in Pain* (1985) has become ineludible in discussions about the difficulty of expressing physical pain, including that wrought by disease. In the post-millennial context, Kathlyn Conway, who has lived with and written about cancer, has published *Beyond Words* (2007), which explores the limits of language to deal with illness and disability, including conditions such as cancer, polio, chronic fatigue, AIDS, blindness, and paralysis, among others.

Touching upon a corpus of literary, artistic, and cinematic narratives produced in the US, this panel explores different expressions of cancer that engage the verbal, the non-verbal, and the visual. Each speaker will analyze a selection of one to three primary texts, delving into the interaction between the image and the word, and discussing issues like the need for and effectiveness of metaphorization, the relationship between (self)representation and language, and the consequences of the authors’ meaning-making processes for the final formal structure of their works.

- a) **Máximo Aláez Corral, Universidad de Oviedo, “Self-exposure of Cancer in Alicia Suskin Ostriker’s ‘The Mastectomy Poems’ and Hannah Wilke’s ‘Portrait of the Artist with her Mother, Selma Butter’: A Comparative Analysis”**
malacor.01@gmail.com
- b) **Marta Fernández Morales, Universidad de Oviedo, “Finding Words for the Silent Killer: Metaphorization in Eve Ensler’s Cancer Memoir”.**
fernandezmmarta@uniovi.es
- c) **Carmen Pérez Ríu, Universidad de Oviedo, “Embodied Subjectivities in Pain through Verbal and Visual Metaphor”**
perezcarmen@uniovi.es



2. “Poe On-line: Text and Image”

Panel Chair: Margarita Rigal Aragón
Institution: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha
E-mail: Margarita.Rigal@uclm.es

The panel will present the main results offered by the Research Project “Poe On-line: Text and Image,” granted by the Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad (HAR2015-64580-P). The project’s main goals were to promote a multidisciplinary methodology of work. To do this, the members of the project have undergone a dilated trajectory working in shared projects which have combined two or more disciplines; to develop the first online archive on Poe’s life and works in Spanish, following the model the Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore has been developing for years; to translate into Spanish those works of Poe that are not yet available in this language; to develop the first online catalogue of illustrated editions of Edgar Allan Poe, following the model of the “Proyecto Cervantes,” hosted at Texas A&M University, in which some of the current members have been involved; to create online didactic resources of a high level of profit both for the student and the academic; and to promote knowledge of the reception that Poe’s works have had in Spain. To do this, we have the experience of some of the members of the project, who have worked widely on Poe and popular culture, both in Spain and abroad.

One of our goals (perhaps the main one) is to highlight the development of a digital catalogue to offer free access to the illustrations that, since the 19th century onwards, have accompanied some of the best editions of Poe’s works. Illustrations are a key element when dealing with the interpretation of a text and, due to this, it is necessary to develop a tool that allows us to analyze the image along with the text. This is especially relevant when dealing with Poe, since he always used a highly pictorial language and included continuous references to the world of the image in his texts. Illustrators have also reflected how Poe has been understood and read in every period and in every society, and their work is a first-hand resource in understanding the development of this process. In this sense, it is significant to see how the first illustrators were mainly interested in the beautiful and picturesque aspects of Poe’s poetry, far away from the gothic-grotesque image that is today associated with his production and which has been chosen to illustrate more recent editions.



a) **Fernando González Moreno & Beatriz González Moreno, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, “Key-Illustrated Editions of Poe’s Works in ‘LyA’s Collection”**

Fernando.Gonzalez@uclm.es

b) **José Manuel Correoso Rodenas, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, “National and International Fruits of the Project “Edgar A. Poe On-Line: Text and Image”**

JoseManuel.Correoso@uclm.es

c) **Alejandro Jaquero Esparcia, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, “Graphic Novel Editions of Poe’s Works in ‘LyA’s Collection”**

Alejandro.Jaquero@alu.uclm.es

3. “Houses, Homes and Dwellings: Self and the Domestic Space in the American Literary Imagination”

Panel Chair: Cristina Alsina Rísquez

Institution: Universitat de Barcelona

E-mail: alsina@ub.edu

This panel will look at the troubled relationship of the American self with the domestic space, which constitutes a core concern of American literature (Chandler). The recurrence of this troubled relationship between self and domestic space in the American literary imagination reveals a deeper, core crisis of discomfort of the American self with the notion of belonging. We aim at analyzing how the material structure of home as object—house—and lived location—aggregation of experiences— both influences and is informed by the selves imagining and inhabiting it. This panel will address this topic in two different ways. On the one hand, it will zoom in on artifacts and the way they are ekphrastically embedded in literary texts, to be put to the service of character formation or concept building; we will also explore how sometimes those objects become things, to use Bill Brown’s distinction and transcend that service so as to assert themselves as things “thwart[ing] human desire even as they call it forth” (O’Farrell). On the other hand, it will zoom out and reflect on how literature presents unconventional homes and dwellings that demand of the reader a reconsideration of what it is we call home, and what housing instability and the threat of eviction do to the process of subject formation. In both cases, we will bestow centrality on representing the materiality of the house, home and/or dwelling in American literature. This panel presents research results of the research project “Troubling Houses: Dwellings, Materiality, and the Self in American Literature” (FFI2017-82692-P, MINECO/AEI/FEDER, UE).



Session 1

Panel Chair: Cristina Alsina Rísquez

- a) Cynthia Stretch, Southern Connecticut State University, “Mi Casa/My Crib: A Neighborhood Response to the Bureaucracy of Eviction”
stretchc1@southernct.edu
- b) Eva Puyuelo Ureña, Universitat de Barcelona, “Domesticity, Self and Politics in U.S. Prison Fiction: The Formation of Black Nationalism in Eldridge Cleaver’s *Soul on Ice*”
eva.puyuelo@gmail.com
- c) Elena Ortells, Universitat Jaume I, “Houses and Homes in the American Graphic Novel”
ortel@ang.uji.es

Session 2

Panel Chair: Cristina Alsina Rísquez

- a) Vicent Cucarella, Universitat de València, “Blackening *The Great Gatsby*: Affective Transpositions Within the African American Mansion in Stephanie Powell Watts’ No One is Coming to Save Us”
Vicent.Cucarella@uv.es
- b) David Fontanals Garcia, Universitat de Barcelona, “Domestic Objects and the Making of Character in Henry James’s *The Spoils of Poynton* (1896)”
dfontanals@ub.edu
- c) Cristina Alsina Rísquez, Universitat de Barcelona, “Objects Named and not Named in Cather’s *The Professor’s House*: Exploring the Limits of ‘Home’”
alsina@ub.edu

4. “Intermediality in Graphic Narratives”

Panel Chair: Mercedes Peñalba García
Institution: Universidad de Salamanca
E-mail: mpg@usal.es

Over the last thirty years, intermediality studies have become one of the fastest-growing fields of interest in interdisciplinary research. Since then, an increasing interest in visual culture has led to more in-depth investigations of intermedial phenomena within the humanities. While narration takes place in novels, films and graphic narratives alike, and can therefore be considered as a transmedial phenomenon, it is important to highlight the specificities of the respective medium in which a story is expressed.



The co-presence of verbal and visual art in graphic narratives clearly asks researchers not only to refer back to semiotics, cultural analysis, close readings and formal textual analysis gleaned from literary and cultural studies in general, and discourse analysis in particular, it also has to build on the findings of iconography and intermediality studies. Since graphic novels are complex narratological cases—they do not only narrate serially, but also involve two media—it is our goal to explore the narrative mode and specific intermedial quality of this genre. We must therefore ask in what ways conceptualizing comics as intermedial narratives based on words and images may deepen our understanding of this medium of visual-verbal storytelling.

In the case of graphic novels, production processes are intimately related to mechanisms and modes of reception. Since production can be assumed to vary depending on the writer's and the graphic artist's goal, it is also important to examine how the conditions of the marketplace are affected by, and affect, the respective artist's view on his art.

- a) **Maaheen Ahmed, Ghent University, “Rethinking Intermediality through Media Memories”**
maaheen.ahmed@ugent.be

- b) **Paul Williams, University of Exeter, “Is It a Book? Is It a Comic? Is It a Print Portfolio? The Ontological Instability of Delany and Chaykin’s *Empire: A Visual Novel*”**
P.G.Williams@exeter.ac.uk

- c) **Mercedes Peñalba, Universidad de Salamanca, “‘Between the Seeable and the Sayable’: An Intermedial Reading of Adrian Tomine’s *Killing and Dying*”**
mpg@usal.es

5. “Affect(ive) Resistance in Contemporary American Media Culture”

Panel Chair: Andrea Ruthven
Institution: Universidad de Cantabria
andrea.ruthven@unican.es

The explosion of new media emerging in the first decades of the 21st century coincides with the affective turn, to borrow Clough and Halley's phrasing (*The Affective Turn* 2007) and an increase in scholarly attention to the ways in which affects circulate, the way they touch us and, consequently, we are touched by and touch those around us. This panel interrogates the way in which affects of resistance, whether these be rage, fear, hope, shame, discomfort or others, circulate through three different media forms. Firstly, by taking into account cinema, and the “cruel optimism” Lauren Berlant (2011) identifies as key to the ideological sustenance of the increasingly



questioned American Dream, the first paper contends with questions of class, gender and sexuality to query the political and aesthetic potential of failure. Secondly, the panel turns to consider television, specifically late-night interview programs that generate conflicting affects of disaffection, complacency and rage through forms of mediated irony. Indeed, this paper questions the extent to which satire is a useful means of affect(ing) resistance in the current political landscape. The third and final paper moves away from the narratives engendered in film or television to consider how new media is generating a form of resistance that takes internet technologies as a jumping off point. In considering the rapidity with which online forms mobilize and circulate affects of resistance, this paper questions the way in which movements like Black Lives Matter, TimesUp, or the more recent March For Our Lives tread the fine line between symbolic (visual) support and material resistance. What the three papers in this panel achieve is a broad look, anchored in specific case studies, of the way in which resistance is stylised in contemporary visual media, and how bringing to bear an affective reading of these forms results in a keener understanding of the way in which contemporary North American society can be understood to be aligned through networks of affect(ive) resistance.

a) Katarzyna Paszkiewicz, Universitat de Barcelona, “*The Florida Project: Affect, Crisis Ordinariness and the Fantasies that (Continue to) Fray*”

katarzyna.paszkiwicz@ub.edu

b) Dolores Resano, Clinton Institute, University College Dublin, “*From Political Depression to Activism: Ironic Responses to Trump in Entertainment Media*”

dolores.resano@ucd.ie

c) Andrea Ruthven, Universidad de Cantabria, “*Virtual Protest, Cyber Resistance, and the Potential of Rebellion 2.0*”

andrea.ruthven@unican.es

TALK-SHOP

1. “**I celebrate myself, and sing myself: Teaching Walt Whitman’s Poetry in the Digital Age.**”

Full Name of discussants:

Eulalia Piñero Gil, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

eulalia.pinero@uam.es

Laura Arce Álvarez, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

laura.arce@uam.es

Julia Salmerón Cabañas, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

julia.salmeron@uam.es



This talk shop celebrates Walt Whitman's bicentenary (1819-1892) through the sharing of different teaching approaches to his complex and multifaceted poetry. Our teaching experience with Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* has been very enriching and productive in the context of new technologies and the use of what we call "the transliterary dialogue" approach. Whitman is generally taught as one of the leading voices of the American Renaissance, and we design the courses to introduce students to a wide range of issues such as the nature of democracy, the emergent consciousness of America's place in the world and the American dream, among others.

Our teaching approach is based on the assumption that readers and their relationship to texts is what really matters in an age in which reading is not encouraged in the classrooms. Most of us would probably agree that we want our students, no matter their level, to develop enduring relationships with the texts we assign them and, what is perhaps more important, to read for pleasure. Nevertheless, we are aware of the importance multimedia and digital technologies have in today's learning process. Thus, it is very important to develop strategies that can incorporate these technologies in the reading process.

Walt Whitman said: "No man has been photographed more than I have". Prof. Salmerón will explain Whitman's relationship with photography and how she uses the image and the text to present Whitman's poetry and biography in the classroom.

Prof. Piñero Gil will present her approach to Whitman's poetry as a transliterary dialogue with other writers' poetry such as Federico García Lorca's "Oda a Walt Whitman," and Allen Ginsberg's "Howl," in order to show how poets speak to other poets thus establishing a very fruitful transcultural dialogue.

Prof. Arce Álvarez will explore how Whitman's revolutionary poetic technique transformed the way of understanding poetry and the verse. That is the reason why it has become a fundamental influence for the modernist avant-garde. The poetry of the Imagists, mainly Hilda Doolittle and Ezra Pound, can be taught through the poetry and legacy of Whitman's free verse.

GUIDELINES

For more information on the Conference Venue see the Organizing Committee's website: <https://saas2019.wordpress.com/>



Guidelines for Panelists can be found at the following link:

<http://www.saasweb.org/GUIDELINESPANELISTS.html>

Participants need not be SAAS or ASA members in order to present a paper. If they are not members they have to pay a one year's membership fee (40€ and enjoy the benefits for the following year) plus the conference fee.

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Master's and Doctoral students who wish to participate in the Seminar must send their name, proof of registration in the doctoral program, and title of their Phd dissertation and research using **this form** before October 15, 2018, to Eulalia Piñero (eulalia.pinero@uam.es) Viorica Patea (vioricap@usal.es)

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We encourage participants to join SAAS and register for SAAS Conference, paying the member fee. Members are entitled to propose panels for the biannual Conferences, apply for SAAS prizes and grants, be on the SAAS mailing list, the annual news letter and a complimentary yearly copy of the journal *REN: Revista española de estudios norteamericanos*.



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University of Salamanca, Spain

Please read the information for prospective participants below and then fill out and process the registration form at the end of this document.

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If you are a member of SAAS or of any of its affiliated Associations (ASA/APEEA/HELAAS/AISNA), you only have to process the Conference registration form below.

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Upon proof of affiliation, Master/Doctoral students can attend and/or participate in SAAS conferences at a reduced fee.

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Conference participants and attendees (SAAS or ASA/APEEA/HELAAS/AISNA members) ^[1]	120 €	150 €	---
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Please let us know if you intend to take part in the following events:

- April 9. Welcome Reception (c. 13:30)
- April 9. Guided tour of the Old Town (20:30)
- April 10. Conference Dinner 45€

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We look forward to welcoming you all in Salamanca and celebrate the University's 800 anniversary!!!



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	Conference registration		Welcome reception	Guided Tour	Conference Dinner	Your Total FEE
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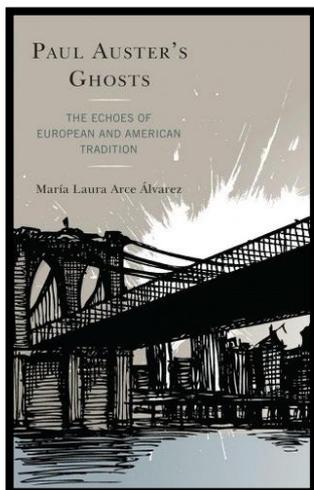
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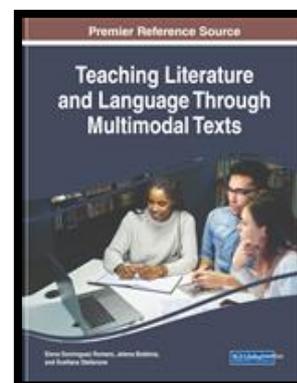
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978-1-4985-6164-8 • eBook

The following book explores the intertextual relationship between Paul Auster's first and most remarkable work, *The New York Trilogy* (1987), and the works of certain American and European writers who shaped this novel and Auster's future works. Auster's *The New York Trilogy* is a novel formed by an

intertextual dialogue which in some cases it is explicit, mentioning authors and books intentionally, and in others implicit, provoked by Auster's admiration for authors such as Samuel Beckett or product of his role as a translator, as it occurs with Maurice Blanchot. These two different ways of intertextuality essentially show Auster's influence of the American Renaissance, Samuel Beckett's fiction and the work of the writer and critic Maurice Blanchot. In these terms, this book proposes an exhaustive analysis of *City of Glass* and Herman Melville's "Bartleby, the Scrivener," *Ghosts* and Edgar Allan Poe's "William Wilson" and *The Locked Room* and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Fanshawe*. The two last chapters also offer a thorough analysis of the whole trilogy in comparison to Samuel Beckett's trilogy *Molloy*, *Malone Dies* and *The Unnamable* and finally introduces a study of the trilogy as a fictionalization of Maurice Blanchot's literary theory.

Correoso Rodenas, José Manuel. "Learning English in a Multidisciplinary Context: A Case Sample — The Independence of the United States Through Multimodal Texts," in Domínguez Romero, Elena, Bobkina, Jelena, and Stefanova, Svetlana (Eds.): *Teaching Literature and Language Through Multimodal Texts*. Hersey, PA: IGI Global, 2018, pp. 237-257. ISBN: 9781522557968. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-5796-8.ch013.



John Adams is a biographical miniseries produced and broadcasted by the American satellite network HBO, which ran between March 16 and April 27, 2008. It illustrates the life of the United States' second president,



John Adams, from 1770 to his death in 1826. Some of the key scenes deal with the Tea Party of Boston, the process of independence and the signing of the Declaration. This series is a major example of how to use a media source to get the student involved in the lesson while acquiring skills and knowledge belonging to different areas. The development of the American Revolution (for history and geography), the ideals of Liberalism (for philosophy), and the early pamphlets and the Declaration of Independence itself (for literature) are some examples of how the student can get acquainted with a multidisciplinary learning process. The experience has shown how this miniseries helps the student to learn English while watching it (with or without subtitles, regarding the subject's skills), and through several workshops afterwards.

Correoso Rodenas, José Manuel. “Coleccionismo de ediciones ilustradas de Edgar A. Poe en la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha. Mecenazgo institucional” [The Collection of Illustrated Editions of Edgar A. Poe at the University of Castilla-La Mancha. Governmental Patronage], in Holguera Cabrera, Antonio, Prieto Ustío, Ester y Uriondo Lozano, María (Coords.): *Coleccionismo, mecenazgo y mercado artístico: su proyección en Europa y América*. Sevilla: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Sevilla, 2018, pp. 31-40. ISBN: 978-84-17337-24-7.

On March, the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness granted several national R&D projects. One of the chosen proposals was the one entitled “Edgar A. Poe Online: Texts and Images,” chaired by a group of professors and researchers of the University of Castilla-La Mancha. The goal of this project is to create a digital database including all the existing illustrated editions of Edgar Allan Poe’s works. Thanks to this governmental patronage, the College of Humanities of Albacete has started an important collection of ancient illustrated books with texts by the Bostonian. Among them, it is possible to find really outstanding pieces, like 19th century originals, the first Spanish editions or a collection of prints belonging to the first French edition.

Durán, Isabel, Rebeca Gualberto, Eusebio De Lorenzo, Carmen M. Méndez-García, Eduardo Valls, eds., 2019. *A Critical Gaze from the Old World: Transatlantic Perspectives on American Studies*, Peter Lang (Transatlantic Aesthetics and Culture, vol. 9). ISBN 978-3-0343-3480-8.

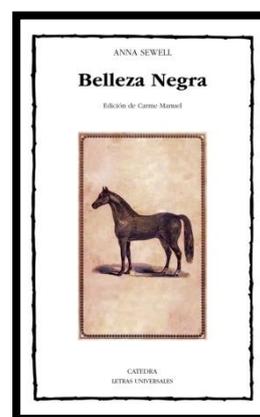


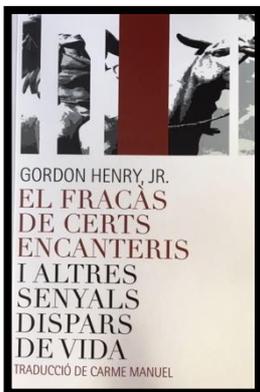
Relatos, Walt Whitman
Ed. Carme Manuel
Trad. Consuelo Rubio

Testigo de los muchos cambios socioeconómicos y políticos que continuaban erosionando los principios republicanos, y de los innumerables intentos por recomponer el imaginario colectivo democrático norteamericano a través de nuevas formas de intervención públicas, Whitman, fervoroso creyente en las posibilidades que encerraba la prensa como herramienta ideológica al servicio de la mejora social, elabora en estas narraciones una voz profundamente enraizada en las retóricas populares y sensacionalistas de preguerra, con el fin de restañar las heridas abiertas en la utópica comunidad republicana imaginada por los padres fundadores. La producción de relatos de Walt Whitman se concentra entre agosto de 1841 y junio de 1848, y se compone de veinticuatro textos, que aparecieron en muchas ocasiones con pseudónimo o sin firmar. Él mismo haría una selección que aparecería en *Specimen Days & Collect* (1882). Su ficción criticará los males derivados de la acumulación de capital, del poder y la corrupción empresariales, de la opresión de los trabajadores y de las mujeres, y del fanatismo religioso, entre otros temas. En realidad, quien surge tras la lectura de estos relatos no es otro que el mismo Whitman que aparecerá en esencia en su poesía: el hombre compasivo, un individuo capaz de situarse en la posición del otro.

Belleza Negra
Ed. Carme Manuel
Trad. Consuelo Rubio

Belleza Negra es el clásico más conocido universalmente de la literatura que aboga por los derechos de los animales. Publicado en 1877, el libro se convirtió en un bestseller que cruzó el Atlántico, donde apareció, unos años más tarde, con el subtítulo de «*La cabaña del tío Tom de los caballos*». Su autora se nutre tanto de una rica tradición en la literatura anglosajona sobre el trato benévolo hacia las criaturas no humanas, como en la novela social reformista victoriana para construir un relato en primera persona en el que un caballo traza un periplo a lo largo de las distintas explotaciones utilitaristas que sufre, que en ocasiones recuerda al de un esclavo en su incesante búsqueda por una vida digna. Vendido de un amo a otro, *Belleza Negra* narra su historia desde su posición como testigo directo de las crueldades padecidas por él y sus congéneres, con el fin de denunciar muchas de las lacras sociales, políticas y económicas de la Inglaterra de finales del xix. De ahí que, esta animalografía equina se convierta en alegoría de la subyugación de diversos sectores sin voz de la sociedad victoriana, en especial, las clases trabajadoras, y exija una toma de conciencia a los lectores.





***El fracàs de certs encanteris i altres senyals dispars de vida*, Gordon Henry, Jr.**

Trad. Carme Manuel

Aquest volum de poemes de Gordon Henry, Jr. conté imatges que tracten, segons ell mateix, de transmetre una visió senzilla del temps i de l'espai. Són com el record d'una volior de corbs que creuen el cel, com gotes grosses d'aigua a punt de caure de la branca d'un arbre abans que els ulls es tanquen per dormir. Són imatges que inclouen les dues cares d'una mateixa moneda: l'ombra i la llum de la gent, de la

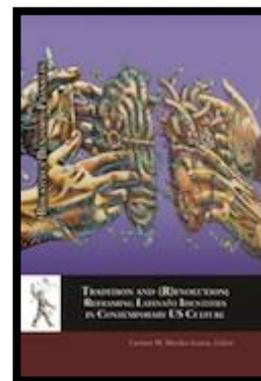
família, dels llocs de la reserva, i que li recorden qui és ell realment. Ara bé, el record de cada visió posseeix una vida pròpia. Henry torna a les tradicions, a la gent i als llocs comuns de la seua gent per tal d'aprofundir en la incapacitat de comunicació de les paraules. En molts poemes fa servir l'humor a més d'un llenguatge encriptat per remarcar el sentit limitat de l'absurd en l'art i la vida de l'indi nord-americà a principis del tercer mil·lenni. La memòria i els records autobiogràfics construeixen un passat que explica el present i la lluita quotidiana per definir-se com a individu en una societat híbrida i en permanent canvi. Les cançons tribals tradicionals i les cerimònies del poble chippewa esdevenen protagonistes amb uns paisatges de destrucció, on els cotxes i els establiments de pas són substituïts de la llar perduda, en una recerca dolorosa per trobar la curació pròpia i del poble indígena nord-americà, ferits pels cataclismes de la història.

Méndez-García, Carmen M. (ed). *Tradition and (R)evolution: Reframing Latina/o Identities in Contemporary US Culture*. Madrid: Biblioteca

Benjamin Franklin, 2018

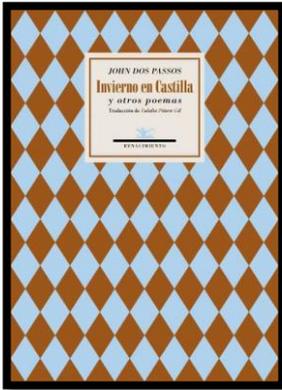
ISBN: 978-84-16978-68-7

Heritage, tradition, and memory are key elements in the construction of any personal and communal identity: even more so in the constant fluidity of Latina/o identities. In the US, even the term "Latina/o," and the idea of "Latinidad" often refer to a largely incoherent grouping: while they recognize certain common ground in language and/or in a history of colonialism, and similar stories of immigration, the terms' use is complicated by the multitude of national origins, ideologies, classes, or even ethnicities of the members of the group.



Tradition and (R)evolution: Reframing Latina/o Identities in Contemporary US Culture recognizes and celebrates such fluidity and multiplicity as positive, challenging, often terrifying, but necessarily invigorating. Constructing our personal identity, taking note of what has constructed us, is what allows us to acknowledge and be attracted to similarities, or to be intrigued by dissimilarities, in other personal identities. It is what enables us to group together in communal

identities. The fictions, children's books, memoirs, poetry, and films analyzed in this book are testimonies to the importance of looking at the past, of remembering, of recognizing our heritage, but also of looking to the future, re-imagining ourselves, and reframing our communities and their identities.



John Dos Passos. *Invierno en Castilla y otros poemas*. Sevilla: Editorial Renacimiento, 2018. Translation, critical edition and notes by Eulalia Piñero Gil

The first translation and critical edition of John Dos Passos's *A Pushcart at the Curb* (1922), *Invierno en Castilla y otros poemas*, has been published by Editorial Renacimiento. The bilingual edition also includes a preface by John Dos Passos Coggin, writer, environmental advocate, and Dos Passos's grandson.

Invierno en Castilla y otros poemas is John Dos Passos's first and only volume of poetry. In his autobiographical poems, the writer explores his experiences in Spain, Italy, Portugal and France. In 1916, when John Dos Passos decided to visit Europe, he travelled from New York City to Madrid to begin his transcultural "project of translating, interpreting, promoting, and even imitating the works of Spanish writers" (Rogers 2016:1). Therefore, the American poet acknowledges the influence of Antonio Machado's *Campos de Castilla* (1912) in his modernist poetry. In fact, *Winter in Castile* establishes a transliterary dialogue with Antonio Machado's seminal poetry collection. The intertextual influence is obvious, and Dos Passos's lyrical voice alludes to Spanish cultural landscape and identity with his own version of Machadian imagery.

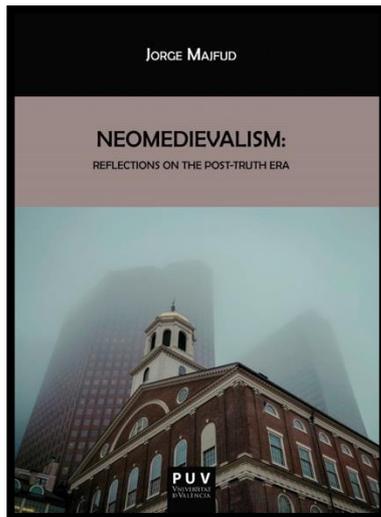
Likewise, the poet represents his painful experience in France as a volunteer ambulance driver during the First World War. The writer's antiwar views and emotional crisis surfaced rapidly in the form of verse. He represented his disappointment in many of the poems where his lyrical voice emerges openly with a desperate tone to save the world from the deceptions of the great warlords. As a result, the reader has the opportunity of facing the emotional effects of the European confrontation which were devastating for the majority of modernist writers.

Rockland, Michael A. New Edition (2018) of *The George Washington Bridge: Poetry in Steel*, Rutgers University Press (first published in 2008).

Rockland, Michael A. *Married to Hitler*. Hansen Publishing Group, 2018.

PUBLICACIONES DE BIBLIOTECA JAVIER COY D'ESTUDIS NORD-AMERICANS

(Publications Universitat de València, 2018)



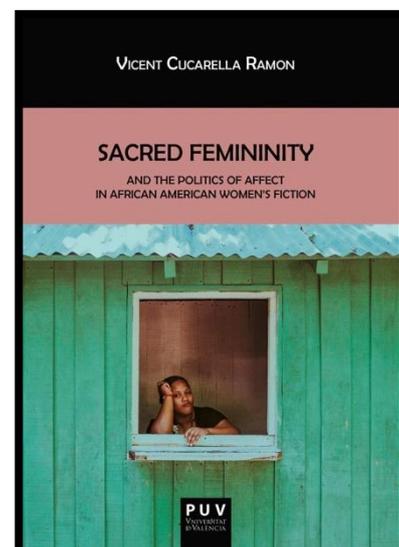
149. Jorge Majfud, *Neomedievalism: Reflections on the Post-truth Era*.

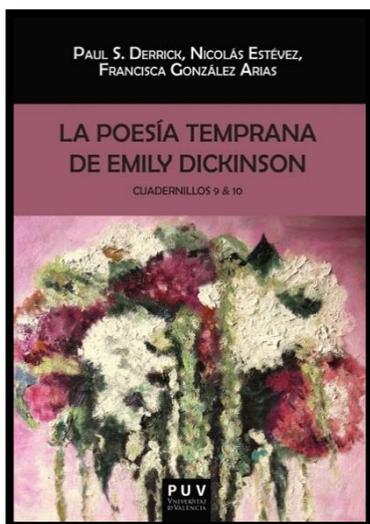
In *Neomedievalism: Reflections on the Post-truth Era*, Jorge Majfud reflects once again on the economic, political, and cultural realities of recent years, with “an outsider’s view from the center”: the culture of masks of the United States’ cultural industries and national unconscious, the hyper-fragmentation of the contemporary individual, the construction of reality through social narratives, the narrative dictated by the major social powers of money and the social castes who have taken us steadily toward a new form of feudalism, one no longer based on ownership of the land but of finance

capital. In all of the essays that comprise this book, one can see the urgency of responding to the historical moment, to the specific events that have occurred over the past two decades, but with an unflinching effort to contextualize events within their greater historical framework. Because, as the author asserts, forgetting is one of the principal weapons of moral, social, and, ultimately, military violence.

150. Vicent Cucarella Ramon, *Sacred Femininity and the Politics of Affect in African American Women’s Fiction*

This book presents the way in which African American women writers (Hannah Crafts, Zora Neale Hurston and Toni Morrison) have followed the spiritual endeavor of black Christianity as created by early nineteenth-century spiritual narratives to construct a sacred reading of the black female self. The sacred femininity that puts the ethics and aesthetics of African American women at the center of a certain mode of (African) Americanness relies on a view of spirituality that joins women ontologically and validates affective modes of representation as an innovative means to obtain social and personal empowerment.





151. Paul S. Derrick, Nicolás Estévez y Francisca González Arias, *La poesía temprana de Emily Dickinson. Cuadernillos 9 & 10*

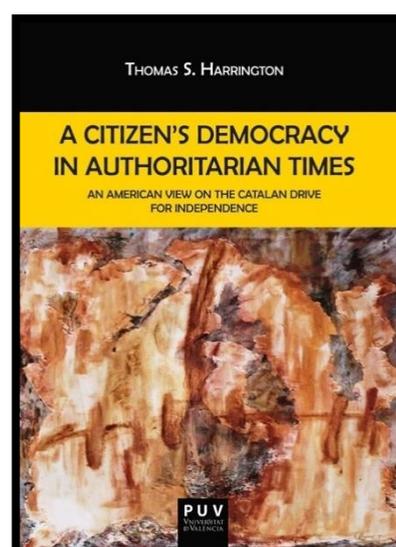
Este es el quinto volumen de un proyecto cuyo objetivo es la traducción y lectura crítica de los cuadernillos de Emily Dickinson, cuarenta secuencias poéticas cortas que plantean una serie de preguntas acerca de las intenciones y los logros artísticos de la misteriosa autora norteamericana. La traducción de cada cuadernillo va acompañada de un comentario crítico con el fin de explicar los poemas y

establecer el papel temático que juega cada una de estas piezas tempranas dentro de la obra global de la poeta.

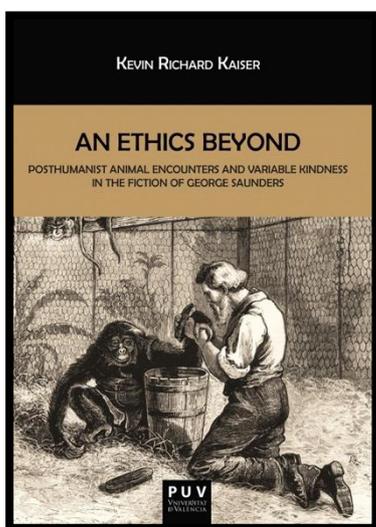
Los cuadernillos 9 y 10, que componen este volumen, incluyen un total de cincuenta y un poemas escritos entre 1860 y 1862. En ellos Dickinson sigue desarrollando sus temas más importantes —la lógica de la renuncia, la tensión entre fe y duda, la muerte como una frontera epistemológica infranqueable y la metáfora de la resurrección— y, al mismo tiempo, perfecciona su técnica poética y el manejo de estos motivos. En definitiva, somos testigos en este volumen de los pasos que la poeta emprende en esta época hacia su plena madurez intelectual y artística.

152. Thomas S. Harrington, *A Citizen's Democracy in Authoritarian Times: An American View on the Catalan Drive for Independence*

Agents of sedition who are heedlessly destroying Spain's "consolidated democracy"? Xenophobes simply interested in protecting their own wealth who are, behind the rhetoric, not that different from the tribal authoritarians coming to the fore in Hungary and northern Italy? These are but two of the many narrative tropes the Spanish government and the establishment press in Europe and the US are rolling out to counter the rise of separatist sentiment in Catalonia. The real story is much more complex and edifying. In this book, Thomas S. Harrington, an American



with a deep familiarity with Catalan culture and history, argues that, far from being a threat to democracy in Europe, the scrupulously peaceful and people-driven movement for independence in Catalonia is, perhaps, the best hope we have for spurring its much hoped-for renewal.



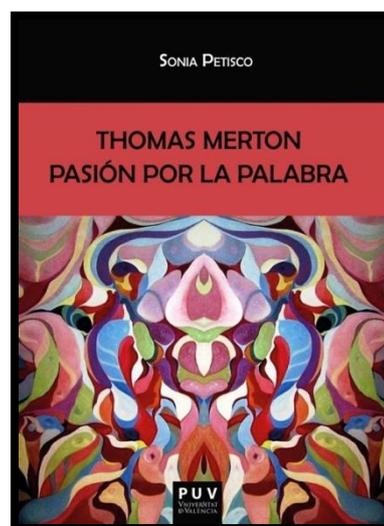
153. Kevin Richard Kaiser, *An Ethics Beyond: Posthumanist Animal Encounters and Variable Kindness in the Fiction of George Saunders*

This study examines the fiction of contemporary American author George Saunders in terms of how it presents situations applicable to the chief notions of posthumanist ethics and how these conceptions concern nonhuman animals, which are prevalent in his writing. Posthumanist ethics can help us understand what is at play in Saunders's fiction. Meanwhile, his texts can help us understand what is at stake in posthumanist ethics. This interdisciplinary

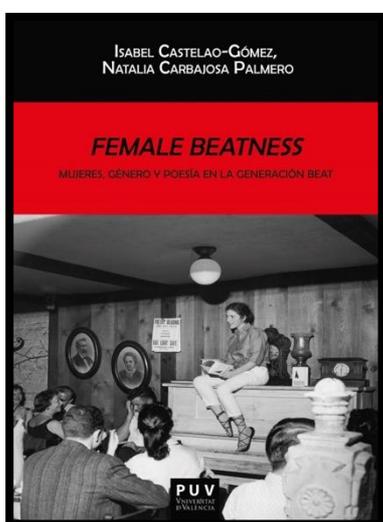
project may be beneficial both to conceiving new notions of ethics that are more inclusive and, more implicitly, to understanding the relevance of Saunders's fiction to the current American sociocultural climate.

154. Sonia Petisco Martínez, *Thomas Merton, Pasión por la palabra*

El presente volumen cifra su interés de forma prioritaria en el análisis riguroso de la poesía completa de Thomas Merton, contemplativo y crítico del siglo XX, famoso en todo el mundo por su autobiografía *La montaña de los siete círculos*. Monje trapense, promotor de diálogos interconfesionales entre diferentes religiones de Oriente y Occidente, Merton fue autor fecundo de numerosos libros en prosa y en verso que han sido traducidos a más de veinte idiomas y que tuvieron una gran repercusión en el ámbito de los estudios norteamericanos, así como en la sociedad de su tiempo. Entre otros aspectos, cabe destacar su doble condición de ciudadano europeo y norteamericano, su relevancia histórica en el contexto de la revolución de los derechos civiles en USA y de la intervención del gigante americano en Vietnam, su vinculación poética con Nicanor Parra o su papel como mentor de Ernesto Cardenal. Salvando las distancias obvias de tiempo, espacio, presupuestos



sociales y personalidad, podríamos decir que al tratar de dar cuenta cabal de la producción poética de Thomas Merton se está abordando una tarea similar a la que supondría revalorizar la prosa de San Juan de la Cruz haciéndola acompañar de su poesía. Ambas forman el anverso y el reverso de un mismo caudal creativo y su alcance es igualmente universal. Como el lector podrá comprobar a lo largo de estas páginas, en la actualidad su obra sigue conservando un mensaje crucial para la humanidad, la necesidad de una revolución lingüística y espiritual en el mundo de hoy sometido a la tiranía planetaria de la tecnociencia y despojado del *mundus imaginalis*. El gran móvil de todo su planteamiento ontológico y religioso será precisamente su aspiración a la Palabra y su gran misterio del Amor. En ella proyecta y administra su propia imagen literaria y humana.



155. Isabel Castelao-Gómez y Natalia Carbajosa Palmero, *Female Beatness: mujeres, género y poesía en la generación Beat*

Este estudio constituye el primer acercamiento crítico, en el mundo académico hispano, a las poetas y artistas de la generación Beat que, junto con los componentes masculinos bien conocidos del grupo (Kerouac, Ginsberg, Burroughs) revolucionaron la escena literaria urbana en la década de los cincuenta en los Estados Unidos,

adelantándose así al cambio de mentalidad que colonizó el mundo en los sesenta y los setenta. *Female Beatness* ubica en el canon literario y el devenir histórico a las mujeres que participaron de la efervescencia del excepcional momento creativo Beat y rompieron las barreras, con sus vivencias y sus obras, del papel subsidiario para el que a priori habían sido educadas. Dentro de un enfoque amplio que aúna contexto sociohistórico, teorías de género y análisis textual, el libro pone en el punto de mira a las poetas Elise Cowen, Diane di Prima, Ruth Weiss y Denise Levertov, explorando de este modo todas las formas posibles, muy diferentes entre sí, de ser Beat... en femenino. Hoy día, más de medio siglo después, su influencia y predicamento siguen absolutamente vigentes.



CFP: REVISTAS DE INVESTIGACIÓN

Lectora. Revista de dones i textualitat, 25 (2019)

**Issue “DECORATING THE BODY: GEMS, JEWELLERY,
AND BODY ADORNMENTS IN LITERATURE”**

Deadline: December 15, 2019

This special edition of *Lectora* seeks to interrogate the role and representation of jewellery, gems, and other accessories in literature. Focusing on material culture and the novel, the collection will explore how objects designed to enhance the body operate within a range of different literary texts.

In recent years, the scholarly field of fashion, material culture and literature has grown significantly. Recent writings by Valerie Steele, Katherine Joslin, and Clair Hughes have enriched the scholarly debate, and new projects such as “Textile Stories” —a public engagement initiative organized by the English Department at the University of Chester— have worked to develop further links between literature and fashion culture. Dress has always been an important expression of identity, and this can be traced back to the European middle ages. Dress and fashion —including jewellery, hairstyles, and accessories— have historically been used to symbolise the wearer’s status, occupation, and gender. Cynthia Kuhn and Cindy Carlson suggest that “fashion is a visible language with meanings that change over time and within cultures” (2007: xiii) and Katherine Joslin argues that, in society, dress “functions as hieroglyph” (2011: 7).

The focus on one specific aspect of material culture and fashion —jewellery, gems and body adornment— places this collection at the interface of current scholarship. To date, very little research has been done on the role of jewellery in literature. Jean Arnold’s excellent 2011 monograph, *Victorian Jewellery, Identity, and the Novel: Prisms of Culture* (Ashgate) argues that material objects played an integral role in the social formation of the nineteenth century British Empire. Reading jewels and gems as ‘prisms of culture’, Arnold suggests that jewellery as represented in the work of writers such as Wilkie Collins, George Eliot, William Makepeace Thackeray, and Anthony Trollope function as symbols of innate power and cultural status. Arnold’s work develops readings of material culture, fashion, and the novel, and offers an important and timely analysis of Victorian literature. This edition of *Lectora* would therefore seek to extend the discussion to other areas of literature and consider the changing role of jewellery in the literary world. For example, as consumer culture developed in America alongside the rise of the department store in the early twentieth century, it is noticeable that literary characters in American novels are increasingly rendered in terms of what they own. For female characters, the emphasis on gems and jewellery has a particular cultural significance. Historically, the purchase of costly jewellery was a time-honoured way of stock-piling financial security for women during periods when they could not own property and served as a solid legacy for their daughters who, under similar legislature, would be barred from inheriting property.



There are, of course, many examples of jewellery culture in literature that would be ideal to explore in this collection. Guy de Maupassant's 1884 short story "The Necklace" uses the diamond necklace of the title to structure this tale of morality and obsession. In Alexandre Dumas's classic *The Three Musketeers* (1844) the heroes must retrieve Queen Anne's jewels from the Duke of Buckingham in order to protect her from the condemnations of the royal court. Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* (1868) features one of the most famous diamond thefts in literary history. In Edith Wharton's first bestseller, *The House of Mirth* (1905), protagonist Lily Bart attends the Stepney wedding, and enviously recognises that the bride's jewels are a symbol of wealth and social acceptance. Anita Loos's comic masterpiece *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1925) features a major plotline involving a fake diamond tiara that serves as part of Loos's savage critique of consumer culture. In Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), Hester's wearing of the A and her decoration of it is an empowering moment of creative feminist activism. Another way of rethinking this text might be to consider the A as a form of *accessory* for Hester, the material item that she grows to construct her own identity around. In addition, pieces of jewellery have played important roles in multiple science-fiction and fantasy texts, from Tolkien's "one ring" to Rowling's time-turner necklace, and Collins's Mockingjay pin.

The collection would be open to any discussion of jewellery and gem culture in literature from the perspective of gender studies and the criticism of culture stemming from said studies. It would be useful to look at how this relationship has evolved over time. For example, how is jewellery represented in more current texts? J. Courtney Sullivan's 2013 novel *The Engagements* uses a diamond engagement ring to connect four different couples over several generations of different families. It is a way of engaging with social history as well as considering the relationship between love, marriage, and material culture. There is much scope here for a dynamic and exciting collection of essays that seeks to reread and reconsider texts in terms of material culture and jewellery.

The editor of the dossier is Dr. Anne-Marie Evans, Senior Lecturer in American Literature at York St. John University, UK.

The articles, written in Catalan, Spanish, Galician, Basque, English, French, Italian or Portuguese, should follow the journal's style guidelines and be submitted online before December 15, 2019.

The Journal also welcomes manuscripts for its *varia* section.

Journal guidelines and information on previous issues are available at:
<http://revistes.ub.edu/index.php/lectora/index>

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- Kuhn C. and Carlson C. (2007), *Styling Texts, Dress and Fashion in Literature*, New York, Cambria Press.



CONVOCATORIAS DE CONGRESOS Y SEMINARIOS

CALL FOR PAPERS

REPRESENTATION IN THE TIME OF THE POSTHUMAN: TRANSHUMAN ENHANCEMENT IN 21ST CENTURY STORYTELLING

**16th International Conference on Contemporary
Narratives in English**

www.typh.unizar.es/conference/

University of Zaragoza, Spain
May 29-31, 2019

The drive towards personal progress may be considered intrinsic to the human species. Whether intellectual, emotional, spiritual or bodily, perfection—or, less ambitiously, improvement—has always been pursued by different means like education, cultural development, meditation, or physical exercise, to name a few. What seems to have changed in recent decades is the tools available in the race for individual enhancement, given the rapidly evolving fields of science and technology as applied to human desires to enlarge one's memory and intelligence, lengthen one's life span, or create genetically stronger and healthier children.

This interest in human progress is key to understand Transhumanism, a cultural and philosophical movement that sees in reason, science and technology the means to overcome human limitations in both our bodies and minds (Bostrom, More, Pearce, Kurzweil). Genetically modified and technologically enhanced humans are transhumans in constant development towards the posthuman, a condition which would radically exceed the capacities of present humans and would entail extreme physiological, genetic and neurological change.

This inherently optimistic movement contrasts with Critical Posthumanism (Badmington, Braidotti, Graham, Hayles, Wolfe, Haraway, Herbrechter), which also sees the human as non-fixed and mutable but which questions anthropocentrism, human exceptionalism and the centrality of the subject



in the Anthropocene. They see transhumanism as an intensification of the Enlightenment concept of “Man” as the measure of all things.

The aim of this conference is to explore both how fiction in the Anglo-American sphere has addressed the question of what it means to be human and also how the literary field itself has changed in the time of the 4th industrial revolution (Floridi, Schwab), in which digital information and communication technologies have become essential and in which the analog gives way to the digital.

Possible topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Representations of human enhancement and transhumanist beliefs in fiction
 - Representations of enhanced human beings, cyborgs and digital posthumans
 - Ideological positions and exploration of the contradictions of the posthuman in fiction
 - Identities in (re)construction: gender, race, sexuality
 - Global markets and environmental damage
 - New aesthetic and narratological approaches
 - Speculative fiction and other genres dealing with the posthuman
 - Topics of interest: utopian and dystopian approaches, ethical concerns and challenges
- Changes in the literary field and consequences of the posthuman
 - From the analog into the digital
 - Enhancement as seen in multimedia and transmedia storytelling
 - Post-literature, trans-literature, enhanced literature
 - E-literature or digital-born literature
 - Changes in the traditional roles of the writer, the reader or the text itself
 - New sensory engagements

Plenary Speakers:

Stefan Herbrechter, writer, academic, translator and researcher on Cultural Theory and Critical Posthumanism at Coventry University (UK) and a Privatdozent at Heidelberg University (Germany).



Alexandra K. Glavanakova, Associate Professor in American Literature and Culture at St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia (Bulgaria).

Sherryl Vint, Professor of Science Fiction Media Studies at the University of California, Riverside (USA).

The conference is organised by the members of the research project “Trauma, Culture and Posthumanity: The Definition of Being in Contemporary North-American Fiction,” which is part of the research group “Contemporary Narrative in English” at the Department of English and American Studies of the University of Zaragoza, Spain.

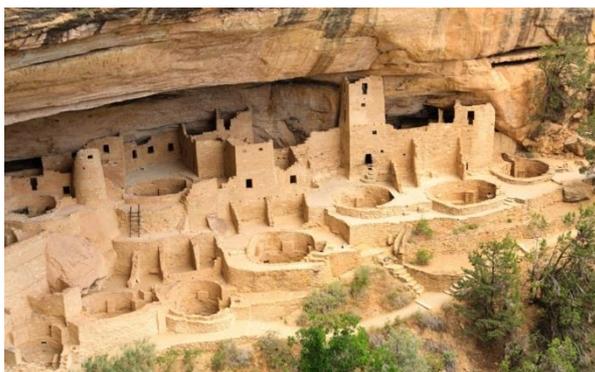
Paper proposals should be 300 words maximum, including a title. Please submit proposals, along with a brief CV and email address to the conference organisers Sonia Baelo-Allué and Mónica Calvo-Pascual at posthumanconference2019@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions:

January 7th, 2019.

PROYECTOS DE INVESTIGACIÓN

Troubling Houses. Dwellings, Materiality, and the Self in American Literature



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Summary

This project will provide a theory of the troubled relationship of the American self with domestic space, a relationship that constitutes a core concern of American literature (Chandler). It will do so by applying the epistemological tools of Domestic Space Studies (Briganti and Mezei), a discipline resulting from the spatial and affective turns in the Humanities, to the praxis of literary analysis. Our hypothesis is that the recurrence of this troubled relationship between self and domestic space in the American literary imagination reveals a deeper, core crisis of discomfort: the American self unreconciled with the notion of belonging. Our opening double, question,



therefore, is “What is the nature of the critical relationship between the American self and domestic space, and what does it reveal about the unique relationship between self and belonging in the American experience?”. The project will analyze the specific valences of power of the domestic space (Marx, Foucault) and the house as social system of transmission of conservative ideology (McDowell, Stea) while, conversely, and concurrently, of potential resistance to it (hooks, Jaggar, M. Friedman). It will also analyze the crisis in the binary of functioning self and idiosyncratic self in the domestic (Lefebvre, Benjamin, Morley), the struggle between intimacy (Segarra) and exposure to “the realm of the far” (Bauman), and the relation between the haunting memory of past homes and the construction of subjectivity (Bachelard).



REVISITING SLAVERY AND RACE IN FREDERICK DOUGLASS'S *NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS*

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“Repressive societies always seemed to understand the danger of ‘wrong’ ideas.”

“Slavery was a long slow process of dulling.”

Octavia E. Butler, *Kindred*

On the occasion of the bicentennial celebration of Frederick Douglass's birth, it seems adequate to reassess his legacy and the lasting significance of his historical figure. Particularly I would like to probe into Douglass's relevance to current debates about race and otherness by revisiting his most popular autobiography *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, published in 1845. My purpose is twofold: on the one hand, to analyze the way Douglass recurs to certain abolitionist strategies as effective weapons to counteract the demeaning image of African slaves promoted by proslavery propaganda, and thus to deconstruct pseudoscientific arguments. On the other, I would also argue that in this classic slave narrative Douglass is intent on fashioning an alternative sense of subjectivity and belonging that grants visibility to a vital and long tradition of resistance, which claimed humanity and rights for enslaved human beings.

¹ The author wishes to acknowledge the funding provided by the Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities (Research Project “Bodies in Transit 2”, ref. FFI2017-84555-C2-1-P), the European Regional Development Fund, and the Spanish Research Agency for the writing of this essay.



As is well known, Douglass was one of the leading pre-Civil War authors and abolitionist activists. He was also known as an exceptional and powerful orator. The critical interest in his works has undoubtedly increased over time,² as well as the need for their reassessment in light of contemporary theorization of crucial notions of race and otherness.³ His rise to fame was due to the unprecedented success of his 1845 narrative, instantly becoming a best-selling author. Indeed, his abolitionist tract grappled with one of the most complex controversies of the time, the slavery controversy, also called “the negro problem” or the “race problem.” He was indeed committed to finding a solution to the “race problem,” being acutely aware of his personal limitations.⁴ As he wrote in his third and final autobiography, in order to address the race problem comprehensively, “I should be profoundly versed in psychology, anthropology, ethnology, sociology, theology, biology, and all the other ologies, philosophies and sciences” (cited in Lee 2009: 4). This shows the way in which Douglass anticipated the establishment of disciplinary boundaries in a historical period in which the concept of race was still being defined from a broader perspective within the context of “scientific racism.”

As Eric Herschthal rightly observes, “we should also remember him as someone whose insights about scientific theories of race are every bit as relevant in our era as they were when he wrote them” (2018: 1). Herschthal documents the way in which Douglass engaged with ethnology, also known as “the science of race,” whose main theorists were Louis Agassiz, a Harvard

² For instance, evidenced by the publication of *The Cambridge Companion to Frederick Douglass* edited by Maurice Lee (2009), or more recently, by two biographies *Frederick Douglass: America's Prophet* by D. H. Dilbeck (2018), and *Frederick Douglass. Prophet of Freedom* by David Blight (2018). To this it may be added the numerous celebrations on the commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of his birth throughout this year.

³ I would add that the renewed attention in recent criticism to slavery narratives and neo-slave narratives in general also proves their pertinence in the ongoing debates over these issues.

⁴ A renowned writer like James Baldwin offered a very compelling picture of Douglass: “Frederick Douglass was first of all a man—honest within the limitations of his time, frequently misguided, sometimes pompous, gifted, but not always a hero, and certainly no saint at all” (cited in Blight 2018: n.p.).



profesor, and Samuel George Morton, president of one of the nation's prestigious scientific societies. Both were supporters of polygenism, which proposed the separate creation of white and black people. Douglass would systematically challenge these racist views, asserting the fact that racism was learned, that is, it was a social construct, not the "natural state of things." His public stance on race could be problematized, as Herschthal explains: "It sometimes meant that Douglass perpetuated scientific ways of thinking about race rather than simply dismantling its logic and insisting on race as a product of history" (3). However, I would argue that, despite the dangers involved in engaging with ethnology, Douglass was a precursor precisely because he was willing to defy the racist scripts sanctioned by his contemporaries, in order to call for the abolition of slavery.

From the onset of his *Narrative*, Douglass clearly delineates the differentiated and inhuman treatment reserved to slaves by narrating the horrors of the "peculiar institution": ignorance about their personal circumstances including age or father, forced separation from mothers, selling of mulatto children, overwork, torture, etc. In the first chapter, he recounts how they were coerced to silence, since any "inquiries on the part of a slave" were deemed "improper and impertinent, and evidence of a restless spirit" (255), a very negative disposition that deserved severe punishment. Drawing a clear-cut distinction between the terrible conditions of enslaved Africans and the fortunate "white children" that led pampered lives on plantations, he forcefully denounces a profoundly unjust system that hinged upon the enslavement of Africans.

Douglass thus describes the processes of racist exclusion and oppression that took place under the auspices of an ideological regime devised to condemn enslaved bodies and identities as the "Others" with respect to the white norm. Toni Morrison herself ponders on the nature and the allure of Othering in her latest book to date detecting "the social/psychological need for a 'stranger,' an Other in order to define the estranged self" (2017: 16). Morrison records the intimate historical link



between the process of inventing an Other and the “illusion of power” (24). She further concludes with Bruce Baum’s statement: “race, in short, is an effect of power” (25). Morrison is addressing here a long-standing racist tradition that sustained a rationale undergirding the twin projects of slavery and colonization. This rationale was based on the development of the so-called “scientific racism,” especially from mid-18th century onwards. Morrison states: “one purpose of scientific racism is to identify an outsider in order to define one’s self” (6), and she enumerates several treatises in which blacks were depicted as prone to “natural indolence,” “ignorance, superstition and barbarism” and incapable of intellectual capacities (4).⁵

Douglass counters this racist system of beliefs, precisely by taking pains to determine that those traits were not “naturally” assigned to slaves, as was propounded by pseudoscientific arguments. On the contrary, it is the “dehumanizing character of slavery” (263) which prompts a reevaluation of the “debasement” of enslaved people caused by their extreme suffering and the constant indignities that were inflicting onto them. The many episodes of physical brutality and the staggering level of violence that are depicted in the narrative aim at bringing home those unjust punishments whose main objective was to strip them of any control over their own bodies, and by extension, over themselves.⁶ It is my contention that Douglass is ultimately “signifying” upon that racist ideology in order to advocate for slaves’ right to

⁵ Morrison cites from the “Report on the Diseases and Physical Peculiarities of the Negro Race” by Dr. Cartwright, printed in the *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal* in 1851.

⁶ Dan Shen and Dejin Xu construe Douglass’s positionality in the 1845 version of the *Narrative* as follows: “I is . . . either an eyewitness of the dehumanization of slavery or a mere victim of it” (2007: 65). I would contend that Douglass’s intentional insistence on these disturbing episodes, especially his aunt’s terrible whippings, goes beyond mere witnessing or victimization, and intends to counteract proslavery idealized depiction of life on antebellum plantations. Admittedly, prominent scholars like Deborah McDowell have accused Douglass of a “voyeuristic relation to the violence against slave women,” making him complicit with the crime he is portraying (cited in Shen and Xu 2007: 68). Needless to say, the frequent naked exposure of female enslaved bodies is significant in the narrative as compared to that of male ones, a clear indication of the sexist bias that characterized the enslaving system.



own their bodies and subjectivities.⁷ As Timothy Sandefur points out, his maxism was: “we own ourselves and must be free to make ourselves the best we can be” (2018: 2). So freedom is inextricably tied up to the very conception of owning the self, which is one of the defining traits of the abolitionist discourse Douglass draws upon.

As part of his denunciation of the “evils” of slavery, Douglass skillfully invokes another abolitionist strategy which consists of proclaiming that its brutalizing effects also affected white people, which also attempts to deny proslavery claims about blacks’ “natural” disposition to be slaves. Especial noticeable is the transformation effected in Mrs. Auld, reminiscent of a Gothic demonic possession:

The fatal poison of irresponsible power was already in her hands, and soon commenced its infernal work. That cheerful eye, under the influence of slavery, soon became red with rage; that voice made all of sweet accord, changed to one of harsh and horrid discord; and that angelic face gave place to that of a demon. (274)

In this case, he utilizes the convenient trope of the “angel of the house” to bring to the forefront the devastating influence of slavery over white women, significantly linking it to the notion of “irresponsible power.” Morrison’s critique mentioned above strongly resonates in this passage.⁸ By exposing how this degradation also altered white people, Douglass radically reformulates the widespread notion of the “debasement of slaves,” or as Solomon Northup would phrase it, “the degradation of his race” (2012: 7), following his own father’s opinion that reflected another common belief promoted by proslavery views.

To put Northup’s 1853 text in dialogue with Douglass’s is also illuminating at this point. Having been born a free man himself, Northup bluntly reproduces some of the ingrained beliefs upholding the enslaving

⁷ Employing Henry Louis Gates’s classic coinage of the term.

⁸ Morrison explicitly mentions this in many other writings, but especially encapsulates it in the telling ending of *A Mercy*: “to be given dominion over another is a wrong thing” (165).



institution at the beginning of his narrative. For instance, he even expresses his anxiety over “the abject condition of a slave” (2012: 11), an assumption he would soon discard after his own traumatic experience. He acknowledges that his previous judgment about enslaved men and women was completely misguided, as he could hardly comprehend the enslaving dynamics before being captured and treated as a slave for twelve years, which basically consisted of “terrorizing black people with relentless physical and psychological violence” as Ira Berlin summarizes it in the introduction (2012: xxv). But what is also compelling about Northup’s changing viewpoint is that his ordeal prompts him to think that slavery led to a status of abjection not only for blacks, but also for white people, echoing Douglass’s abolitionist arguments.⁹

Julia Kristeva’s theory of abjection is particularly appropriate when applied to the inhuman treatment of enslaved blacks, and much has been written about it. But I would contend that it is equally applicable to the monstrous rendering of white members of the master class.¹⁰ It can be affirmed that Douglass’s narrative makes a pioneering intervention in portraying the intricate connection between slavery and abjection as being bi-directional. That is not to say that the enslaving system impacted blacks and whites in the same way, precisely because of the structural inequity fostered by it, but it definitively left an indelible imprint on whites too. In the novel there is also the telling example of the devilish slave-breaker Covey, repeatedly portrayed as insidious, deceitful, savage and extremely

⁹ This is especially evident in the depiction of his cruel master Edwin Epps, but also in the darker picture of the mistress and her vicious treatment of Patsey, because the mistress projects the blame onto the vulnerable slave, who is regularly abused and raped by her husband. This recalls the denigratory view of slave women as “sexual beasts,” conveniently portrayed as “Jezebels” according to proslavery stereotypical designation. Some of the classic discussions of these damaging stereotypes are Deborah Gray White’s *Ar’n’t I a Woman* (1985), hooks’ *Black Looks* (1992), or Patricia Hill Collins’s *Black Sexual Politics* (2005).

¹⁰ In *Powers of Horror* Kristeva delineates the repression of the abject, which is deemed as repulsive and polluted. Black bodies were perceived as contaminated (even transmitting diseases such as syphilis), sexually degenerate and therefore needed to be contained and rejected.



cruel. Scene upon scene insinuate the way in which he extracted pleasure from beating vulnerable slaves or from terrorizing them coming upon them unexpectedly: “such was his cunning, that we used to call him, among ourselves, ‘the snake’” (291). The fact that Covey is animalized is also another strategic reversal of the existing racist view that equated slaves with animals. Conversely, it is whites that ultimately turned into beasts guided only by their lowest instincts.

By this token, it can be affirmed that slavery itself was at the core an abject condition. Interestingly enough, we can trace the use of the word abject as applied to enslaved blacks as early as 1829 in David Walker’s *Appeal*, as he states in the introductory remarks to his third and final edition:

I promised to demonstrate . . . in the course of my Appeal, to the satisfaction of the most incredulous mind, that we Coloured People of these United States, are, the most wretched, degraded and abject set of beings that ever lived since the world began, down to the present day, and, that, the white Christians of America, who hold us in slavery, (or, more properly speaking, pretenders to Christianity,) treat us more cruel and barbarous than any Heathen nation did any people whom it had subjected, or reduced to the same condition, that the Americans (who are, notwithstanding, looking for the Millennial day) have us. All I ask is, for a candid and careful perusal of this the third and last edition of my Appeal, where the world may see that we, the Blacks or Coloured People, are treated more cruel by the white Christians of America, than devils themselves ever treated a set of men, women and children on this earth. (2000: 2)

Here he carefully points out that the state of abjection is provoked by slavery and the accompanying barbarity “of the enlightened Christians of America” (11), who are identified as “devils” and “heathens.” A true indictment of white Christians’ hypocrisy, Walker also intends to comment on the way in which this state of affairs is also a consequence of keeping slaves in ignorance as part of a master colonizing plan solely based on the difference of skin color. This master plan is thus predicated upon a racist ideology embedded in racial inequality. Ultimately Walker’s *Appeal* strives



to negate the inherently degraded and inferior nature ascribed to African Americans as fully unredeemable according to the dominant racist gaze. On the opposite, Walker reiterates that it is institutional racism which is conducive to the abject condition of enslaved human beings, who are humanized as “a set of men, women and children on this earth,” while white Americans are intentionally relegated to a devilish, almost subhuman status.

The abusive and abject nature of slavery is dramatically enacted in a very famous passage in Douglass’s narrative, when he is sent to that most horrendous figure, Covey, to undergo a process of “taming,” known as “slave-breaking”:

I was broken in body, soul, and spirit. My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect languished, the disposition to read departed, the cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died; the dark night of slavery closed in upon me; and behold a man transformed into a brute!
(293)

This and many other dehumanizing strategies on which the institutional and systemic racism relied were purposely deployed in order to create “what Foucault calls ‘docile bodies,’” as Cynthia Nielsen rightfully argues (2011: 253). That is, bodies that would not rebel against the status quo, because they have internalized the prison dynamics of constant surveillance. Douglass explains how enslavers continuously supervised slaves, maintaining them in a state of alert that would eventually make them extremely self-disciplined, even paranoid about any breach or disobedience. Especially Covey’s omnipresent tactics seem to be quite effective: “He was under every tree, behind every stump, in every bush, and at every window, on the plantation” (291). Any minor offence was severely punished, and slaves were subjected to continuous physical and psychological torture. Thus, the objective of self-discipline was successfully established among slaves themselves by means of cultural regulations that identified racialized



and gendered bodies and selves as “other” with respect to the normative “self.”

In opposition to this regulatory and disciplinary state propitiated by the enslaving regime, the other idea that presides over the *Narrative* is the significant tradition of resistance that enslaved people were able to develop against all odds. I have discussed elsewhere the long-standing tradition of black protest that Douglass is purposely drawing from that can be traced back to mid-eighteenth century.¹¹ Together with black protest, I would also like to highlight the long tradition of resistance he is also heir to. As Chinosole remarks,

Slaves’ resistance could be covert and overt, individual and collective ... Because survival is key to the collective’s existence, resistance is usually extended along a continuum from subversion, masking, sabotage, flight, and self-defense; and in rare cases, to organized bloody revolt. (2001: 109)

Slave resistance adopted diverse forms and strategies, but invariably was central to ensure physical and psychological well-being for enslaved communities. Notably, they were instrumental in sustaining black subjectivity in order to counter enslaving dehumanizing practices. As Nielsen emphatically affirms, “Douglass was able to assert his humanity through creative acts of resistance” (2011: 251). His acts of resistance started very early in the *Narrative* with his determination to be literate despite the many obstacles on the way. Arguably, the link between the acquisition of literacy and freedom is a recurrent pattern in male-authored slave narratives,¹² therefore a gender-specific strategy (Morgan 1994: 76). In fact, resistance strategies in general are also gender-specific, as Morgan

¹¹ In “Writing as Self-Creation: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*” (1994), and more recently, in “Commemorating Frederick Douglass and Martin Luther King: African American Rhetoric and Black Masculinity” (2018).

¹² Many scholars have traditionally explored this link, especially as a counterargument to Enlightenment thinkers’ claims of blacks’ lack of humanity and capacity to reason. A classic study is Henry Louis Gates’s *The Slave’s Narrative*.



notes: “Through their use of language, male narrators strove to demonstrate their place as men among men, that they had a *right* to autonomy in a political democracy based on a voter’s ability to understand and debate the issues” (77; author’s emphasis). Mainly used by male slave narrators, they coupled their literacy with their political rights in their claim to full manhood.

Apart from literacy as a leit motif, other scholars have disparaged the excessive use of violence as the main means for asserting his humanity as an obvious pattern of masculinist tradition. Most critics mention the oft-quoted cite: “You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man” (294) as the turning point in the narrative. Here Douglass adheres to the hegemonic notion of patriarchal manhood to advocate for the construction of black manhood, as the only available gender script at the time.¹³ Furthermore, Douglass’s position gradually radicalized and openly urged for armed revolt in 1852 when he said: “every slave-hunter who meets a bloody death in this infernal business, is an argument in favor of the manhood of our race. Resistance, therefore, is wise as well as just” (cited in Powell 2008: 889). Concomitant with mid-nineteenth century militant Black rhetoric, Douglass astutely articulates the pressing needs of Black nationalist thought that dismantled any notion of docile and vulnerable slaves. For Douglass espousing armed resistance was a way to boldly declare the independence of blacks and their right to self-determination. In that sense, he was reputed to be “one of the most radical Black nationalists of his time,” in Sterling Stuckley’s words (cited in Powell 2008: 888). His later endorsement of violence and armed struggle should not obscure the fact that Douglass actively sought for resistance strategies to further the abolitionist cause, but also for other ways to significantly shape black formation in the face of blatant racist practices.

¹³ I also commented on this in a previous article explaining the difficulties Douglass experienced to imaginatively construct other possible alternatives of a black self apart from the normative model of white masculinity.



In the *Narrative*, after his eventful fight with Covey, Douglass's attitude changes from docility, victimization and abjection to defiance and self-control, which eventually will facilitate his way to freedom. Before that dream may come true, readers can witness how he gradually recovers agency and self-esteem. Even though he will remain in the clutches of slavery for four more years, the self-assured Douglass feels already free. This does not absolutely mean that the external conditions have greatly improved, as he continues to be under strict surveillance night and day. Rather, what this new self values is freedom of the mind, and by extension, of the body, which could be interpreted as a position more attuned to African-based holistic philosophies.¹⁴

Another indisputable sign of the new Douglass is the utter lack of fear. Defying one of the main prohibitions of slave codes, he even opens a Sabbath school to teach his fellow-slaves to read and write (303), becoming instrumental in securing the freedom of some of them. Additionally, Douglass also redefines the very concept of community that the impact of slavery had presumably sundered. While at the beginning of the *Narrative*, there were clear indications of the separation and lack of confidence among slaves resulting from the disciplinary techniques employed by the institution, now Douglass repeatedly praises the communal bond among his fellow-slaves calling them “noble souls; they not only possessed loving hearts, but brave ones. We were linked and inter-linked with each other . . . We never moved separately. We were one” (305). This sense of unity has not been sufficiently foregrounded as one of the main resistance strategies enslaved blacks utilized to allow for the survival of the whole community, and consequently, its vital role in overcoming abjection and victimization.

¹⁴ Integral to an African understanding of the notion of self always in relation to the community, there is no separation among body/mind/spirit. For further information, some enlightening sources are *African Spirituality. Forms, Meanings and Expressions*, edited by Jacob Olupona (2000), or “Understanding Traditional African Healing” by M. Mokgobi (2014).



Moreover, this depiction of his fellow-slaves also contests received notions of the inferior and immoral character attributed to them by the prevalent racist ideology. Douglass would reiterate the noble and elevated nature of all slaves, once more opposing any charges of “debasement.” In spite of the terrible enslaving methods to “break” slaves, their morality and dignity are reaffirmed, and hence their humanity is proved beyond any doubt, unlike that of their white oppressors.

Having claimed the human status, it follows then that enslaved blacks have rights to equality and citizenship according to the national rhetoric of the time. Although a Black nationalist, Sandefur confirms Douglass’s unequivocal adherence to the principles of humanity and equality grounded in the American creed, even in the American dream. I agree with Sandefur when he says that “today’s scholars downplay or criticize his belief in individualism, private property, free enterprise or constitutionalism” (n.p.). Admittedly, a cursory review of his early writings reveals his deep investment in those principles that he also advocates for black people. That is the main reason why the abolition of slavery is intimately connected to the access to those rights systematically denied to slaves, especially the right to citizenship that entails the rest of them.¹⁵

But this endorsement on Douglass’s part also complicates the vision of nineteenth-century America as a nation-state. Borrowing Homi Bhabha’s concept of the “*umheimlich*,” Russ Castronovo observes, “the familiar entity of America—characterized by homogeneity, unity, and sameness—becomes unfamiliar, estranged from itself and dislocated in Douglass’s body and narrative that visibly bear traces of an African heritage” (1995: 2). Once again the supposedly abject body of the African slave occupies center stage,

¹⁵ As antislavery documents, Douglass’s pre-Civil War writings, and especially his *Narrative*, are markedly influenced by the abolitionist discourse, which equated freedom with the acquisition of those rights granted by the Constitution. In his later writings Douglass became keenly aware of the fluid possibilities embodied by diasporic constituencies, as Paul Gilroy eloquently expressed in his classic *The Black Atlantic*.



as it posits a difficult challenge to any univocal definition of nationhood exalted in the foundational texts of the US. It is a body and a narrative that undoubtedly disrupts a homogeneous sense of subjectivity and belonging, and upsets the traditional narrative of who is American. Douglass seems to be pointing in a new direction to accommodate that other subjectivity, formulating alternative constructions of the self to counteract the abject conditions that dictate slaves' lack of status as human beings. Castronovo adds: "a radical disjunction exists between the boundaries of the African-American self and the boundaries of the United States" (3), especially how to flesh out a free black self that can be "truly" regarded as American.

Needless to say, Douglass is not the only one that takes issue with this topic. Indeed, it has been proved that the use of the autobiography was "the ultimate textual re-enactment of subjectivity" to dismiss "the racist iconography of the slave period" as Chinosole states (108). Setting the pace of the abolitionist strategies to protest slavery, Douglass's narrative definitively paves the way for an autobiographical subject who is able to transform "discourses of autobiographical identity" (Smith 1995: 21). Moreover, Sidonie Smith chronicles how the slave body is used as a text, even a pretext for abolitionist purposes.¹⁶ That Douglass resists those attempts to appropriate his body and his subjectivity between the traditional scripts of abject slave or "noble ex-slave" testifies to his degree of awareness of conflicted allegiances. Hence, his narrative is in itself an act of resistance on different levels: first, because it becomes the discursive space to claim humanity and subjectivity; secondly, because it helps to continue a distinct African American abolitionist tradition granting visibility to a black speaking subject; and thirdly, because it artfully incorporates a harsh

¹⁶ Although Smith refers to Garrison's speech which does not appear in the 1845 version of the *Narrative*, it certainly stimulates illuminating connections with the abolitionist uses of speaking for slaves.



critique of the manipulation of black bodies and identities, however well-intentioned.¹⁷

Comparing him to Ralph Ellison, David Messmer writes that they both “showed a profound and sophisticated understanding of the need for protest to claim rhetorical space for the African American community without its being reduced to the racist presumptions of both white opponents and white allies” (2009: 602). Clearly a project of resistance to the existing status quo, the *Narrative* can be considered a highly politicized act in which Douglass radically reformulated hegemonic notions of race and otherness. While the effective use of the abolitionist discourse figures prominently in Douglass’s account, other patterns have emerged throughout this discussion which suggest that he skillfully invokes a long tradition of resistance to signal unity and communal life as key aspects in their fight for freedom and autonomy. By problematizing a racist pseudo-scientific discourse on abject and docile black bodies and subjectivities, Douglass undoubtedly validated the construction of an alternative black self, not exempt from contradictions, but which forced a new conceptualization of forms of belonging and nationhood in nineteenth-century America.

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¹⁷ Douglass explicitly addressed it in 1856: “Opposing slavery and hating its victims has come to be a very common form of abolitionism” (cited in Matlack 1979: 15).



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SELVES, SEX, SATIRE AND THE STATES: FIFTY YEARS OF INEXHAUSTIBLE ROTH

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Philip Roth, last survivor and most prolific writer of the critically-branded Jewish American post-War generation (with Saul Bellow and Bernard Malamud), passed away last May at the age of 85. Consistently with the acerbic indictments of rabbis, Jewish faith and religious practice of his early fiction, Roth had explicitly requested that no religious rituals should take place at his funeral, and his remains were laid to rest at the Bard College Cemetery in Annandale-on-Hudson, where he had once taught.

Time and again awarded either for individual novels or his literary career, Philip Roth's writing spans fifty-one years of fiction, from the early *Goodbye, Columbus* (1959) to his last novel, *Nemesis* (2010). The highly prestigious *Library of America* series which anthologizes Roth's oeuvre, edited by Ross Miller, expanded from an originally planned eight-volume series to the definitive ten volume edition, to accommodate no less than thirty works and a collection of nonfiction. Indeed, Roth won every major American literary award (various *National Book Awards* and *National Book Critics Circle Awards*), a few Pulitzer Prizes, several PEN Awards, three prestigious French Awards, awards in the field of historical fiction, the *Man Booker International Prize*, the *Library of Congress Creative Achievement Award for Fiction*, and two years after publication of his last novel, the *Prince of Asturias Prize for Literature* in 2012. In fact, every reputed prize but the Nobel, as reviewer Ron Charles ironically noted in *The Washington Post* in the wake of the Swedish Academy scandals: "It's just as well there will be no Nobel Prize in literature this year. Philip Roth is dead." (May 23, 2018)



Any thorough approach to Roth's massive output is a daunting and almost impossible task in the course of a few pages but identifying the major underlying themes and impulses in the Rothian corpus and how these inform certain works or periods is more amenable. Essentially, Roth employed fiction: to target Judaism or Jewish ritual and its instrumentalization; to satirize—not uncontroversially—male sexual desire; to explore self and selves through writer-doubles within a postmodern framework that interrogates the limits of fact and fiction; and to signpost the “state of the nation” at significant junctures in 20th century American history, including alternate history. Amid the vast amount of criticism on the writer, which is generally limited in scope to a few specific works, a particular period, or individual theoretical and thematic approaches, David Gooblar's *The Major Phases of Philip Roth* (Continuum Books, 2011) is a useful monograph that persuasively builds a taxonomy of the Rothian oeuvre following a largely chronological approach. Engaging with Ross Posnock's *Philip Roth's Rude Truth: The Art of Immaturity* (Princeton University Press, 2006) and Debra Shostak's *Philip Roth: Countertexts, Counterlives* (University of South Carolina Press, 2004), Gooblar sets out to strike a balance between these two recent critical approaches which consider, both of them validly but selectively, the writer's gaze as moving either “outward” towards the “republic of culture” (Posnock) or “inward” towards “human subjectivity” (Shostak). Stressing that “such unity is impossible” as there are, in fact, several Roths, Gooblar proposes to “break Roth's career into clusters of books, positing phases of Rothian preoccupation” (4).

Roth's first work *Goodbye, Columbus* (1959) was targeted by conservative Jewish sectors for the stories' unflattering portrayals of observant Jews, in the sometimes hilarious, sometimes ironic “The Conversion of the Jews”, “Defender of the Faith” and “Eli, the Fanatic.” These allegedly “self-hating” Jewish characters have to be read in the cultural and political milieux of the 1950s, a time when New York liberals,



in the wake of the Holocaust and of the Stalinist purges, had become sceptical of cultural or sociopolitical institutionalization. Formally, such characters become prototypes for the ambivalent, self-questioning and non-conformist individual, and later writer-double which will be so frequent in later fiction. In the novella titling the volume, the symbolic implications of Neil's "seeing" American Jews' identity as divided between a new rich suburban class and earlier inner-city working-class origins becomes relevant, as its final image shows Neil as a "characteristically Rothian [character]... poised between an inward focus on ... the self (Shostak's situated subject) and an outward focus on ... literature (Posnock's republic of culture)" (Gooblar 31)

After this early work, Roth produced two minor novels in a Jamesian style (*Letting Go*, 1962; *When She was Good*, 1967) before fully finding his voice with the unforgettable *Portnoy's Complaint* (1969). A milestone in Roth's career, the narrative mode of Portnoy—an extended psychoanalytic monologue—would prefigure Roth's later self-reflexive fictions, notably the *Zuckerman Trilogy* and *The Counterlife*. In the wild late sixties, Alexander Portnoy becomes a character who is comic in his concern about being serious by embracing 'high literature', pursuing *shiksés*¹, and shedding his father's Jewish background. Signalling Roth's authorial freedom to engage fully with Jewishness and Jewish idiom, Portnoy's vital progress symbolically enacts in a Jewish comic mode precisely the (serious) dilemma of Roth trying to become a hyphen-free American Writer, a concern that had also affected his generational peers, Bellow and Malamud. In an interview, Roth once declared what has now become a celebrated quotation: "The epithet American-Jewish writer has no meaning for me ... If I'm not American, I'm nothing" (qtd. in McGrath)

¹ Used from the perspective of Orthodox Jews, a derogatory term for non-Jewish young women.



The probing of the self (later, selves) and the literary transposition of Freudian psychoanalytic practice became a central concern to Roth in the seventies and into the eighties. In *My Life as a Man* (1974), Roth conceived his most enduring writer-double, Nathan Zuckerman, who would reappear to explore Roth's life as a writer throughout the Zuckerman Trilogy (comprising *The Ghost Writer*, 1979; *Zuckerman Unbound*, 1981; *The Anatomy Lesson*, 1983 and the "epilogue" *The Prague Orgy*, 1985). David Gooblar traces an evolution from the optimistic quest for self-knowledge of the early Portnoy towards its gradual, despairing, narrowing in *The Anatomy Lesson* and in *The Prague Orgy* where, slipping into a 'Freudian lock', eventually "Zuckerman cannot escape his identity as a writer, but, as a writer, he cannot write without some method of self-reflection" (98).

Zuckerman's (and thus Roth's) release from the Freudian lock came via the radically innovative *The Counterlife*, a postmodern meta-novel whose five plots counter one another, telling alternate, incompatible stories of Zuckerman's life. Rather than attempting to uncover or reveal a pre-existent latent self in the Freudian paradigm, *The Counterlife* enacts the narrativization of human experience/s by a multiplicity of selves, "each character becom[ing] the author of his or her own story" (Gooblar 102). This work thus becomes a watershed for the ensuing Rothian phase (late 80s to early 90s) where through a number of narrative devices —textual framing, genre-crossing, and writer/character doubling— the writer interrogated the re-presentation of reality and the self and the ethics of exposing autobiographical truth. In varying modes, such concerns are explored in *The Facts* (1988), *Deception* (1990), *Patrimony* (1991) and *Operation Shylock* (1993).

While Roth's sustained interest in the self and selves gradually evolved from the interiorly psychoanalytic in Portnoy towards the outward doubling in *Shylock*, some early novels started to show other facets. The lustful masculine drives of Portnoy were also transferred into professor David Kepesh, another fictional persona who Roth employed as the focalizer



of his sexual novels *The Breast* (1971), *The Professor of Desire* (1977), and many years later, in this character's old age, *The Dying Animal* (2001). Informed by an interest in Kafka in both form and background (Kepesh metamorphoses into a giant breast in the former), the seventies Kepesh novels belong to this writer's more irreverent and provocative mode, and are generally identified by critics as his weakest. But the early seventies also produced Roth's first approach to the American canvas via the episodic *Our Gang* (1971), a corrosive satire of President Nixon, named "Trick E. Dixon" in the thinly disguised fiction.

After the controversial *Sabbath's Theater* (1995), protagonized by a purposefully unsympathetic, manipulative and sexually-depraved character, Roth turned his attention fully to the American scene in the late nineties with the *American Trilogy* (*American Pastoral*, 1997; *I Married a Communist*, 1998; *The Human Stain*, 2000), the writer's most explicit engagement with the state of the nation in three convulse eras: the Vietnam War years, 1950s McCarthyism, and President Bill Clinton's impeachment (1998-1999). Many Roth commentators read this as a radically new phase, in which the writer moves away from the self-reflexive and/or metafictional postmodern narratives. Roth himself claimed the trilogy wanted to reflect "historical moments in post-war American life that have had the greatest impact on [his] generation." (Roth, "Interview", 8). Clearly there is a shift away from the narcissistic "I", but not necessarily from the public "self." Critics like Gooblar read the trilogy more in terms of an "interaction between self and society ... between self-determination and social determination" (132), echoing the outlooks of *Goodbye, Columbus*, but now broadened to the large American canvas rather than involving only the neighbouring Jewish community. Establishing an interesting link with early 1950s novels featuring Adamic protagonists or protean heroes (J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, 1951; Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, 1952; Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March*, 1953), Gooblar emphasizes how the self-fashioning of Coleman Silk in *The Human Stain*, Ira Ringold in



I Married a Communist or “Swede” Levov in *American Pastoral*, whether in ethnocultural or ideological terms, is ultimately dismantled by the collective and social forces dominant in each era. Further to this critic’s claims, it should be noted that, in this particular assessment, Roth’s *American Trilogy* harks back to the origins of the American novel, as the quest for self-fashioning in the face of (adverse) social forces is a foundational theme in Mark Twain’s *Huckleberry Finn* (1884).

Into the new millennium, Philip Roth kept going strong as a writer, producing a total of seven novels. In a very scheduled approach, four of these novels complete and close the cycle of Roth’s writer(ly) doubles: the aging but still lustful professor Kepesh pursuing young students in *The Dying Animal*² (2001), the concluding Zuckerman novel *Exit Ghost* (2007), a highly meta-literary book that speaks more to insider readerships acquainted with *Zuckerman Bound* and *The Counterlife*, and *The Plot Against America* (2004), which employs the perspective of Philip Roth as a child, being the sixth work to feature Philip Roth as semifictional / autobiographical character. This last work deserves further discussion, since it involved Roth’s imaginative and quantitative leap into the “alternate history” genre (extending *Operation Shylock’s* and *The Counterlife’s* concerns with alternate Roths and alternate Zuckermans) and became his most awarded novel in the new century (*James Fenimore Cooper Prize for Best Historical Fiction*, 2005; *Sidewise Award for Alternate History*, 2005; *National Book Critics Circle Award* finalist, 2005). Grounded on the alternate event that Roosevelt lost the 1940 Presidential election to the antisemitic Charles Lindbergh, *The Plot Against America* explores how a dystopian, fascistic US under the Lindbergh presidency affects Jewish Americans and various Roth family members in particular. Interweaving individual stories with the public forces of the nation, the novel

² Best known in Spain through Isabel Coixet’s film adaptation *Elegy* (2008), following the translation into Spanish of Roth’s novel as *Elegía*.



imaginatively reinscribes a long list of real historical figures from the twenties, thirties and forties, including Nazi officials and American politicians, tycoons and journalists.

Roth completed his impressive literary career with four short novels, labeled the Nemeses quartet: *Everyman* (2006), *Indignation* (2008), *The Humbling* (2009) and *Nemesis* (2010). Rather uneven in terms of literary quality, all four novels deal with the influence of individual choice and personal circumstances in determining human fate. The most acclaimed work in this late series is *Everyman*, recipient of the *PEN/ Faulkner Award*, an entertaining and thought-provoking meditation on the confrontation of sickness and mortality faced by the unnamed protagonist. The middle novels are generally agreed by critics as unremarkable or even fiascos, but in the closing novel *Nemesis*, Roth revisits his hometown of Newark to tell the moving story of a local sports hero, javelin thrower Bucky Cantor, in the midst of the polio epidemic in the summer of 1944, a story that echoes the pattern of *American Pastoral's* Jewish American sports star. Following the publication of *Nemesis*, Roth declared that he was retiring from fiction writing. And so he did.

Unlike a number of his American and Jewish American contemporaries —Don DeLillo, Jonathan Safran Foer, Thomas Pynchon, and cartoonist Art Spiegelman, to name a few— Roth's late fiction never explicitly addressed or alluded to 9/11 and its sociopolitical aftermath, although he was still actively writing after 2001. Attempts have been made to read *The Plot Against America* as a *roman-a-clef* on the Bush administration and the "War or Terror" years, but the events in the novel never hint at this era and Roth always explicitly refuted such readings. Yet a passage in this novel, describing the family and neighborhood reaction when the Republican convention unexpectedly nominates Charles Lindbergh following the aviator's last minute surprise appearance at the meeting, becomes uncannily prophetic of Trump's nomination in the summer of 2016: "No!" was the word that awakened us, 'No!' being shouted



in a man's voice from every house on the block. It can't be. No. Not for president of the United States." (16)

Philip Roth's literary achievement is colossal. As many commentators and critics acknowledge, there are (arguably) six to ten novels which do not match the standards of a literary genius. Yet Roth was so prolific that this is largely inevitable. Whether as commentator of the state of the nation, fictionalizer of history, postmodern writer, provocative analyst of sex, and, above all, supreme satirist, his place among the literary greats in the American canon is indisputable.

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