American Studies in Transatlantic Perspective: Critical Regionalism in Politics and Culture

June 1 to June 9, 2014, San Marcos, TX

Center for the Study of the Southwest at Texas State University
San Marcos & the Bavarian American Academy, Munich
8:00 – 8:30 AM  
Jessica R. Pliley, Texas State University  
Introductory Remarks  

Jessica R. Pliley is an assistant professor of women’s and gender history at Texas State University. She served as the inaugural Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery Fellow at the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolitionism at Yale University. She earned her Ph.D. at the Ohio State University. In addition to authoring Policing Sexuality: The Mann Act and the Making of the FBI (Harvard, 2014), her work has appeared in the Journal of Women’s History and the Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. She is currently editing a collection of essays on transnational and global anti-vice activism for Cambridge University Press.

8:30 – 9:30 AM  
Jesús F. de la Teja, Texas State University  
Not Just Between South and West: A Transnational Overview of Southwestern History  

What makes the Southwest a distinct American region is precisely that long border with Mexico. In fact, in some respects the American Southwest is a continuation of the Mexican North. This presentation will provide a historical overview of the region emphasizing the major social, economic, and political development that have shaped life in the region from the arrival of the first Europeans to the recent past.

Jesús F. de la Teja is Jerome H. and Catherine E. Supple Professor of Southwestern Studies, Regents’ Professor of History, and Director of the Center for the Study of the Southwest at Texas State University-San Marcos. He has published extensively on Spanish, Mexican, and Republic-era Texas, most recently the co-authored Recollections of a Tejano Life: Antonio Menchaca in Texas History (2013). He served as the inaugural Texas State Historian (2007 – 2009), and has been president of the Texas State Historical Association. Currently he serves on the board of directors of Humanities Texas and the San Jacinto Museum of History.
CRITICAL REGIONALISM IN POLITICS AND CULTURE—SUNDAY, JUNE 1

10:00 – 12:00 AM
Heike Paul, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg
Critical Regionalism and the Recycling of Turner’s Thesis after World War II

Following a more general introduction to the theme of the summer school with regard to ‘old’ and ‘new’ regionalisms, I want to zoom in on the particular ‘career’ of the writings of one prominent scholar of regionalism, namely Frederick Jackson Turner whose so-called “frontier-thesis” has become much wider known than his work on “sections” in American history. It is after World War II that Turner’s thesis serves, once again, as an anchor of defining Americanness and of affirming American ‘virtues’ of individualism and democracy at home and abroad—particularly in the geopolitical constellation of the ‘cold war.’ In 1947, Turner’s major work, The Significance of the Frontier in American History, was published in German/Germany for the first time within the political climate of West-German reeducation/reorientation. I will contextualize Turner’s argument within German and American discourses of space/place, expansionism, and democracy to reconstruct some of its ‘preferred readings’ and cultural translations in this particular transatlantic moment. This will lead to more general observations regarding critical regionalism as discursive framework.

Heike Paul is professor of North-American Literary and Cultural Studies at the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg. Her book publications include Mapping Migration: Women’s Writing and the American Immigrant Experience from the 1950s to the 1990s (Diss., 1999) and Kulturkontakt und Racial Presences: Afro-Amerikaner und die deutsche Amerikaliteratur, 1815 – 1914 (Cultural Contact and Racial Presences: African Americans and the German America-Literature, 1815 – 1914, Habil., 2005). She has co-edited Multilingualism (special issue of Amerikastudien, with Werner Sollors, 2005), Pirates, Drifters, Fugitives: Figures of Mobility in the US and Beyond (with Alexandra Ganser and Katharina Gerund, 2012), and Präsenz und implizites Wissen (Presence and Tacit Knowledge; with Christoph Ernst, 2013). Currently, she works on issues of transatlantic cultural mobility in the 19th and 20th century and on American foundational mythology.
Where does any of us stand today in the new configurations of meaning, place, and time occasioned by global economic restructurings and new technologies of communication? How do you or I or someone elsewhere make sense of altered relations of the self, the body in place, notions of political life, or of the nation state? Critical regionalism is a way of diagnosing and conceptualizing these transformations—it is a political/cultural imagination and also a mode of embodiment whose keywords and ethical domains are under construction. For Gayatri Spivak, critical regionalism offers a strategy for democratic address of problems of precarity and it takes the shape of an abstract state. I will be interested in this talk to situate Spivak’s thinking in contexts of other theorizations of critical regionalism and, especially, I develop feminist discussion of the above questions and link them to related ones in the fields of feminist theory and American Studies about security, sovereignty, the contemporary state, and storytelling in the present. What alternative worlding projects does feminist critical regionalism imagine? What can it teach us about decolonizing or remapping the fields of US Southwest study? Select literary and film texts that figure here include: The Round House, González & Daughter Trucking Company, Giant, Woman Hollering Creek, flesh to bone, August: Osage County, Bagdad Café, Johnny Guitar, and High Noon.

Krista Comer is an American Studies scholar, an associate professor of English at Rice University and Associate Director of Rice’s Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. She has written Landscapes of the New West: Gender & Geography in Contemporary Women’s Literature (UNC Press, 1999) as well as Surfer Girls in the New World Order (published in 2010 by Duke). Last summer she edited a special double issue of the journal Western American Literature featuring the work of younger scholars and junior faculty and focused on the conceptual keywords such as: ‘postwest,’ ‘critical regionalism,’ and ‘post-regionalism.’ Right now she is working on a book entitled The Feminist States of Critical Regionalism and it’s a project that is both a Public Humanities work with women surfers and also a work of feminist theory and culture and literary study. In 2003, she was President of the Western Literature Association.
9:00 AM Meet at the front of San Jacinto Hall for the vans to Austin.

10:00 AM Visit the Harry Ransom Center, the Texas State Capitol, and the ‘Live Music Capital of the World.’

8:00 PM Meet at the corner of Congress and 11th Street for the ride back to San Marcos.
This talk draws from a project that attempts to put critical regionalism into practice, investigating the dynamics of place-representation in order to find ways to change them. My case study is the Cumberland Gap, an icon epitomizing a triumphalist narrative of American expansionism. A major point of entry into the Ohio Valley for Anglo-American settlers in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Gap represents a site where you could, in the words of Frederick Jackson Turner, “watch the process of civilization, marching single file.” Over the last two decades The National Park Service has carried out a massive project designed to return the Gap to this “historic condition.”

By scrutinizing the “restored” landscape of the Cumberland Gap National Historic Site, and in particular the park’s Gap Cave, I examine the counternarratives that lurk in the cracks in the restoration’s façade. The cave’s history of commercialization, the remnants of which are still present in area landscape and lore, offers a different story of American expansion, focused on economic exploitation and social “uplift.” Understanding the complexity underlying, literally and figuratively, this triumphal landscape—especially in light of some of the cultural, economic, and political challenges of the present day—suggests that perhaps we might be well-served to integrate other these sorts of less aggrandizing versions of national expansion into these palaces of collective memory.

Doug Reichert Powell's interest in social constructions of place and region (especially the southern Appalachian mountains) underwrites his research and writing in popular culture, landscape, literature, composition studies, and critical pedagogy. Doug’s first book, Critical Regionalism: Connecting Politics and Culture in the American Landscape, was published in 2007 by the University of North Carolina Press, while Composing Other Spaces, a collection of essays about place and writing pedagogy Doug co-edited with John Paul Tassoni, was published by Hampton Press in 2008. His publications and presentations cover subjects ranging from the 1998 manhunt for Eric Rudolph to the 1916 hanging of a circus elephant. Doug is currently at work on a documentary writing project about commercial caverns (or “show caves,” as they are known in the trade) and other “geology tourism” sites—rock formations, mineral springs, and other landscape oddities—in the valley-and-ridge province of the Appalachian Mountains. A graduate of Northeastern University (PhD, 1999), East Tennessee State University (MA, 1992), and Washington and Lee University (BA, 1990), he is associate professor of English and director of the First-Year Seminar at Columbia College Chicago.
This presentation will provide a tour through Southwestern literature from the beginning to the present, including writers, genres, and major themes of Southwestern letters. The focus will be on literature of the 20th and 21st century, including such writers as J. Frank Dobie, Katherine Anne Porter, Larry McMurtry, Cormac McCarthy, Leslie Silko, Rudolfo Anaya, and others.

A scholar noted for his writing on the literature of the American West, Mark Busby is also a novelist and former co-editor of the journals _Southwestern American Literature_ and _Texas Books in Review_. He is a professor of English at Texas State University and former director of the Center for the Study of the Southwest and a past president of the Texas Institute of Letters. His books include _John Graves, Writer_ (co-editor, 2007), _The Southwest: The Greenwood Encyclopedia of American Regional Cultures_ (editor, 2004), _From Texas to the World and Back: Essays on the Journeys of Katherine Anne Porter_ (co-editor, 2001), _Fort Benning Blues: A Novel_ (2001), _Larry McMurtry and the West: An Ambivalent Relationship_ (1995).
Work in Progress Presentations

2:00 – 2:45 PM
Felicia Preece, Wayne State University
“A picture of the whole world”: The Role of Place in Hemingway’s Fiction

This paper examines how Ernest Hemingway’s fiction models Michael Steiner’s belief in a particular breed of regionalism which exists parallel to globalism and incorporates an increasing drive to cling tightly to one’s roots while still promoting an interconnected and global society.

3:00 – 3:45 PM
Marta Usiekniewicz, University of Warsaw
The Eating Detective: Food and Masculinity in 20th century Crime Fiction

This project attempts to theorize food as means of gender representation in contemporary crime fiction. Men’s foodways are crucial yet rarely investigated aspect of masculinity: a transparency that requires examination. The choice of crime fiction is motivated by two factors: existence of abundant research on masculinity in this formula, and the historical gendering of the crime fiction cannon.

4:00 – 4:45 PM
Robin Coleman, Wayne State University
“And I only am escaped alone to tell thee”: The Idea of Space in America and the Melville Archive

In February 1953, CLR James wrote to Charles Olson, “Dear Professor Olson, I have read your book on Melville and have sent you my own.” James is referring to Olson’s 1947 text *Call Me Ishmael*; James has sent Olson a copy of his own text, *Renegades, Mariners and Castaways*, just published in 1953. Studying this letter, this paper will consider this relationship as a case study: to show how nationality was a site of direct intervention in the study of Melville and America, to show how both James and Olson were drawn to Melville as a resource for American Studies, and how the region of the archive is a space that both speaks and silences these two men and their valuable contributions to academic scholarship.
8:00 – 9:45 AM
Ron Tyler, Formerly of UT- Austin & the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth
Selling the Southwest: From Exploration to the Ubiquitous

From 1820 Anglo and European artists have documented the land and the cultures of the American Southwest, turning it from an exotic, little-known region into the tourist-friendly Meccas that we know today. Their work is now highly sought-after by museums and collectors and offers insight into this complex region.

Ron Tyler is the retired Director of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Texas. He is former Professor of History at the University of Texas at Austin and Director of the Texas State Historical Association and the Center for Studies in Texas History at the University and has published a number of works in the areas of Texas, Western America, and American art and history, including Alfred Jacob Miller: Artist as Explorer (1999), Prints of the West (1994), Audubon’s Great National Work: The Royal Octavo Edition of The Birds of America (1993), Views of Texas: The Watercolors of Sarah Ann Hardinge, 1852-1856 (1988), and Visions of America: Pioneer Artists in a New Land (1983).

10:15 – 12:00 AM
Steve Davis, Texas State University
“The Sense of Place”: Celebrating Regional Culture at The Witliff Collections

The Witliff Collections is inspired by Texas author J. Frank Dobie, who observed: “It seems to me that people living in the Southwest will lead fuller and richer lives if they become aware of what it holds.” To that end, the Witliff collects primary and secondary source material from the region’s leading writers, photographers, filmmakers, and musicians, in order to illuminate the creative process while enhancing our understanding of Texas, the Southwest, and Mexico. Witliff Collections curator Steve Davis will provide a powerpoint presentation highlighting the Witliff’s holdings, which include the literary papers of noted author Cormac McCarthy.

Steven L. Davis is the Assistant Curator of the Witliff’s Southwestern Writers Collection at Texas State University and a prolific author. His publications include J. Frank Dobie: A Liberated Mind (2009) and Texas Literary Outlaws: Six Writers in the Sixties and Beyond (2004), and with Bill Minutaglio, Dallas, 1963 (2013). He has also edited two books in the Southwestern Writers Collection Book Series with the University of Texas Press: Lone Star Sleuths: Mystery/Detective Fiction from Texas (co-edited with Bill Cunningham and Rollo Newsom, 2007) and Land of the Permanent Wave: An Edwin “Bud” Shrake Reader (2008).
Work in Progress Presentations

2:00 – 2:45 PM
Mashid Mayar, Universität Bielefeld
Geographical Puzzles and Tensional Cartography: Turn-of-the-Century American Children and the Cartography of the Impossible

Examining 1890s’ geographical puzzles composed by children and printed in best-selling Harper’s Young People, my presentation traces the ‘synecdochic/encyclopedic’ relationship between the alphabet and world cartography. The conclusion is, because of scalar inconsistencies in the puzzles’ pretense to global-ness, that maps drawn based on their points of reference would be ‘cartographically impossible.’

3:00 – 3:45 PM
Jasper M. Trautsch, Freie Universität Berlin
Remapping Europe and Imagining “the West”: The Spatial Reordering of Europe and North America, 1945-1957

This presentation analyzes how the notion of a “West” came to shape West Europeans’ and North Americans’ spatial perceptions after World War II, asking specifically how Americans, who had traditionally defined their nation in opposition to Europe, reinvented themselves as the leader of a “western world” and how West Germans and Italians, who had historically considered their countries anti-poles of “western civilization,” re-imagined themselves as “western.”

4:00 – 4:45 PM
Danielle Smith, Texas State University
Bioregionalism, Zendik Tribe, and a Vision for a Cooperative Future

Bioregionalists disagree about which “natural” lines of demarcation should be used to draw new state borders. I argue that the underlying philosophy of bioregionalism, human cooperation with nature rather than competition with it, should decide political boundaries. Drawing from the idea that individuals “do” gender, I argue that individuals also “do” region. Such “doing” can be identified with cultural responses to natural environmental forces. For example, South Florida has a long tradition of “hurricane parties” and Austin, Texas has banned plastic bags in stores in an appeal to local “green” culture. As such, political boundaries should be chosen based on how humans interact with their proximal environment.
8:30 AM – Meet for the bus in front of San Jacinto Hall for adventures at Enchanted Rock State Natural Area and in old town Fredericksburg.
8:00 – 9:45 AM
Robert Tally, Texas State University
The Insufferable Spirit of Place: Washington Irving’s Critical Regionalism

In his early sketches Washington Irving explores the “spirit of place,” a term D.H. Lawrence applied to the nation as a whole, but which is far better suited to the non- or even anti-nationalist project of local or regional narratives, in which the most salient feature of this genius loci is often its resistance to the forces of national development. Using a geocritical approach, Tally will argue that Irving’s fantastic description of Sleepy Hollow confronts the emergent nationalism with a powerful alternative, establishing a place apart from the emerging nation-state and national narrative.

Robert T. Tally Jr. is an associate professor of English at Texas State University. His books include Fredric Jameson: The Project of Dialectical Criticism; Poe and the Subversion of American Literature; Spatiality (The New Critical Idiom); Utopia in the Age of Globalization; Kurt Vonnegut and the American Novel; Melville, Mapping and Globalization; and, as editor, Geocritical Explorations; Kurt Vonnegut: Critical Insights; and the forthcoming Literary Cartographies. He also serves as the general editor of the Palgrave Macmillan book series Geocriticism and Spatial Literary Studies.

10:15 – 12:00 AM
Bob Brinkmeyer, University of South Carolina
The South as Europe: Southern Regionalism under the Shadow of European Fascism

During the 1930s and 1940s, the American South, primarily because of its system of segregation, was often compared with the fascist nations of Europe, and particularly with that of Nazi Germany. This comparison, which was widely held through the United States, forced Southern intellectuals and writers to rethink the meaning of regionalism, regional identity, and Southern culture. My talk will explore this rethinking, surveying how Southern writers, both in fiction and nonfiction, reconfigured their conceptions of the South and its place within the nation and the world.

Work in Progress Presentations

2:00 – 2:45 PM
Matthias Klestil, Universität Bayreuth
“Neither Tracks nor Visible Stations”: The Underground Railroad as African American Literary Heterotopia

Reconsidering the Underground Railroad through the Foucauldian concept of heterotopia, my presentation explores how nineteenth-century African Americans documented, spatially (re-)imagined and conceptualized, and literally strategized their experience of the phenomenon. Moreover, I argue along texts by William Still, William and Ellen Craft, and Henry “Box” Brown that the “Liberty Line” is significant for an environmental knowledge in the black literary imagination.

3:00 – 3:45 PM
Carmen Brosig, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg
Chicano Nationalism and the War in Viet Nam: How Aztlán was Made

The work relates the construction of Aztlán with the changing understanding of patriotism during the Viet Nam War and the resistance to it. It will show how Chicanos identified with the Vietnamese people framed by the decolonization process.

4:00 – 4:45 PM
Allison Robinson, University of Houston
Protecting the Myth of White Womanhood in the American South

This project seeks to fill voids within the historical narrative by exposing how southern states set forth paternalistic policies as a final bastion of gender and racial traditions tracing back to the antebellum period. I will argue that the paternalism, as well as the ideas of masculinity and honor, that existed in the South during the 19th century, carried through to the 20th century and expanded to encompass paternalism over white women and youth. Changes in sexual expression and norms, as well as the presence of newly freed African Americans, I argue, worried Southern state officials who sought to preserve the “ideals” of white womanhood during the first half of the 20th century.
Work in Progress Presentations

8:00 – 8:45 AM
Mary Murphy, Texas State University
The Colonizer's Voice: Constructing Gender and Race with the United States Venereal Disease Policy during World War II

Various levels of restrictions and liberties based upon gender and race existed within the U.S. military’s venereal disease policy during World War II in the mainland United States, Hawaii, and Liberia, indicating that the further removed from the U.S. a region was the less “civilized” its venereal disease policy, the more easily the military appropriated women as sexual rewards, and the greater the liberties granted to European-American men while increasing control over African-American men.

9:00 – 9:45 AM
Scott DeGregoris, Wayne State University
Circuits, Scuba Enthusiasts, and Swastikas: Heterotopian Spatiality and Suburban Hyperreality in The Crying of Lot 49

Thomas Pynchon’s San Narciso is an emblematic literary representation of the complexity of American suburban spatiality. Drawing on work from Jean Baudrillard and Michel Foucault (amongst others) this paper examines both the ways in which the spaces of San Narciso are inscribed with and reflect the social, political, and economic currents of the postwar years and how they foreshadow geographies of postmodernity.
This project brings André Breton’s neglected *Ode to Charles Fourier* into conversation with modernist long poems that pose the question of the universal in anticipation, retrospection, or even present experience of Stunde Null, the Zero Hour announced by the destruction of Europe, the Holocaust, and the atomic bomb. Each of these works—Eliot’s *Four Quartets*, H.D.’s *Trilogy*, Williams’s *The Wedge*, Pound’s *Pisan Cantos*—is formally organized to invoke, enact, or lament the possibility of universal truth or value as a counter to the forces of modernity verging on destruction. Breton’s invocation of Fourier as his guiding light out of the present darkness is set in a biographical and historical framework that includes: encounter with the revolutionary poetics of Aimé Césaire in transit to the United States; discomfort in the conditions of exile and refusal to adapt to American culture; divorce and remarriage in Reno, Nevada; the Trinity test, atomic bomb, and conclusion of the war in August 1945; and his visit to the Hopi reservation. This version of my paper will focus on a critical regionalist approach to Breton’s construction of universals: how do his exile to the United States, contact with Césaire, trip to Nevada, and visit to the Hopi Reservation inflect the utopia imagined in his dialogue with Fourier, and how would the work of other modernists in exile (particularly Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*) help us read this moment. The transitions in Breton’s personal life; the slot machines of Reno; the Snake Dance at Mishongnovi; the desert itself enable a vatic address to a nonevental unity of enlightenment and destruction that would lead him and the surrealist movement forward.

Work in Progress Presentations

2:00 – 2:45 PM
Kendra DeHart, Texas Christian University
“Our Sole Interest Is the People”: Home Demonstration Work and Rural Transformation in Texas, 1914-1950

The aim of the project is to more thoroughly analyze how regionalism affected rural women’s experiences in home demonstration work. The paper will provide insights into the connections and tensions between rural regional and national identities while also exploring how rural women’s conception of both influenced their social, economic, and political activism.

3:00 – 3:45 PM
Monika Sauter, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg
Evangelical ‘Purity’ Culture between (Sacred) Intimacy and Public Feeling

The talk will investigate constructions of femininity and “sacred intimacy” (Linda Kintz) in evangelical ‘purity’ culture. Understanding such discourses on sexual abstinence as a (religious) ‘public feeling’ (Lauren Berlant, Ann Cvetkovich), I will consider how ‘purity’ is entangled with notions of region, gender, religion as well as the private, and the public.

4:00 – 4:45 PM
Stephen Koetzing, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg
The Old Man and the Wilderness: The Desert in Don DeLillo’s Point Omega

Focusing on the relationship between protagonist and landscape, I suggest that the desert must be understood as a metaphor for the old and retired Elster. Moreover, I claim that his chosen exile draws on a history of westward expansion and US imperialism, a “usable past” (Henry Steele Commager), which can be employed to reassess the United States at the beginning of the 21st century.
Combining insights from human geography, critical regionalism and environmental literary criticism, I want to argue that the concept of the trans-local, rather than the transnational, is useful to describe the complex poetics of place in Agha Shahid Ali’s *A Nostalgist’s Map of America* (1991) and Arthur Sze’s *The Ginkgo Light* (2009). Engaging with landscapes of the American Southwest, in particular the natural environment, as well as geographies elsewhere, both poets reimagine the region as a site of trans-local attachments and as the grounds for trans-ethnic affiliations, especially with local Native American peoples. What emerges at least tentatively from this inclusive and yet open sense of belonging, I hope to show, is a ethics of being in and with nature that attempts to account for the increasing pressures of both globalization and global environmental crisis. Literature, as Ali's and Sze's poetry suggest by foregrounding poetic strategies like intertextuality and metaphorical language, plays a central role in the development of such an ecologically suggestive ethics of place in the context of migration and displacement.
The 1970s posed a series of challenges to the Texas mythos. As previously marginalized groups expanded the vision of who counted as a Texan, the counterculture, too, re-imagined the state’s identity. We hear this experiment coursing through the music of Austin, Texas, in the decade and see it in that subculture some came to call the cosmic cowboys.

Jason Mellard is Assistant Director of the Center for Texas Music History at Texas State University and author of Progressive Country: How the 1970s Transformed the Texan in Popular Culture, published by the University of Texas Press in 2013, and winner of the Coral Horton Tullis Memorial Prize for Best Book on Texas History from the Texas State Historical Association.
Work in Progress Presentations

2:00 – 2:45 PM
Marcus J. Merritt, Wayne State University
Build Your Own New York: New York’s Tulsa Poets and Pop Forms of Community

1950s New York School poets developed a poetics of artistic community whose political charge came from a dialectic of exclusivity and inclusivity. Later New York School poets from Tulsa adopted the form of community poetics, writing themselves into it. Acquaintances, friends, artistic heroes, all become nodes of community, rebalancing the terms of the earlier dialectic in favor of a Pop inclusiveness.

3:00 – 3:45 PM
Antoni Gorni, University of Warsaw
Loud Minority: The Social and Cultural Impact of “Blaxploitation”

Black action films of the 1970’s (aka. “blaxploitation”) are typically thought of merely as exploitative of their black urban audiences. I want to consider the manner in which these films offered black urban viewers specific ways of looking at the American reality of the era.

4:00 – 4:45 PM
Evelyn Huber, University of Augsburg
“Indianness Sells”: Native American Representations in US Advertising

My project examines the use and development of Native American representations in US magazine advertisements from 1932 to 2013. It also discusses these marketing images in the context of indigenous reactions and contrasts them with advertisement imagery produced by Natives.
In the Introduction of his 2007 book, Critical Regionalism: Connecting Politics and Culture in American Society, Douglas Reichert Powell asserts that because of its inherent sense of geographical scope, a region can never, ultimately, be an isolated space, withdrawn from larger cultural forces and processes. The evolution of the United States-Mexico Border Region as a geographic entity, with its own unique patterns of history, politics, economics, and culture, is no exception. This research focuses on the economic development of the U.S.-Mexico border, but does so, within a backdrop of geography, history, political and social circumstances, at all geographic scales, that led to the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The paper concludes with an assessment of the impact of NAFTA on the U.S.-Mexico border, as well as, remarks about the future directions of this region.

Dr. Denise Blanchard is currently a Professor of Geography at Texas State University and specializes in international relations and trade, economic geography, communication geography, hazards/disasters, and emergency management. In 1999, Dr. Blanchard and colleague, Dr. Aditi Angirasa from Texas State University’s Department of Agriculture were awarded a United States Department of Agriculture grant to study the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] on the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Denise graduated with a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 1992. She is a former Director of the James and Marilyn Lovell Center for Environmental Geography and Hazards Research, and was named Honorary Professor of International Studies in 2010 by the International Studies Department at Texas State University.
CRITICAL REGIONALISM IN POLITICS AND CULTURE—MONDAY, JUNE 9

10:15 – 12:00 AM
Andrew Sanson, Texas State University
Water: The Perpetual Crisis of the Southwest

No issue transcends the boundaries of individual cities and states like water. Neither aquifers nor rivers flow with any relationship to political boundaries. This regional “hydro-geography” has resulted in increasing trans-boundary conflict among the Southwestern states but also offers some opportunity for cooperation as the climate continues to change, the drought deepens, and both the environment and economic prosperity are threatened.

Andrew Sansom serves as Executive Director of the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment and Research Professor of Geography at Texas State University-San Marcos. His one of Texas’ leading conservationists. He is a former executive director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, executive director of the Texas Nature Conservancy, and founder of The Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas. His published works have appeared in Texas Monthly, The Texas Observer, Houston City Magazine, Politics Today, Texas Highways, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and Texas Town & City. His first book, Texas Lost, was photographed by Wyman Meinzer and published in November 1995. His most recent book is Texas Past, photographed by Wyman Meinzer and published in November 1997.

2:00 – 3:30 PM
Katharina Gerund, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg
Sisterhood is Regional? US-American Women’s Activism between the Global and the Local

My talk examines US-American women’s activism of the so-called second wave situated between the global and the local. Taking a critical regionalist perspective it zooms in on two key, but equally controversial figures of dominant US feminism: Betty Friedan and Robin Morgan. In particular, I analyze their respective foci on ‘suburban sisterhood’ on the one hand and ‘global sisterhood’ on the other as they become evident in their activism and particularly in and around the publication of two specific works: Friedan’s monograph The Feminine Mystique (1963) and Morgan’s edited volume Sisterhood is Global: The International Women’s Movement Anthology (1984). Friedan and Morgan have, of course, been highly influential figures in US feminism and their works have received wide attention; and also the connection between feminism and regionalism is well established. Critical regionalism promises a fresh perspective on feminist activism’s relations to specific places and spaces, be they real or imagined. Not only does it allow for a (re)examination of feminist activism and writing of the 20th century in its regional, local, and global frameworks but it also exposes the interrelations of feminism and regionalism in the 21st century.
Katharina Gerund studied American Studies, Media Studies, and Psychology at FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg and Afro-American Studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She holds a Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Bremen and currently serves as coordinator of the doctoral program “Presence and Tacit Knowledge” (funded by the German Research Foundation) at FAU. Her research focuses on African American literature and culture, (cultural) mobility and Americanization, gender studies and feminist theory. Katharina is the author of Transatlantic Cultural Exchange: African American Women’s Art and Activism in West Germany (transcript, 2013) and the co-editor of Pirates, Drifters, Fugitives: Figures of Mobility in the US and Beyond (Winter, 2012; with Heike Paul and Alexandra Ganser). She is currently working on a second book project that examines the politics of sisterhood in US-American social movements and popular culture.

Dr. phil. Meike Zwingenberger is executive director of the Bavarian Center for Transatlantic Relations in Munich since January 2014 (Stiftung Bayerisches Amerikahaus gGmbH, www.amerikahaus.de). Between 2007 and 2013 she has been the executive director of the Bavarian American Academy in Munich. In the years 1996-2006 she was lecturer and assistant professor at the Amerika-Institut of Ludwig-Maximilians University Munich. Research stays led her to the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, CA in 2006, to Harvard University, Cambridge, US in 2005, and to the University of California, Berkeley, US in 1996. Her dissertation in 2004 was titled Social Capital: Communities and Social Networks in the US. In recent years she published Visual Cultures – Transatlantic Perspectives (2012 with Volker Depkat), Global Cities – Metropolitan Cultures (with Barbara Hahn, 2011), Scientific Cultures – Technological Challenges (with Klaus Benesch, 2009) in the series of the Bavarian American Academy with Universitätsverlag Winter, Heidelberg. For the Bavarian American Academy she organized numerous conferences and summer academies with cooperating partners (Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg, Ludwig-Maximilians University Munich, University of Augsburg, Wayne State University, American University, Texas State University, San Marcos) i.e. on American Studies in a Transatlantic Perspective: Critical Regionalism in Politics and Culture (2013/2014), Cultures of Mobility (2012), Transatlantic American Studies: Democratic Cultures, Past and Present (2011/12).
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