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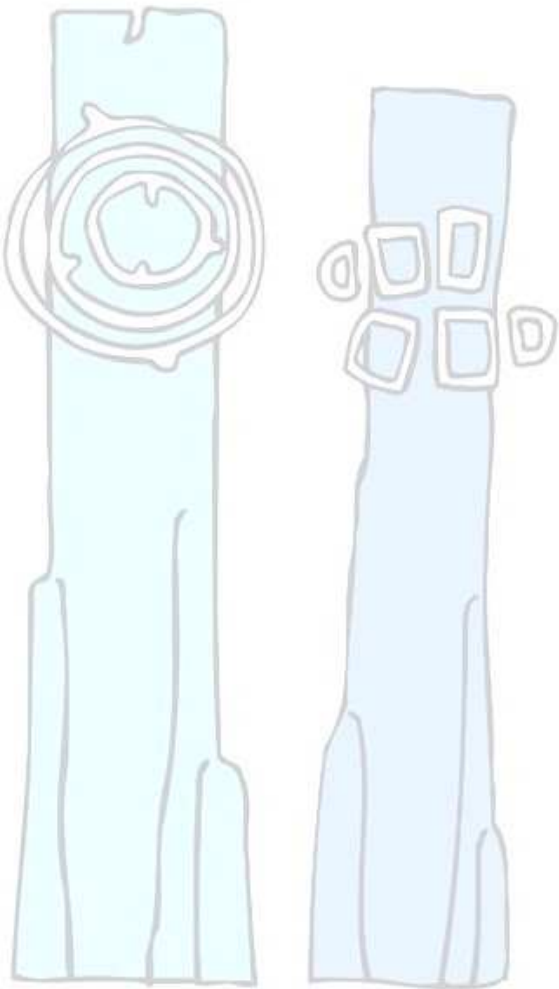
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North American Literary and Cultural Studies (NamLitCult)**

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***Program - Overview**

***Thursday, June 30, 2011**

- 9.30: Registration opens
*C7 4, Foyer
- 10.00: Welcome and short introduction
- 10.15 – 13.00: Workshop "Identity, Politics and Ethics: Judith Butler and Queer Theory" (Eveline Kilian, HU Berlin)
*C7 4, Room 1.17
- 13.00 – 14.30: Lunch break
- 14.30 – 17.30: Project Presentations
*C7 4, Rooms 1.17 and 3.23 // C7 1, Room U15 (-1.15)
- 20.00: Keynote lecture "Low Theory: Transdisciplinarity and Queer Studies" (Judith Jack Halberstam, USC)
*Frauenbibliothek Saar // Bleichstr. 4 // Saarbrücken

***Friday, July 01, 2011**

- 10.15 – 13.00: Workshop "Queer Theory and The End of Everything: Race, Economies, Sexuality" (Judith Jack Halberstam, USC)
*C7 4, Room 1.17
- 13.00 – 14.30: Lunch break
- 14.30 – 17.30: Project Presentations
*C7 4, Rooms 1.17 and 3.23 // C7 1, Room U15 (-1.15)
- 20.00: Film: "Travel Queeries" – Elliat Graney-Saucke
Performance – Sir La Muse
Discussion
*Kino 8 ½ // Nauwieserstr. 19 // Saarbrücken

***Thursday, June 30, 2011**

10.15 – 13.00:

Workshop "Identity, Politics and Ethics: Judith Butler and Queer Theory" (Eveline Kilian, HU Berlin)

*C7 4, Room 1.17

Judith Butler is certainly one of the key figures of Queer Theory. But there are striking differences between her and those scholars who focus their arguments on negativity and the anti-social. In this workshop we will explore Butler's investment in Queer Theory, her positionings and repositionings over the past two decades, and her conceptualization of the nexus between queer, identity, politics and ethics as it has shaped itself in her more recent writings.

Eveline Kilian is Professor of English Literature and Culture and currently Head of the Department for English and American Studies at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. From 2009 to 2011 she was Co-Director of the Centre for Transdisciplinary Gender Studies at HU. Her major areas of research and publication are: trans/gender and queer theory, gender and ethics, discourse analysis, the interface between literary discourse and other cultural discourses, the literature and culture of modernism and postmodernism, and metropolitan cultures (emphasis on London).

20.00:

Keynote lecture "Low Theory: Transdisciplinarity and Queer Studies" (Judith Jack Halberstam, USC)

*Frauenbibliothek Saar // Bleichstr. 4 // Saarbrücken

This talk uses "low theory," (a term I am adapting from Stuart Hall's work) and popular knowledge, to explore alternatives and to look for a way out of the usual traps and impasses of binary formulations; low theory tries to locate all the in between spaces that save us from being snared by the hooks of hegemony and speared by the seductions of consumption. But it also makes its peace with the possibility that alternatives dwell in the murky waters of a counter-intuitive, often impossibly dark and negative realm of critique and refusal. And so the talk darts back and forth between high and low culture, high and low theory, popular culture and esoteric knowledge, in order to push through the divisions between life and art, practice and theory, thinking and doing and into a more chaotic realm of knowing and unknowing.

Judith Jack Halberstam is Professor of English, American Studies and Ethnicity, and Gender Studies at USC, Los Angeles, where she is also the Director of The Center for Feminist Research. Halberstam is a well known gender theorist who works in the areas of queer theory, visual culture, Gothic literature and the horror film, modern novel, postmodern culture, film and video, feminist theory, gender studies, and science/ animal studies with an emphasis on subcultures. Halberstam regularly speaks on queer culture, gender studies and popular culture and publishes blogs at www.bullybloggers.com.

***Friday, July 01, 2011**

10.15 – 13.00: **Workshop "Queer Theory and The End of Everything: Race, Economies, Sexuality" (Judith Jack Halberstam, USC)**

*C7 4, Room 1.17

This workshop will develop a queer theoretical conversation around questions of futurity, endings, beginnings, utopias and dystopias, temporality and spatiality. We will read new work in queer theory that addresses questions about political economy, race and sexuality, immigration and labor and that develops new critical tools for developing models of resistance. Readings will include work by: José Esteban Muñoz, Fatima El-Tayeb, Chandan Reddy, Rod Ferguson, Tavia Nyong'o, and Kale Fajardo.

20.00:

Film: "Travel Queeries" – Elliot Graney-Saucke
Performance – Sir La Muse

Discussion

*Kino 8 ½ // Nauwieserstr. 19 // Saarbrücken

Travel Queeries is a feature-length documentary film that examines the culture, art and activism of radical queers in contemporary Europe. Through personal interviews, documentation of performances, festivals, multi-media arts and community spaces, the film explores queer as a political identity in 21st century Europe, how language and identities translate over cultural and physical borders.

The film focuses on radical and innovative actions and projects that, through pushing for an alternative to commercialization of gay culture, brings to light queer subculture that operates mostly under the radar of LGBT mainstream. *Travel Queeries* talks to queers explaining the first Pride in Serbia, stories of the drag scene in Berlin, a queer anarchist black-lingerie block at London Pride, and Barcelona's queer squatters organizing the 8th international 'Queeruption.' Through these stories, the film demonstrates an ability to invite audiences into the lives of those living outside societal confines. www.travelqueeries.com

Elliot Graney-Saucke is a multi-media artist, events' organizer and cultural worker, thematically connecting her work to cultural activism with a queer and female lens, utilizing collaboration and community to highlight art as social change. *Travel Queeries* is her first feature film. Her current productions include *Boys on the Inside*, a documentary short about 'boy' identity/culture in US women's prisons; *Blue Tuesday (and the broken riddles)*, a short queer fairytale; and *The US Culture Wars*, a short about conflicts between religion and art in US public funding.

She also performs multi-media bio-drag queen performance art as **Sir La Muse**. Originally from Olympia/Seattle, US, Elliot is based in Berlin, Germany.

***Project Presentations: Speakers and Titles**

***Thursday, 30 June, 2011: 14.30 – 17.30**

Popular Culture I: Queer Identities/Practices in Music

Chair: Astrid M. Fellner // *C7 4, Room 3.23

- Eva Battista: Postmodern Aesthetic Practices in American Music Videos: Lady Gaga (de-) constructed.
- Nora Koller: The Calculating Gaze: Beyoncé, Transsexuality, and Queer Theory
- Jenny Moos: Boy Bands, Girl Fans, and the Queering of Masculinity?
- Maria Katharina Wiedlack: “We’re gonna burn your rainbow and we’re having fun, oh yeah” (Skinjobs) – The Onset of Societies Death Drive *Or* Punk Rock’s Utopian Fantasy?

Performing Sex: Pornography Revisited

Chair: Judith Jack Halberstam // *C7 4, Room 1.17

- Stephanie Hopf: The Performed Self – Gender in Performance Art with special focus on Valie Export
- Pax Chmara: P is for Porno
- Jiann-Chyng Tu: Significant Discharge: the Money Shot, Masculinities, and Meaning
- Angelika Tsaros: Torture’s getting a bad rep: BDSM and consent

Troubling Gender: Facets in German Literature

Chair: Eveline Kilian // *C7 1, Room U 15 (-1.15)

- Lena Heilmann: Re-modeling the *Frauenzimmer*: Women and Spatiality in German Literature (1770-1820)
- Carlien Roels: The biological gender and the composition of Heimat in Jenny Erpenbeck’s novel *Heimsuchung*
- Sebastian Zilles: Somewhere Lost In-Between: Friendship, Love and Sexual Desire in Literary Male-Bonds in Contemporary German Prose
- Michaela Koch: Hermaphroditism and Intersexuality in the early 20th century: How a Man’s Maiden Years Reinforce the Sexual Binary

***Friday, 01 July, 2011: 14.30 – 17.30**

Popular Culture II: The Queer Politics of Popular Media

Chair: Astrid M. Fellner // *C7 4, Room 3.23

- Heike Mißler: Chick Lit and Popular Feminism
- Leonie Grön: The romantic cycle: How heteronormativity is perpetuated by two popular series
- Viera Novakova: Women in US TV Series
- Rebecca L. Harper: Does She Belong? Representing Queer Women in German and British Film and Television since 2000

Strategies of Queer: Queering Theories and Practices

Chair: Judith Jack Halberstam // *C7 4, Room 1.17

- Jule Jakob Hesseler: The libidinal body - a queer reading of Lyotard
- Judith Kohlenberger: From Hard Core to Hard Facts: A Queer Approach to Science
- Jasper Verlinden: Strategic Authenticity: Male Pregnancy and the Renaturalization of the Transgender Body
- Susanne Jung: Strategies of Queer Resilience in the Writings of Queer Theorists: Foucault, Sedgwick, Butler
- Caroline Schubarth: Being touched – being human: Reading the rediscovery of passivity from a feminist perspective

Gender in Translation: Translating Queer Localities

Chair: Eveline Kilian // *C7 1, Room U 15 (-1.15)

- Joanna Moore: Queer Language in German and Slovene
- Somayeh Amin: A Holistic Approach to Translations of Women Specific (feminist) Literature
- Maria Hinterkörner: “Kiwi” Masculinities in New Zealand Short Stories – Queering the Past
- Philipp Sammel: Gender Trouble in the Ring – Gender Roles and Masculinity in Boxing, Boxing Literature and Boxing Movies

Abstracts

Popular Culture I: Queer Identities/Practices in Music

Chair: Astrid M. Fellner // *C7 4, Room 3.23

Eva Battista

Postmodern Aesthetic Practices in American Music Videos: Lady Gaga (de-)constructed.

My paper intends to focus on the representation of gender in the American music video, which serves as an aesthetic platform of postmodern culture. The music video as a fairly recent aesthetic medium emerged in the context of the culture industry or rather music industry allowing the distribution of music on a larger scale. The music video is seen as a product of mass consumption in contemporary postmodern society. I consider the works of popular culture as a significant part of today's culture and society. Popular culture and contemporary society influence each other in a reciprocal manner. I will investigate the dynamics of this interdependency as a discourse relying on the theory of culture as a signifying practice in the tradition of *Michel Foucault*.

With the example of the female superstar *Lady Gaga* I will analyze the presentation of gender as a performance that is played out in her music videos as well as in other public appearances such as award shows etc. *Lady Gaga* comes off as an eccentric and outspoken public figure and presents herself as being radically opposed to conformity. She plays with the visual codes of *Drag* breaking down the binary system of essentialist gender roles and the notion of beauty – exemplifying the destruction of a prevalent constructed system in the post-structuralist sense of *Jacques Derrida*. As a consequence, the notion of gender roles and female beauty will be resignified or reconstructed completing the process of *deconstruction*.

I want to argue that postmodern aesthetic styles such as parody and the plurality of references to traditional styles serve as tools for revealing the constructedness of gender roles. The parody of the female beauty standard and of the exploitation of the female body in the music industry works via exaggeration and irony reaching levels of the absurd and grotesque.

Eva Battista is 27 years old and studies English, Italian and German at Saarland University in the school teacher program. She is in her final year and will finish her teacher degree in November 2011. She spent a two semesters abroad, one in Milan, Italy (2005) and one in Cardiff, Wales (2008) with the Erasmus Exchange Program. She also studied translation and interpretation for English and Italian from 2003-2005.

Nora Koller

The Calculating Gaze: Beyoncé, Transsexuality, and Queer Theory

This presentation looks at the transgendered context of a recent music video to examine the relationship between feminism, queer theory and transsexuality. “Single Ladies (Put A Ring On It)” is a 2008 pop song by the American singer Beyoncé. Its video features the singer and two dancers, with all three dressed and made up identically. Shortly after the video’s release, it was revealed in the gossip press that one of the dancers is a male-to-female transsexual. Here, I would like to think through this “revelation” by asking the following questions: What exactly is revealed by one's transsexual status? What subject positions are reinforced so that the work of revealing can take place? I will argue that such technologies of gender prescribe a way of looking so that transgender is perceived in a calculating way, whereby presumably stably gendered viewers are asked to weigh its proximity to and distance from a gendered ideal. While the fe/male gaze so prompted is *revealing* regarding the hierarchy of femininities, it also shows what the stakes are in maintaining the bimodal notion of embodiment. The extent to which such a model informs queer theory has been successfully problematized by Susan Stryker (2004) who has called trans studies queer theory's “evil twin”. In film narratives, such as in the cross-dressing classic *Dressed to Kill* (dir. Brian De Palma, 1980), the evil twin is a schizophrenic category of a discrete persona or a malignant tumor that ultimately cannot be repressed or ignored. The evil twin emerges from within: it holds a mirror to its “good” counterpart while battling the confines of the latter’s mind and body. I would like to attend to this notion that transsexuality is already “in” queer but is at the same time kept at bay. This dynamic of presence-absence informs the notion of queerness made “good” and has implications for what counts as a body in feminist theory.

Nora Koller has an MA in English Literature. She is currently working on her PhD project on transfeminism at the Gender Initiativkolleg of the University of Vienna, Austria. Her review of “*You’ve Changed*”: *Sex Reassignment and Personal Identity* (ed. Laurie J. Shrage) has recently appeared in the *Graduate Journal of Social Science*.

Jenny Moos

Boy Bands, Girl Fans, and the Queering of Masculinity?

My presentation sets out to explore the queer potentialities inherent in boy band culture. Boy band culture had its heyday during the mid- and late 1990s when innumerable boy bands were casted in order to successfully conquer the music market. The boy band phenomenon might at first sight seem to have evolved around a very heteronormatively structured pattern of male performers on stage and screaming female fans in front of the stage. Drawing on the work of Judith Jack Halberstam (2005) and Gayle Wald (2002), I will challenge this notion and argue that boy band culture offers a space for alternative masculinities. In my analysis, I will primarily focus on (affective) responses to boy band culture which, for example, can be found in subcultural re-interpretations of songs like “I Want It That Way” by the *Backstreet Boys*.

Jennifer Moos, M.A., studied English Philology, Gender Studies and Linguistics in Freiburg, Manchester and Basel; has taught courses in feminist, gender, queer and literary as well as on cultural studies; works and teaches at the Department of British, North American and Anglophone Literatures and Cultures at Saarland University; PhD project on “The Pleasures of Sleeping, or: Towards a History of Sleep and Sleeplessness in U.S.-American Culture”; co-editor of *queere (t)ex(t)perimente* (2008); member of the editorial team of *Freiburger GeschlechterStudien*.

Maria Katharina Wiedlack

“We’re gonna burn your rainbow and we’re having fun, oh yeah” (Skinjobs) The Onset of Societies Death Drive Or Punk Rock’s Utopian Fantasy?

Queer punk rock is more than a style of music. It is situated in a well connected network of local groups with specific agendas. Accordingly, it is not overestimated to call queercore a subcultural movement, which can be understood as a form of queer activism and agency, able to communicate queer-feminist ideas in an informal setting (Judith Halberstam 2005; José Muñoz 1999, 2010).

This presentation will give a brief overview of the phenomenon queercore, based on my dissertation-project. Starting with a short general overview, I will focus on some examples of queercore bands, to demonstrate prototypical politics and strategies.

Queer punk uses tactics of shocking by violating social rules and norms and promotes sexual and gender diversity. Anticapitalistic ideals, antiracist and feminist agendas are included as well as anti-transphobic messages.

Listening to some lyrics, it seems as if *queerness* is understood in Lee Edelman's (2005) terms as anti-social, always disturbing identity. While queers refer to the anti-identitarian and anti-social meaning of the term queer within the symbolic, queer punk music offers so much more than this reference and inherent cultural criticism. Punk's physical and emotional qualities enable individuals to connect with each other, to envision a better future in the present.

My research questions are: why is the genre punk rock used to articulate queer criticism and do punk performances really challenge socio-cultural norms and power, or do they stabilize them? In reference to Lee Edelman's famous statement, that politics in the means of a brighter future necessarily stabilize the existing (homophobic) system, empirical work might be appropriate to evaluate the actual place of queer politics within US societies and its effect.

Mag.^a **Maria Katharina Wiedlack** is a doctoral candidate at the Department for English and American Studies at the University of Vienna and currently works at the Gender Research Office at the University of Vienna. Her research fields are queer theory, gender and postcolonial studies. She is a queer activist and conference organizer; her dissertation focuses on punk rock, queer theory and activism.

Performing Sex: Pornography Revisited

Chair: Judith Jack Halberstam // *C7 4, Room 1.17

Stephanie Hopf

THE PERFORMED SELF Gender in Performance Art with special focus on VALIE EXPORT

The focus of my presentation is on gender in performance art and how gender stereotypes are challenged and deconstructed in the works of the Austrian artist VALIE EXPORT. The artist works with feminism and the concept of gender politics to challenge gender stereotypes and to refer to the question of how a woman's role in society was/is determined. She does this by using her own body as a communicative tool and perceiving it as occupying an intermediate

position between self-realization and external determination by society. Furthermore, the artist engages in ‘American’ discourse on specific issues and appropriates those for the Austrian context. Similar to U.S. performance artists, such as Yoko Ono, Martha Rosler, Barbara Kruger and Cindy Sherman, the body is always at the center of debates within EXPORT’S works – the body of how it is mediated, conceived, sensed and torn apart. The body as an object in a phallographic society where women only exist as constructs of the male gaze. A society that is, with all its norms and regulations, created and collected by a male predominance. VALIE EXPORT uses specific strategies, such as metaphor, citation and mimesis as well as parody, to deconstruct gender norms inherent in our society. Hereby, two phenomena are considered most important: human fragmentation and the body as material and canvas, in other words, as communicative tool.

First, the paper discusses performance art in general, the important difference between performance and performativity and also tries to give a short overview of the development of performance art from Black Mountain College, Happening and Fluxus to Body Art and Feminist Actionism. The second part of the thesis discusses selected works by VALIE EXPORT, and connects and embeds the artist in an ‘American’ context.

Stephanie Hopf: Since 2005, I am a student of English and Media Studies at the University of Vienna. After having spent a semester in Copenhagen, Denmark, via the ERASMUS program, I took part in an excursion to the United States in collaboration with Bradley University, Peoria last summer. I graduated in Media Studies in May 2011 and I am currently working on my diploma thesis in English Studies.

Pax Chmara

P is for Porno

This paper focuses on the rise of post-porn and queer porn politics through an assertion of alternative sexualities and sexual desires. Departing from the works of Annie Sprinkle and Tim Stüttgen (Post/Porn/Politics Symposium), my research explores the works of independent queer performance artists, D.I.Y. organizations such as GirlsWhoLikePorno (2003-2007), Ladyfest and community events such as sextoy workshops and grassroots political activism.

Also exploring the impact of late capitalism on the body and the embodiment of desire, my paper touches upon the works of Michel Foucault, Walter Benjamin and Felix Guattari.

Utilizing these historians along with the methodologies of contemporary post-porn practice,

we are able to see a departure and liberation from mainstream pornography production. I will talk about some of today's queer porn filmmakers and their impact on the expression and development of sexual desires. Additionally my work emphasizes the role gender queers have in the overall emancipation of normative body-image typing. This paper was recently presented at the ASL graduate conference in Leipzig, April 2011. Images and film stills from live performances, video works, queer porn and television also accompany the presentation.

Pax Chmara is currently enrolled in an M.A. at Humboldt University in Berlin. Pax is currently working on a documentary film following the lives of women living in former Yugoslavia. Contact: paxchimera@yahoo.com

Jiann-Chyng Tu

Significant Discharge: the Money Shot, Masculinities, and Meaning

Given that seminal fluid is often considered the most valuable fluid of a man, its emergence on screen in hard-core pornography is seen as the narrative climax of a sexual number, as well as “evidence” of pleasure. In light of this, the so-called “money shot” then further symbolizes not only pleasure, but also power and desire. It is additionally often fetishized and transformed into a thing of worship in pornography—particularly its online variety—as seen in the emergence of the pornographic subgenre known as “cumpilation.”

In this presentation, I would like to explore notions of masculinities, meanings, and pleasures by posing the following questions: How does the money shot, as seen in gay and straight pornography, negotiate between the meanings and the significance of pleasure and masculinities? How have pornographic subgenres, such as cumpilation, further complicated and challenged the conventions of hard-core pornography in the age of xTube and Youporn? In attempting to shed light on these issues, I will address the structural, social, cultural, and economic implications of seminal fluid. I will also problematize the relationship between seminal fluid and pleasure with respect to issues of gender and sexuality.

Lastly, with consideration of the Jamesonian postmodern consumerist society in which the money shot is situated, I would also like to discuss the multiple meanings of the money shot and how it leads to the commodification and consumption of pleasure.

A native of Taipei, Taiwan, **Jiann-Chyng Tu** is an MA candidate in Amerikanistik at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. He received his BA in German and English from Wake

Forest University in 2008. His research interests include Narratology, Cybercultures, Visual Cultures, Gender and Sexuality Studies, and Film Studies.

Angelika Tsaros

Torture's getting a bad rep: BDSM and consent

The the most basic idea of consent is that if all participating adults agree, there is no problem. However, what if you don't consent to "normal" pleasure but to pain?

Allowing an attack on one's bodily integrity is a very problematic issue. While public torture has run the gamut from the Roman circus, to the medieval spectacle for the masses, to something *they* did in obscure nations with questionable political systems, and finally back to a somewhat acceptable way of getting information to prevent attacks like those in 2001, private torture for pleasure has always been viewed as morally problematic, perverted, and most importantly, illegal.

In BDSM (bondage/discipline, domination/submission, sadism/masochism) torture is a given. Adding to sexual humiliation through 'sex slave' scenarios, dominant sadists of all sexes inflict physical harm on their partners. I argue that what might seem outrageous to a general public is no different from accepted forms of sexuality performed by even the most pious of men: actually, even safer. The consent given by the participating partner renders valid and legal a situation that could otherwise be brought to the attention of the authorities: after all, allegations of rape or assault and battery might follow any sexual encounter.

Recent publications on the issue argue that since rape is a predominantly female problem, consent is a female issue (cf. Archard, *Sexual Consent*). While many feminists disagree and blame a culture of easily accessible pornography and availability of sex, they leave out (or attack) the BDSM sexual subculture which is viewed as situated somewhat in the vicinity of 'danger to women'. I argue that consensual BDSM is the polar opposite of the current reality of threat of sexual violence to women: BDSM requires constant and enthusiastic consent thus making the consent – through the possibility to withdraw it by use of a safeword – more valid than the assumed consent of non-safeword sexual practices. Furthermore, using Gayle Rubin I will inquire how discussions surrounding queer sexualities and consent are influenced by a hegemonic view through a lens of sexual panic. I maintain, therefore, that consenting to pain is not only possible and valid, in its currently practiced form in BDSM it is preferable to a more intransparent form of assumed consent in more accepted forms of sexuality.

Angelika Tsaros is a Ph.D. candidate of American Studies at the University of Graz, where she received her M.A. in 2008 with a thesis on intersex gender identity published in 2010 as “A Modern Hermaphrodite? Intersex Identities in Jeffrey Eugenides’ *Middlesex*” (VDM). She is currently working on her dissertation on gender and power relations in representations of sadomasochism, specifically on issues of consent. Her research interests include Queer Studies, Sexuality Studies, Identity Studies, Representation and Power Relations as well as Native American and Inter-American studies.

Troubling Gender: Facets in German Literature

Chair: Eveline Kilian // *C7 1, Room U 15 (-1.15)

Lena Heilmann

Re-modeling the *Frauenzimmer*: Women and Spatiality in German Literature (1770-1820)

My tentatively titled dissertation “Re-modeling the *Frauenzimmer*: Women and Spatiality in German Literature (1770-1820)” examines narrated spaces in literature authored by women. I use three categories of space (socio-political, access to the public sphere, and spatial representation) to rethink how space and gender entwined at the turn of the nineteenth century, instead of understanding space to be a stable and definite term. Women’s history has been the subject of many works, and “space” has been an accepted and understood term. The specific places that women inhabit and abandon has so far been understood in general terms. By challenging this fixed notion of space, as well as Habermas’ simplified view of public/private, I hope to address and fix an inherent problem in the discussion of women and the spaces in which they exist. My book will include six chapters: literary spaces, salons, the theater, masked balls, bedrooms, and travel, all of which share the motifs of concealing and revealing, as well as gender-play.

Lena Heilmann is a doctoral candidate in Germanics at the University of Washington, Seattle. She received her MA in German and a graduate certificate in Women and Gender Studies at the University of Colorado, Boulder in 2008.

**The biological gender and the composition of Heimat
in Jenny Erpenbeck's novel *Heimsuchung***

Big political changes in Germany as well as the rising globalization have turned the concept of Heimat, meaning “home” or “homeland”, into a problematical one. Nevertheless it is very present in German literature of the 20th and 21st century, especially in the period after 1989. In the context of my M.A. project I study the literary representation of Heimat, the loss of Heimat and the search for a Heimat in recently published novels, including Jenny Erpenbeck's *Heimsuchung*. A central question of this study concerns the composition of Heimat: is Heimat always linked with geographical spaces or are other compositions possible?

In the first part of the presentation, I'll present the two components a Heimat contains: a psychological and a geographical component. Secondly, I'll explain how my research concerning Erpenbeck's novel has revealed an interesting influence of the biological gender on the composition of the individual Heimat and therefore on the identity of each character. This analysis shows that men tend to put more weight on the material component of Heimat whereas women attribute more importance to the psychological component. Therefore the hypothesis can be advanced that the composition of Heimat in *Heimsuchung* depends on the biological gender of the individual characters. In order to confirm this hypothesis, the third part of the presentation will examine what happens when characters tend to perform a gender other than the biological gender by opposing themselves to gender-related stereotypical expectations. Even when some characters in *Heimsuchung* tend to overcome the biological gender in this way, they fail at doing so. The conclusion will be that the biological gender of the characters in *Heimsuchung* can't be overcome and therefore determines the individual composition of Heimat and the identity of each character.

Carlien Roels studied Linguistics and Literature: French and German at Ghent University (Belgium). She wrote her M.A. thesis about the literary representation of “Heimat” (“homeland”) and of homelessness in the works of Jenny Erpenbeck, a writer born in the GDR, and Andreas Maier, a West-German author. Her research interests focus on German and French literature of the 20th and 21st century, with an emphasis on the literary representation of identity and identity search, Heimat and homelessness as well as on gender and postcolonial studies.

Sebastian Zilles

Somewhere Lost In-Between: Friendship, Love and Sexual Desire in Literary Male-Bonds in Contemporary German Prose

In 1902, the German anthropologist Heinrich Schurtz established the term male bonding to Germany. He noted that male bonds are characterized by a “Geselligkeitstrieb” whereas women are dominated by a “Geschlechtstrieb”. Within this dichotomous gender-model, Schurtz also highlighted that male bonds are an enrichment for society since they are an embodiment of the intellectual concept.

In contemporary German prose literature male bonds are at the edge of dying out. My thesis is that the crucial reason for male crisis is the accentuation of physicalness. Even in 1917, the author Hans Blüher stated in his monography *Die Rolle der Erotik in der männlichen Gesellschaft* (2. Bde, 1917/1919) that relationship between men are always libidiously motivated. I will transfer this assumption to contemporary German literature, e. g. Robert Schneider’s novel *Schlafes Bruder* (1992), Christian Kracht’s novel *Faserland* (1995) and Juli Zeh’s detective novel *Schilf* (2007). I will focus on the conception of maleness and male identity. As I will point out, all three protagonists ‘use’ maleness as a masquerade. Thus, the question what has to be masked respectively what has to be compensated is raised. In addition, one can also pose the question what can be found when one looks behind the mask. Within my corpus, the following gradation can be outlined: the inability to hold up or even form male bonds is caused by queer male identity which is presented as fragmented. Queer characters fail on different levels, which are friendship, love and sexual desire.

Sebastian Zilles, born in 1985, has degree in German and English Studies. His main research areas are masculinity studies, literary depictions of genius and evil in German literature after World War II and crime fiction. In his PhD project he analyses literary male bonds and concepts of maleness from Goethe to contemporary prose literature. Sebastian Zilles is undergraduate instructor and research assistant at the University of Mannheim (Department for New German Literature and Qualitative Media Analysis, Prof. Dr. Jochen Hörisch).

Michaela Koch

Hermaphroditism and Intersexuality in the early 20th century: How a Man's Maiden Years Reinforce the Sexual Binary.

Rooted in discourse analysis, my PhD thesis deals with negotiations of the sexual binary in literary representations of intersexuality. Beginning with Herculine Barbin's *Memoirs* (written in the 1850s) up to contemporary novels like Jeffrey Eugenides' *Middlesex* (2002) or Thea Hillman's *Intersex (For Lack of a Better Word)* (2008) I trace the descriptions of hermaphroditism, intersexuality and the sexual binary in literary texts and their position within a web of non-literary descriptions in discourses such as medicine, psychology, or gender studies.

Currently, I'm working on a chapter on N.O. Body's *Memoirs of a Man's Maiden Years* (*Aus eines Mannes Mädchenjahren*, 1907) and would like to present an extract of my work. In a contemporary review Franziska Mann asks to analyze the *Memoirs* not for their artistic or aesthetic value but for their value for humanity. She poses great importance on the Foreword by Rudolf Presber, a writer and publisher, and the Epilogue by Magnus Hirschfeld, a sexologist who served as expert witness for N.O. Body's case before court. Hirschfeld and his colleague Iwan Bloch who served as expert before court as well, both discuss the *Memoirs* in their works on hermaphroditism. I will read N.O. Body's text in the context of Hirschfeld's theory of intermediary sexes and argue that the narrative reinforces rather than challenges the binary that his body is said to defy. Nevertheless, the discursive situation surrounding the text exemplifies the entangled perspectives on hermaphroditism and the sexual binary.

Michaela Koch works as a lecturer in English literary and cultural studies at Oldenburg University. She holds a Magister and a 1st Teaching Certificate for high schools in English and German Studies. In her PhD project she analyzes literary discourses on intersexuality and hermaphroditism.

***Friday, 01 July, 2011: 14.30 – 17.30**

Popular Culture II: The Queer Politics of Popular Media

Chair: Astrid M. Fellner // *C7 4, Room 3.23

Heike Mißler

Chick Lit and Popular Feminism

Since the 1990s, Chick Lit (a genre of popular romance fiction written by, for, and about women) has established itself as one of the most visible forms of popular feminism. I take popular feminism to be a fairly recent movement whose aim it is to dismantle and reappropriate a feminism associated with the 1970s, take it down from its pedestal in the academy, and make it palatable again for the masses. In this process, much is lost and much is manipulated, and the media as well as the respective governments play a supportive role in shaping this popularized idea of feminism. To obscure what has been lost and replaced by a very tame version of feminism, a discourse of choice is brought forward which offers schemes of pseudo-empowerment for women and disguises as a lifestyle option rather than making political and social claims. This language of choice is well illustrated in popular feminist manuals such as Ellie Levenson's *A Noughtie Girl's Guide to Feminism* (2009) or its German equivalent *Wir Alphamädchen* by Meredith Haaf, Susanne Klingner and Barbara Streidl (2008). This freedom of choice, however, is mere pretense, since the mechanisms behind these decisions remain in the dark. By analysing Chick Lit fictions for their implicit ideological formations, I argue that the language of choice is used to hide dominant patterns of power, i.e. patriarchy, or structures of desire, i.e. heteronormativity, which remain at the base of these novels and are thus proliferated among readers, without them even noticing – or wanting to notice this. For my presentation at the Gender*Queer*Workshop I want to focus on how heteronormativity pervades selected Chick Lit novels.

Heike Mißler was born and raised in Saarland, but has occasionally fled the country to study or work in the US, UK and France. She holds a degree in English and French from Saarland University (Staatsexamen), where she now works as a research assistant at the chair of British literary and cultural studies. For the last year she has also been working on her PhD thesis, which deals with the role of post-feminist popular romance fiction (so-called Chick Lit) in the aftermath of feminism. Her research focus is thus centered on (post-)feminism, gender and queer studies, but she is also interested in contemporary British literature and culture in general and in postcolonial studies.

Leonie Grön

The romantic cycle: How heteronormativity is perpetuated by two popular series

The proposed thesis intends to explore normative implications regarding gender identities as they are sustained by contemporary mass media. Based on the exemplary analysis of two popular serials, *Tales of the City* as well as the more recent *Sex and the City*, I will investigate the ubiquitous tendency towards a romantic backlash.

Both of the serials under discussion started as a weekly column in a U.S. newspaper. Subsequently, these installments were published in the form of serialized novels and finally adapted for the screen. At the core of both narratives are urban singles and their erotic wanderings through the respective city. Bereft of their native family ties, yet enmeshed in the social web of an 'elective family', the constant elaborations on their (love) lives provide sundry occasions for analysis.

The pivotal question guiding my study is, though: How do these texts react to and process the normative expectations thrust upon them by the social sphere?

Obviously, *Tales of the City* is eager to parody social norms in their entirety. Set in San Francisco in the 1970s, the serial appears to be set in a 'homodystopia' where heterosexuality is marked behaviour and consequently denied romantic closure.

Meanwhile, *Sex and the City*, a series marketed for its brazen attempts to address sexual taboos at prime time, has resolved to endorse the 'classic' romantic quest. Besides the WASP exclusivity of its protagonists, queerness appears but a lifestyle phenomenon.

Finally, my comparison will lead me to a critique of parody as a means to subversion. With one of the primary texts at hand an overt challenge, the other a reiteration to conservative values, I will question the efficacy of this concept.

Leonie Grön is a student of World English, Literatures and Cultures at Saarland University. The proposed talk is based on her BA thesis which she is currently working on.

Viera Novakova

Women in US TV Series

I would like to present a project outlining of my PhD thesis that I am currently working on. This thesis deals with representations of gender identities in contemporary American popular culture, particularly in contemporary American television series. In my analysis, I am

focusing on female characters and the way in which their gender identities are presented. I have decided to analyze television series because of the higher periodicity of broadcast of TV series compared to movies. Therefore, the perception of these characters is possibly more evolved than those of movie characters. Since all of the analyzed television series have more than 3 seasons, there is a high possibility of a better development of chosen characters.

In my thesis I will analyze female character in the following television series: *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, *CSI: Miami*, *CSI: New York*, *Desperate Housewives*, *Sex and the City*, *Ugly Betty*, *The L Word*, *Bones* and *Grey's Anatomy*. The thesis is divided into several chapters dealing with different television characters. I am focusing on female character in leading or top executive positions, female characters that work for the Police force or the Army and female characters in the world of media. A whole chapter is dedicated to the depiction of women as sexual predators since this topic is still relatively frowned upon in contemporary society. Another part of the thesis will deal with presentation of GLBTQI characters as most of the television series I analyze include at least one of such characters. I am interested in the ways in which the queerness of these characters is presented on screen.

Viera Novakova has studied at the Faculty of Arts at the Prešov University in Prešov majoring in British and American studies. After graduation she started teaching at the Faculty of Humanities and Natural Sciences at the Prešov University. Since October 2009 she has been teaching at the Department of British and American studies at the Faculty of Arts, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice. In her academic work and study she concentrates on American politics and culture, Gender Studies and Queer Studies.

Rebecca Bex Harper

**Does She Belong? Representing Queer Women
in German and British Film and Television since 2000**

My PhD thesis examines how the belonging and otherness of queer women has been constructed spatially and temporally in German and British film and television during the first decade of the twenty-first century. In order to explore the spatial and temporal representations of queer women, this thesis interrogates constructions of belonging and otherness in relation to various aspects of identity. *Heimat*, home, heritage, nationality, class, queer sexuality and gender are the key concepts under examination in this project.

My comparison between Germany and Britain is motivated by the striking distinction of the spatial and temporal representation of queer women. The German films in my corpus often interrogate the meaning of migration and border-crossings, alongside the notion of queer identity, and tend to do this in a contemporary setting. Hence, recent German film appears to construct concepts of nationality, gender and queer sexuality in response to globalization. The representation of queer women in German film in a contemporary transnational context strongly contrasts to the British films and television mini-series which, in terms of space, have almost exclusively represented the queer female characters in a national context. In this context, class and gender issues appear more important than an external other. Crucially, these films and mini-series are often set in Britain's past through the use of either historical film or costume drama genres.

In sum, this thesis compares the aesthetic production of British and German queer female identities, by exploring how the belonging and otherness of the queer female characters are represented spatially. In particular, I consider the binary of private and public space and the transcendence of national and regional boundaries. I also explore the representation of queer women in relation to temporal notions of belonging (such as heritage and roots) and the temporal setting of the narratives.

Bex Harper is a PhD candidate at The University of Nottingham. Her thesis explores spatial and temporal representations of queer women in contemporary German and British film and television. One of her main research interests is freaks and she previously completed a research MA titled 'Queer "Freaks" in the New German Cinema', focusing on Ottinger and Fassbinder. She is also interested in how concepts of gender, sexuality and belonging are represented on-stage in English language and German language musicals.

Strategies of Queer: Queering Theories and Practices

Chair: Judith Jack Halberstam // *C7 4, Room 1.17

Jule Jakob Hesseler

The libidinal body - a queer reading of Lyotard

My recent studies focus on the interdependences of bodily tropes and conceptions of desire. Taking the texts from Butler and Foucault as a starting point to approach the interplay of body-sexuality-discourse-power, I would like to ask how conceptions of desire are

interrelated with somatic figurations and whether a queering of somatic images might direct towards a possible draft of queer desire. In the texts of Butler and Foucault, the body is constituted and concurrently destroyed in a process of discursive materialization. This simultaneousness of destruction/construction interferes with Freud's libidinal economy. Even if it implies a dualistic structure differentiating drives into libido and death drives, Eros and Thanatos function in an almost inseparable way. In the development of his drive theory Freud takes the organic unity as an initial point. In his text *Libidinal Economy* Lyotard mentions that this notion of a somatic unity-totality produces the conceptualization of desire as lack, which dominates Freud's psychoanalysis and serves as an assumption for a binary gendering of the body and reciprocally the postulation of a heteronormative conception of sexuality. On the contrary, Lyotard delineates a body, which could be read as a metaphor of polymorphous perversity: fragmentary, plural, particular, the surface of a multiplicity of libidinal streams. This implies a libidinal economy and hence a draft of desire which is not guided by a lack, but can be understood as multiple, productive, perverse, excessive (close to the Deleuzian idea of desire). Firstly, I would like to explore if Lyotard's corporeal image functions as queering of the body and thus, if this involves the potential of a queer conception of desire. Resorting to Butler and Foucault, the question emerges how this model of desire can be conceived as a sexual dispositive that is produced in the powerful process of discursivation. Secondly, I want to analyze further intersections of different body tropes and conceptions of desire in the texts of Freud, Lyotard, Butler as well as Foucault.

After studying Comparative Literature, Philosophy and French Philology at Freie Universität Berlin and Paris VIII, focusing on Poststructuralism, language theories, philosophy of the body, queer/feminist theories, and working as a student assistant in the research project "Precariousness of Sexual and Gendered Identities: Everyday Practice and Symbolic Forms",

Jule Jakob Hesseler is currently working on the interdependencies of bodily metaphors and concepts of desire in the context of a MA Philosophy at Freie Universität.

Judith Kohlenberger

From Hard Core to Hard Facts: A Queer Approach to Science

My project aims to make the insights gained by Queer Theory relevant beyond the traditional realms of gender and sexuality by applying it to the examination of current interactions between natural sciences and popular culture. I intend to examine the parallels and overlaps between what Jean-François Lyotard has defined as abstract or denotative knowledge on the one hand and narrative knowledge on the other, whose confusion and overlapping constitutes a vital feature of postmodern science. Specifically, my project is set to explore how the recent popularity of Big Science is contingent on its perception and construction as cool, which is one of the most pervading qualities in contemporary popular culture and at the same time perceived as incompatible with traditional scientific discourse. In accordance with contemporary cultural studies of science as pioneered by Donna Haraway and Bruno Latour, a central goal of my project will be to unravel a continuum between the supposedly polar notions of science and culture, logics and aesthetics, core and periphery, theoretical foundations and material effects. This continuum will be understood as distinctly queer, i.e. containing the potential for paradox, subversion and discontinuity. In that sense, I will resort to the methodological toolkit provided by Queer Theory to analyze, as one might loosely rephrase Annemarie Jagose's paradigmatic declaration, mismatches between epistemologies and discursive systems and unravel more fluid conceptualizations of purportedly clear-cut categories. My project thereby fully embraces queer as a position that is "at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant" (David Halperin) by contesting established discourses and advocating an alternative vision of one of the most regulated and normative segments of society, science.

Judith Kohlenberger is a PhD candidate at the University of Vienna. Her diploma thesis on the pertinence of coolness as a cultural strategy in contemporary US-American cinema was awarded the Annual Fulbright Prize in American Studies and the 2010 Excellence Award by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Science and Research. She is currently working on her PhD thesis, which explores the interactions between natural sciences and contemporary popular culture in the US-American context. Her research interests include European Romanticism and Gothic fiction, cultural and literary theory, gender studies as well as hemispheric approaches to the Americas.

Jasper Verlinden

**Strategic Authenticity:
Male Pregnancy and the Renaturalization of the Transgender Body**

On April 3, 2008, Thomas Beatie, a transgender man from Oregon who was six months pregnant at the time, appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* as the so-called “first pregnant man.” This appearance caused a crucial shift in mainstream thinking about male pregnancy, from the biological male whose pregnancy is enabled by revolutionary scientific developments (as can be found in fictional accounts) to the pregnant man as a transgendered subject.

In this project, I will analyze examples of male pregnancy from utopian and dystopian science fiction narratives to photographic (self-)representations of the pregnant transgender body. In order to examine the potential of the figure of the pregnant man in (re)negotiating questions of gender difference, technology and biology, body and identity, I will take a closer look at the rhetorical and visual strategies used in these examples in relation to the shifting discursive frameworks of science, law, feminism, gender studies, transgender studies, and queer theory.

Given the time constraints of the workshop, I would present only a very limited amount of material and center my readings around the theoretical trope of the cyborg. In Donna Haraway’s “A Cyborg Manifesto” (1985) the cyborg is an anti-essentialist union of machine and organism. Yet in the application of this figure, it is the machine, the unnatural technological part that has taken center stage. It is quasi impossible to imagine the apparent bio/logical impossibility of the pregnant man outside the realm of science and technology. However, bringing the organism back into the cyborg equation through the figure of the pregnant man might offer insight into how the body—however discursively constituted—continues to resist the regulatory effect of the discursive frames it finds itself in, as well as our individual attempts at corporeal mastery.

Jasper Verlinden is a Magister student in English Philology and North American Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin. His current research interests include emotion and belonging, transgender studies, and fan fiction. He is currently teaching a student-led seminar on queer theory.

Susanne Jung

**Strategies of Queer Resilience in the Writings of Queer Theorists:
Foucault, Sedgwick, Butler**

Theorists of queer affect, such as Ann Cvetkovich and others, have for the past decade of queer theory been focusing mainly on the traumatic effects of hegemonic power structures on a given subject's internal experience. However, there has been a slight change of focus in both neuroscientific and psychological research in recent years, moving away from the concept of trauma and focusing instead on a given subject's strategies of resilience when dealing with challenging life experiences.

The concept of resilience describes a subject's ability to withstand, deal and cope with a challenging life experience by drawing on a range of internal and external resources available to the individual at a given point in time. Some individuals may be more resilient than others, but resiliency is also something which can be trained and learned. An individual may develop a range of strategies of resilience when dealing with stressful lifetime events.

This paper aims at making the concept of resilience available to queer literary and cultural studies, looking at strategies of resilience in the works of the 'founding mothers and fathers' of queer theory – Michel Foucault, Judith Butler and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. It is part of a larger project looking at strategies of queer resilience in contemporary English literary texts as an MA thesis and – as a subsequently larger project in the form of a PhD thesis – in both nineteenth and twentieth century literary texts. If the modern system of heteronormative power structures can be said to have been largely in place towards the middle of the nineteenth century, as Foucault and others have argued, one should also be able to assume that queer subjects have always had or have concurrently been developing strategies of resilience in order to deal with this challenge to their affective lives.

Susanne Jung is currently writing her MA thesis in English literature at the University of Tübingen. She has published articles on the cultural practice of fan fiction writing as a means of engaging queerly with popular cultural narratives, and also on contemporary queer postpornography. Her fields of interest include Gender Studies, Queer Studies, Performance Studies and Creative Writing. She holds a degree in Pharmacy also from the University of Tübingen. She is one of the co-founders of the Queere AStA Hochschulgruppe at the University of Tübingen.

Caroline Schubarth

**Being touched – being human:
Reading the rediscovery of passivity from a feminist perspective**

In my PhD-thesis I examine the turn towards (radical) passivity within western arts and humanities in particular in gender and queer studies and the field of affect studies. One aim of this work is to understand how passivity – traditionally a problematic category for feminism – is now reconceptualised in order to be integrated and appropriated as a political means within these theoretical fields.

A look into western cultural history shows that an apprehended passive feminine nature and its implications of suffering, weakness and absence of reason were used in order to oppress women. Hence, it is not very surprising that feminists have hardly turned explicitly to radical passivity as a way to criticize the current (neo-) liberal norms.

Yet passivity has returned into western scholarship as precariousness where it does not only become a virtue but a precondition for thinking the (ethical) human. Passivity has been counted as a virtue in history before, e.g. in religious contexts only that then it was a privilege for men only. The same goes for 18th century literature and theatre discourses of disinterestedness.

So which gender discourses are the new revaluations of passivity referring to? Or are they leaving the category of gender completely behind as some writings around the affective turn seem to suggest? Is it at all possible to use passivity without invoking its gendered history?

One part of the concept of passivity that seems to be missing in all the debates is the pleasure of passivity that can be found in sadomasochistic subcultures and primitive genre like melodrama and pornography – highly gendered ground. Taking all these aspects into account I am attempting to shed some light on the diverse politics of passivity.

Caroline Schubarth studied Cultural Studies, Gender and Queer Studies and Social and Economy Communication in Leipzig, Jena, Berlin and Oslo. She now lives and works as a freelance academic in Berlin and writes her PhD thesis within the program Cultural Gender Studies at Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg, Germany. She has published articles on effeminate masculinity, pornography and violence and is currently co-editing a book on queer theory.

Gender in Translation: Translating Queer Localities

Chair: Eveline Kilian // *C7 1, Room U 15 (-1.15)

Joanna Moore

Queer Language in German and Slovene

My research will investigate the relationship between the language of sexuality and the political and social context, specifically non-heterosexuality, in German and in Slovene, resulting in a comparison of the findings for the two countries. It will consider the language of sexuality as a tool, or cause and effect of, or reaction to the wider political and social context in Germany and Slovenia, and offer an insight into how society's understanding and acceptance of such issues change and are the results or causes of political and social change.

In terms of LGBT rights, Slovenian law is on a par with that of most Western European countries, and more accepting than most Eastern European countries. However I have met Slovenians who believe that there are no homosexual people in Slovenia and have been told that hiding one's homosexuality is often advisable there. Conversely, Germany is socially quite tolerant towards homosexuality and is perhaps one of the most tolerant European countries in this sense. Yet, politically, it is not a European leader in LGBT rights.

In order to investigate political and social language, I plan to consider language use drawn from official government communication, official communication by LGBT organisations, everyday language used by heterosexual people and everyday language used by non-heterosexual people. Information will be drawn from corpora, existing language use and qualitative interviews with native speakers.

The combination of topics will make for an innovative study as queer studies and Slovene studies are relatively new or under researched topics and, combined with German studies, will form an innovative study. My presentation will introduce my proposed research (to be started in September) and the approach I plan to take, as well as how my ideas relate to existing research.

Joanna Moore is a final year undergraduate at the University of Nottingham (England), studying French, German and Slovene. In September she will start a research Masters at Nottingham in German and Slovene.

A Holistic Approach to Translations of Women Specific (feminist) Literature

Although in modern society women and men are said to be in equal positions and work in almost the same situations, it has been claimed that women and men translate in different ways. It has, however, never been shown in a transparent systematic way how men and women really differ in translation.

This dissertation is basically aimed at finding women-specific features in feminist texts and their translations and at developing a systematic model to specify gender-specific features in a text and applying it to feminist texts to show gender related differences in translations by female and male translators.

My research is being done in a holistic way, which looks at holistic ‘Gestalt’ phenomena, implied background knowledge, cultural attitudes and values in a text. First of all, according to the model developed by Heidrun Gerzymisch, a holon is made, which is based on the first English translation of Henrik Ibsen’s “*A doll’s house*”, which is often called the first true feminist play, is made. To make the holon, I have considered feminist and gender specific issues of the play. And then, I will analyze the ways in which the holons are translated into Persian by female and male translators, and the ways the holons are represented in a more recent English translation. It is also possible to try to find out how these features are represented in a modern feminist literary work, and how these features are represented in a film adaptation of the play.

Somayeh Amin has studied English translation studies at Azad University, Tehran, Iran and her M.A thesis was titled “Gender Consciousness and Iranian Female Translators”. She currently is a doctoral candidate in Translation studies in Doktorandenprogramm Multidimensionale Translation (MuTra), at Saarland University. Contact: soam_1981@yahoo.com

Maria Hinterkörner

“Kiwi” Masculinities in New Zealand Short Stories – Queering the Past

In the course of the workshop I would like to present preliminary results of my dissertation as a work in progress. I analyse the multiple representations of (male) masculinities in New Zealand short stories by male authors and in what ways their performances are linked to New Zealand cultural identity and national narration.

Using the interdisciplinary methods of cultural, gender and postcolonial studies, I investigate in what ways gender identities are performed by the characters in the selected short stories, and I look at how their performances express national, New Zealand identity. Looking at the different ways New Zealand male authors imagine masculinities, my dissertation project examines the linkages of what makes the performance of masculinities explicitly New Zealand. Showing that New Zealand masculinities are the effect of specific cultural and historical processes, my study explores different realisations of New Zealand masculine gender identity in short stories.

The short fiction I would like to present – “Little Joker Sings” by Peter Wells – is representative of the trend to queer national narration. Peter Wells, New Zealand filmmaker, writer and iconoclast is exemplary in pulling apart the heteronormativity of New Zealand iconic events, such as rugby football and New Zealand’s eager participation in World War I and II. The military as a typically gendered arena remains an all-male environment, hegemonic discourse thus rendering an all-male experience a national event. Peter Wells exhibits the genderedness of New Zealand cultural identity formation and shows quite plainly that New Zealand masculinities are in themselves manifestations of results of gender and national discourse.

Maria Hinterkörner is a PhD candidate at the department of English and American Studies at the University of Vienna pursuing a PhD in New Zealand literature. She holds a degree in German and English Literature and a degree in Celtic Studies from Vienna University. Contact: Maria_hiko@gmx.at

Philipp Sammel

**Gender Trouble in the Ring –
Gender Roles and Masculinity in Boxing, Boxing Literature and Boxing Movies**

According to Joyce Carol Oates, boxing “is a purely masculine activity and it inhabits a purely masculine world.” (J.C. Oates. *On Boxing*. 2006, p. 70) Similarly, Manfred Luckas argues in his PhD thesis that both boxing and literary depictions of boxing represent a clear cut hierarchy of genders. (cf. M. Luckas. “*So lange du stehen kannst, wirst du kämpfen.*” *Die Mythen des Boxens und ihre literarische Inszenierung*. 2002, p. 300) In order to understand both Oates’ and Luckas’ arguments, we need to analyse how boxing is defined as masculine through symbols and metaphors which are derived from the reign of animals and the military, amongst others. Furthermore, we will look at how masculinity is defined through normative heterosexuality and misogyny. However, there are also symbols in boxing literature and movies that undermine heterosexist and hegemonic masculinity. We will go on to analyse how women and gay men, who are rejected genders in the world of boxing, can fight their way into the ring, and why the world of boxing, from where gay men are supposed to be excluded, is “powerfully homoerotic” as Oates puts it. (J.C. Oates *On Boxing* 2006, p. 30) Thus, we will analyse meanings of phallic, penetration, and blood symbols that serve to undermine and destroy hegemonic masculinity in the ring itself, the place that was supposed to be the ideal place of masculinity.

Philipp Sammel, born 3/27/1985. Since 2004: studies of German and English literature and linguistics at Saarland University, final thesis: *Geschlechterkonzepte bei Boxerfiguren in deutschsprachigen Texten und Filmen*. Since 2008: research assistant at Lehrstuhl für Neuere Deutsche Philologie und Literaturwissenschaft (Chair of German Literature) at Saarland University (Prof. Dr. Ralf Bogner) and at Bachelor Optionalbereich der Philosophischen Fakultäten at Saarland University (Dominik Schmitt, M.A.).

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