

**46TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE
AUSTRIAN ASSOCIATION FOR AMERICAN STUDIES**

MEDIATING MOUNTAINS



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Abstracts and Speaker Biographies

Department of American Studies, University of Innsbruck

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KEYNOTE LECTURES

Keynote Lecture I, Friday, November 22, 15:00-16:30 (Aula, Main Building)

"Highroads and Skyroads: Cinematic Mountains and the U.S. National Park Service"

Jennifer Peterson (Woodbury University)

What does the historical nature film have to tell us that might be useful today, as public awareness grows about current and accelerating forms of ecological catastrophe? In order to understand where we might be going in our relationship to the planet, it has become imperative to think about what led us to this pass in the first place. Based on archival research in U.S. government archives (NARA in College Park, Maryland and the Yosemite Archive in California), this talk brings together methodologies from film history and the environmental humanities to examine the filmmaking practices of the National Park Service (NPS) in the 1920s and 30s. As produced by the federal government, these educational films consolidate a specific concept of the national park as a "nature space" in which the so-called wilderness is evacuated of indigenous presence and repopulated with modern tourists. Through this process, natural landscapes – and specifically, mountain landscapes – were converted into commodities of scenic wonders. Produced in the interwar years before the popular concept of nature shifted into an environmentalist rhetoric of endangerment, the earliest federally-produced national park films celebrated the role of the state in taming the wilderness.

Automobiles play an important role in the history of the American National Parks. Cars were a popular trope in the earliest national park photos and postcards, evoking a contrast between technological modernity and primeval nature. The 1920s and 30s were the era of roadbuilding in the parks, and numerous films from this period depict road-building, maintenance, and driving, particularly on mountain roads. Films made by the Bureau of Roads such as *Highroads and Skyroads* (1922) depict the laying-in of automobile infrastructure in the parks, while more tourist-oriented NPS films such as *Land of the Lofty Mountains* (1936) present famous national park landscapes like stage sets, with footage shot from roads that guide the viewer through the scenery. These films capture not only the landscapes of their day but modern attitudes and practices related to land use and fossil fuels. Watching these films almost a century later, we witness an important stage in the expansion of the system that produced global warming, before that concept yet existed.

Keynote Lecture II, Saturday, November 23, 09:00-10:30 (HS3, Geiwi)

"Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy: Two Landscapes of the Anthropocene 1970 and 2014"

Sean Cubitt (Goldsmiths, University of London)

Though the International Geological Congress has yet formally to adopt the Anthropocene, the term refers us to the deep time of geological epochs. The Capitocene (Moore), Chthulucene (Haraway), misanthropocene (Clover, Spahr), and entropocene (Stiegler), to name just a few, place climate change in relation to tighter historical periods, and more specific human orientations. Our event's focus on mountains offers further focus on what is common to but also distinguishes different regional experiences of the Anthropocene and its cognates. For film/media studies, any depicted world, real or fictional, is a diegesis, and diegeses have become central to the pleasures of the Anthropocene screen. There has never been a rule that diegetic worlds must exist: genre worlds like the Spanish Main and the Wild West have always exceeded their historical actuality. The generic rule has been only that diegeses should be coherent. Recent studies of action films have suggested that narrative and spatial coherence can be sacrificed to thrills. The increasing incoherence of at least some diegetic worlds, this paper argues, illuminates more than industrial entertainment imperatives. Comparing Tsui Hark's 2014 *The Taking of Tiger Mountain* (*Zhi qu wei hushan*), the second adaptation of Qu Bo's adventure novel of the People's Liberation Army, to the 1970 film of the Peking Opera version directed by Xie Tieli, demonstrates the stakes in imaginations of mountains separated by 45 years. Equally though differently stylised, the films raise questions about the degrees of coherence they can project onto their real and imaginary space-times.

"Thereness: Video Game Mountains as Limits of Interactivity"

Sascha Pöhlmann (University of Konstanz)

Building on the more focused contributions to the Alpine Playgrounds panel, my talk aims to offer a broader perspective on the mediation of mountains in video games that considers an abstract quality I theorize as "thereness," or a challenging presence that both invites and resists being engaged by humans, and which is central to the ludic and symbolic function of a number of related games in recent years. I will discuss games that deliberately resist the mimetic approach of an ever-increasing "realism" in this popular medium but rather explore the allegorical aspects of the mountains, notably without turning them into 'mere' metaphors but insisting on their own distinct existence as something beyond ourselves. As virtual mountains that are not really to be played with, they invite a philosophical, cultural, and aesthetic interpretation as human mediations of what resists both mediation and the human, as something always just beyond our full cognitive and epistemological grasp, a limit rather than an object of our consciousness. I will discuss how games such as *Celeste* (2018), *Getting Over It with Bennett Foddy* (2017) or *Mountain* (2014) use their unique audiovisual, tactile, and ludic qualities to convey this elusive 'thereness' of the mountain as something that both challenges and rejects human interaction. Instead of offering their players the fantasy of power and control that so often underlies contemporary video games, these games evoke the otherness of mountains to take their players to the limits of interactivity within a medium that is fundamentally defined by this very interactivity. The confrontation with this limit, finally, has a variety of implications that range from ecocritical considerations to a cultural critique of social normativity or consumerism.

PLENARY PANEL

Plenary Panel on Appalachia, Saturday, November 23, 18:15-19:45 (Aula, Main Building)

Chair: Katherine Ledford (Appalachian State University)

"Bottling Steep Slopes: Mediating the Historical, Cultural, Regional, Recreational, and Environmental Subjectivities of Appalachian Mountain Vineyards"

Jessie Blackburn (Appalachian State University)

With over 400 recently-established vineyards and wineries found along a one-thousand-mile stretch of the Appalachian Mountains, we are witnessing a burgeoning tourism industry's rapid adaptation of the culturally stereotyped 'lowbrow' Appalachia into a 'highbrow' wine-tasting destination. When we query the semiotics of this new Appalachian wine region, we find vintners who are mediating the region's rhetorical and socio-environmental constraints by championing a new discourse that selectively engages established historical narratives of Appalachian place alongside equally entrenched cultural narratives of global elite winemaking heritages. Bound to a sense of place due to the nature of the industry, Appalachian vintners must work to rhetorically situate their vineyards in the broader wine tourism narrative that is regional, national, and international in subjectivities. All the while, Appalachian wineries face the culturally-challenging steep slope of geo-locating terroir inside the region's collective identity—a cultural identity that often collides with very old (and sometimes dissonant) winemaking narratives about culture, tradition, environment, class, and legitimacy. Based on over 80 site visits to Appalachian mountain wineries; rhetorical analyses; and interviews with wine makers, wine associations, and government officials involved in wine promotion, this paper will examine the ways that reproduced mountain rhetorics work to legitimize an unrecognized wine region through cultural appropriation, association, and mediation. Furthermore, this paper will argue that commodified notions of 'mountain' represent a new formation of North American place-making that is simultaneously derivative and inimitable as well as local and global in its adaptation.

"Modern Moonshine: The Revival of White Whiskey in the Twenty-First Century"

Cameron D. Lippard (Appalachian State University)

The craft of making moonshine—an unaged white whiskey, often made and consumed outside legal parameters—nearly went extinct in the late twentieth century as law enforcement cracked down on illicit producers, and cheaper, lawful alcohol became readily available. Yet the twenty-first century has witnessed a resurgence of artisanal distilling, as both connoisseurs and those reconnecting with their heritage have created a vibrant new culture of moonshine. While not limited to Appalachia, moonshine is often entwined with the region in popular understandings. Focusing mostly on southern Appalachia, this presentation introduces the research from scholars across the disciplines of anthropology, history, geography, and sociology to make sense of the legal, social, and historical shifts behind contemporary production and consumption of moonshine, and offers a fresh perspective on an enduring topic of Appalachian myth and reality. What does the moonshine revival tell us about our national culture? How does it shape the image of Appalachia and rural America?

PANELS

Panel Session I, Saturday, November 23, 11:00-13:00

Panel 1: Mountain Cinema (Room 50101)

Chair: Christian Quendler (University of Innsbruck)

"Of Mountains and Men. Anthony Mann's Approach to Landscapes and the *Conditio Masculina*"

Ines Bayer (Deutsches Filminstitut und Filmmuseum, Frankfurt am Main)

Where [John] Ford has mesas, [Anthony] Mann has mountains. No one would attempt to climb a Monument Valley mesa, and they are perfectly easy to go around; when a mountain appears in a Mann movie you are pretty certain that it will be climbed, and with extreme difficulty.

Anthony Mann (1906-1967) may not be the most prominent director of the Classical Hollywood era, but he is certainly the most rigorous in his handling of bodies and mountainous terrains. In my paper, I argue that the relation between the male body and the rocky, vertical landscapes that provide the setting for many of the most climactic scenes in Mann's westerns is at the very core of the director's oeuvre. Those scenes amount to a radical, yet precise inventory of the human condition, or rather, the male condition, which is inseparably tied to violence, pain, trauma, and obsession. Mann's philosophy is matched by a visual style which is excessively physical and which equally applies to the position of the body in the frame, to the relation between (sparse) dialogue and (rich) photography, to the peculiar state of the protagonists between myth and corporeality. Men on the ground, pressing their flesh against the rocky flanks of mountains, are a crucial visual trope for the cinematic universe of Mann.

The presentation will include a variety of film clips, production stills and original documents from studio archives. While highlighting Mann's epoch-making westerns of the 1950s, reference will also be made to Mann's work in different genres, notably the film noir and the epic film, as well as to the depiction and spatial use of mountains in the directorial work of other pivotal US filmmakers, including John Ford and Budd Boetticher.

The paper draws on the author's dissertation, recently published as "Anthony Mann. Kino der Verwundung" at Bertz+Fischer Verlag, Berlin.

Works Cited:

Wood, Robin: Man(n) of the West(ern). *CineAction* 46 (June 1998), pp. 26-33. Here: p. 30.

"'Soviet' and 'Kyrgyz' Landscapes in *Nebo našego detstva*"

Anna Ladinig (University of Innsbruck)

Mountains have always played a prominent role in Kyrgyz cinema. This can be understood as a consequence of the established antagonism between 'national' and 'socialist' by the medial representations and further, the conventionalized connection between 'nature' and 'national' as well as 'progress' and 'Soviet'. The question of how 'Soviet' and 'Kyrgyz landscapes' are constructed in film is explored with reference to the film *Nebo našego detstva* (1966, engl. *The Sky of Our Childhood*, director Tolomuš Okeev).

The first feature film by Kyrgyz director Tolomuš Okeev examines the Soviet re-territorialization of the Kyrgyz mountains, which had been subjected to national territorialization only a few decades earlier. In this semiautobiographical work, Okeev deals with the everyday life of a nomadic family. Their way of life is constrained by the expansion of the infrastructure that will connect the rural and mountainous Soviet republic with the modern and urban center of Moscow. Conflicts arise on the fault lines between the young and old generations as well as the Kyrgyz nomads and the Soviet construction workers. In the spirit of the relatively liberal Thaw-period, clear attributions of earlier Soviet films give way to ambivalent depictions of 'nature', 'progress', 'Kyrgyzness' and 'Sovietness'. This is further emphasized by the mixture of stylistic and narrative elements of documentary and western films. Okeev addresses the dichotomies of old-young, center-periphery, progress-backwardness, socialist-national and by deconstructing them creates a multilayered depiction of the Soviet-Kyrgyz realities.

"Early Swedish Mountain Films from an Eco-Critical Perspective"

Anna Rossholm (University of Stockholm)

The mountain region in the northern part of Sweden has been an important film location throughout Swedish film history, from the early silent film period to contemporary film and TV productions. In fiction film, documentary film and TV series the mountains in the north represent extreme wilderness, ancient times, and - as habitat for the Scandinavian indigenous Sami people - cultural otherness. Compared to the German or Austrian Bergfilm – or other films set in the Alps – the Swedish mountain film is neither indebted to a heimat-tradition nor primarily associated with the adventure film genre. Yet they can be conceptualized as a group of film that shares similarities in how the human/nature dichotomy is depicted. The proposed paper discusses the notions of nature and time in Swedish mountain films from the early silent film period to the mid-1940s from an eco-critical perspective. The time frame of the project represents the period before the so-called 'great acceleration' of human exploitation of resources in the Anthropocene as well as the time before environmentalist politics. In an environmentalist context mountains do not only represent nature and wilderness in contrast to modern civilization but also deep time and geological perspectives on history. The paper is a first attempt to frame a future research project. The presentation will therefore mainly focus on broader questions and a general overview of the material. Canonical films such as *The Outlaws* (Victor Sjöström, 1919) and classical nature documentaries of the 1940s will be discussed as cases in point.

"Sisyphos Doing the Mountains"

Susanne Rieser (University of Graz)

In this talk I will compare Stan Brakhage's *Dog Star Man* (1961-1964), Jean-Marc Vallée's *Wild* (2014), which is based on Cheryl Strayed's bestseller-memoir, and the Buddhist practice in California mountain Zen centers. The mountains of Colorado and California are here not examined in their symbolic, representational dimension, but rather as spaces of physical and emotional travail, where processes of transformation and overcoming of ego/self are at stake. The three case studies are very distinct: an avantgarde visionary film, a mainstream narrative film based on a non-fiction account of mastering the Pacific Crest Trail and a centuries-old meditation practice. Their communality lies in the fact that all three deal with practicing physicality in mountain environments. In different ways and contexts, they all work on questions of solitude and separation, of labor, strain and pain, of the Sisyphean task of survival and existentiality.

Panel 2: Appalachia: Sacred Space and Spiritual Ecology (Room 50105)

Chair: Diane Martinez (Western Carolina University)

"Mountains as Sacred Spaces in Appalachian Literature"

Mae Miller Claxton (Western Carolina University)

In his 2010 keynote speech at the annual Western Carolina University Rooted in the Mountains symposium, Silas House began with a quote from a Trappist monk, Thomas Merton: "Everything that is, is holy." House goes on to tell a story about the mountain behind his house when he was growing up, a mountain that anchored his family and community. He writes, "The mountain was our past and our present, our family and our future, our whole identity as a way of life." He and his family went to that mountain to grieve, to rejoice, to be close to God. House describes the mountains of Appalachia as sacred spaces, comparing them to holy sites in other countries that should be protected and cherished. In my paper, I would like to consider mountains as sacred places using three examples. First, I would like to acknowledge the original inhabitants of our mountains, the Cherokees, by considering a specific story that shows their connections to the mountains, specifically the story of Judaculla Rock, the place where the slant-eyed Tsul Kalu landed from the high mountains to teach the people of the earth how to live the right way. I will compare this story with John Ehle's *The Road*, the epic story of the creation of the railroad through the high mountains of western North Carolina. While the book is about human manipulation of one mountain, in particular, the main character, engineer Weatherby Wright, also understands the power and character of this mountain he must conquer in order to achieve his goal of "progress." Finally, I would like to look at Silas House's fictional depiction of mountains in his novel *Clay's Quilt* and his nonfiction book *Something's Rising*, a collection of essays addressing mountain-top removal in Appalachia.

"Where I Belong: Mountain Homeplace in Appalachia"

Pamela Duncan (Western Carolina University)

In a 1985 New York Times essay, "Where I Ought to Be: A Writer's Sense of Place", author Louise Erdrich states: "In a tribal view of the world, where one place has been inhabited for generations, the landscape becomes enlivened by a sense of group and family history." I would argue that the same, perhaps to a lesser extent, is true for many Appalachians, people who, like my own family, have inhabited these mountains for generations. While Appalachia is a place that is quickly becoming homogenized, a land where sense of place is being cast aside for money, where the soul of a people is being traded for development, there are still those for whom place is a sacred repository of history, culture, and identity. Even after the loss of a homeplace, the land itself remains, peopled by the ghosts of lives lived there. In an essay and a novel excerpt, I will explore that concept in relation to my own experience of loving and losing a homeplace that provided a living record of family history.

"Exploring Spiritual Ecology in Appalachia through an Historical Analysis of Agency"

Diane Martinez (Western Carolina University)

One of the most striking aspects in the long history of exploitation in Appalachia is the lack of agency that the residents have had to endure and which continues today. Negative characterizations of Appalachia, as "a place outside normal life," where "'hillbillies,' despite today's politically correct climate, are regular objects of mockery'" (Ewalt & Cantrill, 2017, p. 106), challenge efforts of residents to control their own land because the mountains have value only for their resources and the people are a joke. In some ways, Appalachians are given a voice through collections of stories, such as in *Something's Rising* by Silas House and Jason Howard and in the film *Hillbilly* by Rachel York, but the hillbilly caricature dominates the American mind even today, thereby granting power to lumber, coal, and other exploitative and environmentally destructive industries that have destroyed and continue to destroy this part of the country. There is, however, a strong, spiritual connection between Appalachians and the mountains, an appreciation of the mountain wilderness this is deeply personal and directly tied to livelihood and to memories. This connection, however, has been and continues to be ignored, undermined, and manipulated by extractive industries that have exploited this part of the United States for over 200 years. In keeping with the thread of spiritual ecology, this presenter explores the concept of agency between Appalachians, industry, government, and even the mountains, through historical documents, such as brochures associated with establishing the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, lumber company newsletters, and personal correspondence, to give perspective on contemporary conversations regarding the ecological fate of the region today.

"Taking a Spiritual Turn: Environmental Advocacy in Appalachia"

Laura Vernon (Radford University)

Environmental advocacy in Appalachia is a strong force at work. The grassroots groups have a varied history of environmental activism in Appalachia, but their goal is the same: to protect and restore Appalachia's mountains and communities. The coal mining industry began practicing mountaintop removal in Appalachia around 1970. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, mountaintop mining is a form of surface mining where workers extract coal seams from a mountain by removing the land above the seams. Explosives remove up to 500 vertical feet of mountain. Then, the rock, soil, and vegetation are moved to nearby valleys. Mountaintop mining changes the ecosystem of both land and water on both the mountain and in the communities. While work is taking place to restore the mountains and clean the water, the ecosystems will never be the same again. There is no doubt that Appalachia residents feel a strong connection to the land. This connection is a reflection of a principle of spiritual ecology: ecological renewal and sustainability depend on recognizing that the earth's soul and humanity's soul are one (Sponsel, 2012, p. xv). Spiritual ecologist Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee posits, "Only from this place of sacred wholeness and reverence can we begin the work of healing, of bringing the world back into balance (p. ii). It is from this point of view that the presenter will examine the "spiritual ecology" rhetoric of three Appalachian environmental groups: Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards, Keeper of the Mountains, and Appalachian Voices. As part of the analysis, the presenter will discuss how the groups position their environmental advocacy activities around this rhetoric. The presenter will then invite attendees to engage in a conversation about spiritual ecology's efficacy as a way of revisioning the human-environmental connection and of restoring hope.

Panel 3: The Photographic Construction of Mountains (Room 50109)

Chair: Ingrid Gessner (Pädagogische Hochschule Vorarlberg)

"Revisiting Brokeback Mountain, or: How Mountains Matter"

Sabine Sielke (University of Bonn)

Mountains loom large in the realm of our imagination and in all cultural imaginaries; they cover grounds that stretch far and wide, including the spaces projected over the course of film history. Two extensive lists compiled by IMDb, for instance – “100 Best Mountain Films” and “Mountain Themed Movies” – feature films on mountaineers and climbing expeditions (with Louis Trenker's 1938 *Der Berg ruft* ranked first) as well as zombie narratives, comedies, and love stories, designating mountains as a fairly inclusive terrain. Curiously amiss in the aforementioned lists is Ang Lee's award-winning movie *Brokeback Mountain* (2005), whose controversial subject matter may have pushed the title-giving “mountain theme” off screen.

Returning to *Brokeback Mountain* and its mountainous aesthetics, my contribution reengages the cinematic landscape projected in Lee's “love story” – a landscape that echoes, as I show, a national visual culture mapped and remapped by paradigmatic moments in art, photography, and film. Calling on the tradition of the Western as much as on the work of Edward Hopper, Anselm Adams, Andrew Wyeth, William Eggleston, Richard Avedon, and beyond, *Brokeback Mountain* superimposes its own visual space and soundscape on representations we are more familiar with and, in the process, shifts our perspective on how mountains matter. My contribution shows why, since then, mountains have never been the same in the US-American cultural imaginary.

"The Power of Collective Vision: Landscape, Visual Media, and the Production of American Mountains"

Danielle Raad (University of Massachusetts Amherst)

The way we view the landscape is socially constructed and dictated by media. The images of mountains, from paintings to stereographs to digital photographs, influence how Americans see them and continually reproduce a collective vision. I will describe the process by which this collective vision of nature and mountains in the United States is constructed through the dissemination of visual media and the rise of domestic tourism. The progression of modes of landscape representation over the past two centuries has continuously distanced the image of the mountain from reality. I use Baudrillard's orders of simulation as a conceptual framework for understanding the diachronic relationship between the landscape and its visual representations. Inextricably linked to the simulacra of the mountain is the American collective vision of the mountain, which is homogenized and therefore necessarily a counterfeit. I argue that this collective vision possesses the powers to colonize, to nationalize, to exclude, and to blind. Each power informs the next, with the collective vision of nature implicated in each. I will trace the history of the representation of the mountain in America, showing how image production and distribution is linked to the orders of simulation and the power trajectory from colonization to nationalization to exclusion and ultimately to blindness.

"Aerial Alps: Balloon Photography and Mountain Modeling in the 19th Century"

Hannah Zindel (Leuphana University Lüneburg)

First you have to understand the mountains, then you can draw or model them, says the Swiss mountain geologist Albert Heim in the middle of the 19th century. But how to understand the mountains? My paper examines the media and techniques used by the Professor of Geology at the Zurich Polytechnic, later ETH Zurich, to record, process and store the Alpine landscape and asks how these techniques shape his image of the Alps.

In a first step, the focus of the lecture will be on Heim's methods of producing colored drawings or clay models, which he calls reliefs. When Heim became professor of geology in Zurich in 1872, he insisted on a reform of the relief system. Reliefs were to become “more natural”. They should no longer be created on the basis of maps, but from observations. On the basis of geographical publications, the lecture traces how Heim's demands and with them the Alps became a central point of reference in discussions on the relationship between naturalness and artificiality as well as perception and imagination in geography, and how the media and techniques used influenced them.

In a second step, Heim's balloon flight over the Alps in 1898 will be examined. The geologist describes his reliefs as overviews, in which he constitutes the view of a mountain group from an imaginary point

of view lying in the air. When he met balloon captain Eduard Spelterini, he had the idea of exchanging his virtual point of view in the air for an actual one. Based on the journey report, the lecture will outline how Heim describes the mountains from the balloon. Eduard Spelterini, on the other hand, takes photographs from the balloon. From then on, he animates Alpine panoramas in front of an audience by cross-fading single pictures.

“Down the Rugged Canyon Route”: Barry Goldwater’s Landscape Photography of Arizona”

Susann Köhler (University of Göttingen)

Barry Goldwater (1909-1998) was recognized in American politics as a cowboy Republican from the Southwest. The Arizona Senator had been in office for thirty years and was the presidential candidate of the Republican Party in 1964. He helped invent a modern conservatism in the postwar era that was fueled by anticommunism, entrepreneurialism, and libertarianism. Next to his political career, Goldwater was also an avid amateur photographer and adventurous outdoorsman who knew Arizona's diverse landscape and counties well. Many trips took him time and again to the Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, and Hopi and Navajo territories. While traveling, he documented the desert, canyons and rock formations, local culture, and Native American population and thus created an immense photographic archive of his home state. His images were published in photobooks, the magazine *Arizona Highways*, and exhibitions in the United States and Europe. Goldwater's photography presents the American Southwestern landscape in the tradition of nineteenth-century survey photography. I argue that his landscape and mountain pictures from the 1930s through the 1970s unfold a vision of individualism, freedom, self-reliance, and opportunity. In this sense, his images draw on the mythical power of the West and reveal principles of conservative thought. In my paper, I will focus on Goldwater's iconic landscape photographs in connection with his political career and contextualize his photography through the historical development of modern conservatism in the United States.

Panel 4: Alpine Playgrounds: Games, Apps, and Technologies (Room 40130)

Chair: Sascha Pöhlmann (University of Konstanz)

“A Short Technikgeschichte of Climbing Mountains in Video Games”

Dejan Lukovic (University of Innsbruck)

This paper focuses on how the act of mountain climbing has been represented in video games throughout the history of video games and elaborates on the implementation of climbing at a gameplay level. Its thesis is that climbing in video games had to experience the same technological processes and progressions as its real-life counterpart. Insofar, it is possible to claim that the conquering of real life and digital mountains is and always has been a joint effort.

From the first climbing-centered video game (*Crazy Climbers*, 1980) on to the technological top-notch virtual reality experience *The Climb* (2018), lots of time has passed. While video games that predate *Crazy Climbers* utilized depictions of mountains without an inherent purpose, *Crazy Climbers* was the first video game to actually “codify” the climbing of buildings. Throughout the early history of video games, mountains have served as boundaries which limit game spaces and gameplay due to technological restrictions. With technological progress came wider game spaces which did not necessitate mountains as boundaries anymore, and with the further development of 3D game environment processing, mountains have become a sphere of game space on their own.

It is this rich history of representation, ludification and conquest of mountains in video games in this particular order this paper focuses on. It is examined that the conquering of mountains in video games has only been possible because of the advancements in technology which mirror real-life climbing. This paper's thesis is exemplified by various case studies of video games that have been conducted throughout the past decades which clearly show the aforementioned transformation of mountains and their purpose in video games. This development is juxtaposed by the *Technikgeschichte* of real-life climbing in order to highlight the presumed similarities.

"Summiting The Ludic Heartland – On Spatial Appropriations of Mountains, Alpine Vistas and Ecocritical Values in Rural Open World Games"

Marc Bonner (University of Cologne)

This paper will broach the issue of (1) how rural open world games adapt specific iconic geological formations and sights of national parks of specific real-world US federal states and (2) what values they embody within the diegesis. Based on a transdisciplinary approach, the media-specific depiction and function of mountains, ridges, valleys and the regulating horizons will be of special interest. Staging vast coherent and nonlinear navigable topographies of networked places instead of enclosed, separately loaded levels, the landscape experience of open world games becomes an end in itself. They also sport a heightened topographical verticality unprecedented in computer games.

Rural open world games not only evoke an urge of exploration of pristine wilderness as a place but also enable hunting wildlife, gathering herbs and crafting as wildness gameplay. Three case studies will serve as the bedrock for the thesis that said game spaces (A) compensate for a nature long lost by overexploitation and industrialization and (B) can be understood as recreational worlds of experience in the tradition of landscape gardens and national parks.

The post-apocalyptic world of *Horizon Zero Dawn* (2017) merges real-world biomes and the geological structures of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming into a branching mountain valley; in *Far Cry 5* (2017) players roam the fictional Hope County in Montana from undulating farmland to alpine biomes full of hazardous wildlife and snowy peaks; *Red Dead Redemption 2* (2018) is the current peak in hunting wildlife, making camp and surviving as a gunslinger and rancher in a Wild West that is a montage of iconic regions throughout the USA.

As all three games stage a vast ludic distillation of the US Heartland, each achieves specific ecocritical and political statements that are inscribed into game mechanics and aesthetics – from boldly leftist to questionably conservative to romantically nostalgic.

"Hiking, Flying, Sharing: Space, Media, and Self-Tracking in the Digital Age"

Karina Kirsten (University of Marburg)

The development of small, mobile media technologies, such as smartphones, GoPro cameras, and GPS systems, has significantly changed both amateur and extreme sport mountain activities. Fixed on arms, thighs, or heads, these media devices expand bodies not only physically, as "extensions of (wo-)man" (Marshall McLuhan), but virtually, as perceptions are transformed into digital data that can be shared online. By tracking the mountain hike, photographing the summit success, recording the paragliding flight, and assisting in navigating through the mountains, these mobile media devices sample a variety of mountaineering experiences in images, graphics, and numbers that map bodies in relation to space (Doreen Massey). Through GPS functions, Geodata, and cameras, physical movements become digital traces that refer back to specific places and represent concrete moments. The media devices thus anchor the physical in virtual space, even as they release humans from local places; thereby, human beings, mountains, and media become connected and disconnected simultaneously. If you want to be trackable, you have to be mobile; but if you want to be shareable, you have to get online.

In my paper, I will explore how these media technologies connect us to space, and specifically to mountains, and how they represent our mountaineering activities in reverse. As my analysis will show, not only do these devices engage with multiple imaginaries of mountains (as aesthetic landscapes, sporting sites, and romantic wildernesses), but they also, and most importantly, translate mountains into a hybrid media space through the local tracking and evaluation of spatial movement. This changes our perception and appropriation of mountains fundamentally. We are offered a new spatial media engagement that encompasses the exploration and appreciation of mountains by enabling us to hike faster, fly higher, and share wider.

"The Affordances of Place: Mediating Mountains through AR Applications"

Marc Nunes (Appalachian State University)

The concept of "affordances" provides a vocabulary for discussing the relational coupling between user and mobile device that is critical to an ecological understanding of the role and place of digital media in everyday life. Likewise, it allows us to acknowledge the gap between two agents in two environments: one digital and the other embodied. Over a decade ago, I addressed the importance of understanding the "cyberspaces of everyday life" as virtual topographies: performative speech acts that "write" space through material, conceptual, and experiential processes. In a similar move, Don Ihde (2009) describes what he calls a "material hermeneutics" – what is otherwise non-perceivable is "translated by ... instruments into bodily perceptible images," a "technological transformation of a phenomenon into a readable image" (56). By highlighting the potential for agent-specific action within an agent-environment relation, a study of affordances focuses our attention to what happens at the boundary of a doubly-mediated human-device coupling, and how these digital devices alter both our sense of place and our experience of the place of information in everyday life.

Farman (2012, 2014) details a number of examples of how augmented reality (AR) apps on location-aware, mobile devices have been deployed to create narrative overlays for walking tours and cultural heritage sites in cities, yet this is equally true for apps that provide information overlays on natural landscapes, such as stargazing and trailfinding applications. Peakfinder, for example, is a location-aware app that positions users within a topographic map showing the names of mountain peaks, the path of the sun from sunrise to sunset, and the user's current longitude, latitude, and compass heading. Unlike a mapping app, Peakfinder assumes that you are looking "through" your screen and pointing the mobile device in the direction of a peak—mediating mountains in quite literal terms. Peakfinder bills itself as an AR application, although I would suggest that what it provides, more precisely, is a set of augmented affordances by way of the potential actions of a digital agent—the device itself—to materialize information. I experience the affordances of place differently in that I now have information (literally) written over a landscape, a topography in its most literal sense as a writing of place. The information overlay alters not only my orientation toward the landscape; it also provides me with a potential set of interactions that I would not otherwise have at my disposal. As such, how I perceive the world offers an opportunity to co-perceive myself within a new sense of place, with an altered range of current and future action potentials.

Through an examination of Peakfinder and other mountain-oriented AR applications, I intend to explore the degree to which information can quite literally overlay our embodied experience of space and place, reordering our topographies to such an extent that we do not merely access information; we now find ourselves embedded in it. My double-orientation toward the device and the place where I find myself serves as a doubled point of articulation in the production of space. Users act upon a transformed material environment through a range of augmented affordances – the product of digital action by digital agents in a digital environment – drawing out data that we ourselves provide actively (through responses to prompts) or passively (through capture of motion or habitual action) as material extension of digital devices through our bodily orientations and dispositions. From the perspective of embodied experience, the result is that "our sense of 'body' is embodied outward, directionally and referentially, and the technology becomes part of our ordinary experience" of the environment in which we act and interact (Ihde 2009, 42). So, too, is our sense of place mediated through this complex, yet ordinary experience of location-aware mobile devices.

Works Cited:

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Ihde, D. (2009) *Postphenomenology and Technoscience: The Peking University Lectures*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
Nunes, M. (2006) *Cyberspaces of Everyday Life*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Panel 5: Exoticizing Mountains (Room 40134)

Chair: Joshua Parker (University of Salzburg)

"Mountains of Nature and 'No-Mind': A Transcultural Approach to Moments of Heightened Awareness and Non-Substantialist Ontology in Thoreau, Kerouac, and Snyder"

Birgit Capelle (University of Düsseldorf)

In his essay "Blue Mountains Constantly Walking" (1990), Beat poet, naturalist, and Zen Buddhist Gary Snyder makes reference to thirteenth-century Japanese Zen master Dōgen's "Mountains and Waters Sutra." Snyder appeals to the sacredness of East Asian mountains and elaborates on the traditional East Asian view of the world as a dynamic and temporal interplay of mountains and rivers: "In common usage the compound 'mountains and waters'—shan-shui in Chinese—is the straightforward term for landscape. . . . the totality of the process of nature." According to Snyder's reading of Dōgen, experiencing reality as mountains and waters, yin [and] yang, the male and the female continuously interacting, is seeing reality as *is* (in an enlightened state of "no-mind") in its plain thusness (*tathatā*) of "passage" (*kyōryaku*), temporality or "non-substantiality" ("selflessness," *anātman*). In *Shōbōgenzō*, Dōgen makes explicit how time relates to mountains and rivers: "The mountains are time, the oceans are time too." In *Mountains and Rivers Without End* (1996), Snyder gives a poetic form to this Buddhist and Taoist insight into existence as a temporally unfolding, non-substantial dynamic interplay of two non-oppositional, complementary forces (additionally inspired by the tradition of Chinese landscape scrolls).

In my paper I take up Snyder's poem and the non-substantialist philosophy of Dōgen as a theoretical and referential frame for examining Henry David Thoreau's *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849) and Jack Kerouac's *The Dharma Bums* (1958). I argue that these works reflect and develop the American Transcendentalist insight that life, in its very "essence," is a dynamic continuity or "web of events" (Emerson). Both works are narratively structured in a way similar to Snyder's poem (and the Chinese scrolls). They also give expression to ontological insights that can be found in the centuries-old Zen ontology of Dōgen, specifically his notion of "existence-time" (*uji*) and Buddha's insight into "impermanence" (*anitya*).

Both Thoreau and Kerouac crafted their semi-autobiographical narratives in the form of journeys or quests (pursued by the main characters) that unfold through meandering geographical and spiritual landscapes, reaching points of climax on mountain tops, where the narrators experience epiphanies or heightened awareness (Thoreau: "Saddle-back Mountain"/Mount Greylock; Kerouac: Matterhorn Peak and Desolation Peak). These journeys are similar to the dynamically interacting mountains and rivers of Dōgen and Snyder. They can be read as narrative descriptions of Being or life (ontologies), as an essentially temporal, rhythmical happening that continually emerges from the creative interplay between two complementary forces. Most importantly, they generate and comprise occasional moments (peaks) of spiritual insight ("no-mind") during which one instantaneously becomes aware—in the sense of Dōgen—of the simultaneity, interconnectedness, and ultimate "emptiness" (*śūnyatā*) of all existence (e.g., Thoreau's "region of eternal day").

"Mountain Drug Economies and the Limits of Orientalist Fantasy in Paul Bowles's *Let It Come Down* (1952)"

Benjamin Robbins (University of Innsbruck)

The American writer Paul Bowles settled in Tangier in the late 1940s, where he would live until his death in 1999. His novels of exile repeatedly dramatize the ways in which Western visitors to the Maghreb project Orientalist desires onto this "exotic" part of the world. In Bowles's 1952 novel *Let It Come Down* (1952), for example, his American protagonist Nelson Dyar moves from New York to the International Zone of Tangier to begin a new career. Dyar takes advantage of the brothels and drugs available to him, viewing them through an Orientalist fantasy of seductive excess.

The economy of the mountainous Rif region in which Tangier is situated did in fact support the city's drug scene; as Bowles described in an account of a journey through the region: "At one point you could look directly down from the road into a deep ravine whose sides were planted wholly with kif [a cannabis product]. Ketama [a mountain town] is the kif center of all North Africa" (*Travels*, 278). Bowles would write the hallucinatory final section of *Let It Come Down*, titled "Another Kind of Silence," in the Rif mountains under the influence of kif, which documents the descent of Dyar's own kif-smoking

mountain trek into murder and madness. In this paper I will explore how Bowles uses mountain landscapes to expose the limits of Oriental fantasies; in placing Dyar within a mountainous region that he perceives to be "another world" (*Let It Come Down*, 299) and "absolutely alien" (*Let It Come Down*, 291), the Western traveler is unable to sustain fantasies of pleasurable excess and experiences an alarming unravelling of their identity.

Works Cited:

Paul Bowles, *Travels: Collected Writings 1950-1993* (New York: Harper Collins, 2010).

Paul Bowles, *Let It Come Down* (New York: Harper Collins, 1952/2006).

"Alpine Orientalism: A Postcolonial Reading of Mountain Travel Literature"

Eva-Maria Müller (University of Gießen, University of Innsbruck)

This paper is an attempt to dissect the structures of thought involved in culturally producing mountains as an Other tourist destination. To this end, the paper proposes to think of mountains as being mediated through conceptualisations of 'the Orient' in colonial discourse. In so doing the paper explores how Orientalist imagery and rhetoric has contributed to mediating mountains in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century travel literature.

By offering a postcolonial reading of mountain literature from the Rockies and the Alps the paper inquires into 'the Orient' as a powerful cultural category that has shaped mountains in- and outside of Europe. It tests a concept described and developed for the theorization of hot, tropical, and extra-European spaces to cold, high-altitude, and intra-European environments. Drawing from postcolonial theory's seminal works, this paper theorizes *Alpine Orientalism* in two major steps: First, it turns to literary representations of the Canadian Rockies, mountains within the familiar realm of the British Empire, to establish the ground for a postcolonial study of mountain literature, before it addresses the Austrian Alps to tease out where, when, and how a shared representation through Orientalist markers has played out differently in the mediation of intra- and extra-European mountains. In short, it offers a postcolonial reading of mountain literature along the *topos* of 'the Orient.'

"Buddhist Mountain Cure? Leonard Cohen's Time at Mt. Baldy Zen Center in California from 1994 to 1999"

Ulrich Eschborn (University of Graz)

The Canadian Leonard Cohen (1934-2016) and Bob Dylan, two international singer-songwriter stars, are widely regarded as 'poets' of popular music. Another parallel between Cohen and Dylan is their great fascination with religion, Buddhism and Christianity respectively. From 1994 to 1999, Leonard Cohen lived in the secluded Mt. Baldy Zen Center in the San Gabriel Mountains near Los Angeles. This presentation explores whether the time in the Zen center functioned as a spiritual 'cure' for the artist in any way and whether it left traces in his work. The presentation will also demonstrate the great contrast between Cohen's spiritual quest and the wrongful actions of his manager and friend, Kelley Lynch, and his Zen master Kyozan Jushi Sasaki (1907-2014), whose assistant he was at Mt. Baldy. During Cohen's time as a monk, Kelley Lynch started stealing her client's money and even selling his publishing rights. In 2012, many female students accused their former teacher Sasaki of harassment or rape, a misconduct confirmed by some of Sasaki's confidants.

Panel Session II, Saturday, November 23, 14:30-16:00

Panel 6: Building Mountains: Visual Landmarks and Narrative Functions (Room 50101)

Chair: Robert Winkler (University of Gießen)

"Taking Bauhaus to the Mountains: Capitalism, Modernism, and the Aspen Jet Set"

Julia Lange (University of Hamburg)

The émigré history of prominent members of the Bauhaus school such as Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe – who fled from Nazi persecution to the United States in the late 1930s – and the influence of the Bauhaus notion of functionalism on American art and architecture at large are well researched scholarly domains. However, one aspect that has not yet received much attention is the transfer and implementation of Bauhaus ideas and practices in the geographical locale of the Rocky

Mountains and the it-town of Aspen, in particular. This paper traces the initial manifestation and subsequent evolution of the Bauhaus movement in the, by now, mundane town of Aspen through a close examination of the life and art of Austrian Bauhaus member Herbert Bayer. Since settling down in Aspen on the invitation of German-born Chicago industrialist Walter Paepcke in 1946, Bayer created a number of private buildings and public venues in Aspen that follow the International Style of modern architecture. Bayer also designed commercial advertisements based on the same stylistic principles of New Objectivity (*Neue Sachlichkeit*) so as to promote the former mining town as a ski resort and as a (socially progressive) cultural hub for the well-to-do. Succinctly put, this paper explores the following entangled questions: How did Bauhaus ideas travel to Aspen and how did the town subsequently transform from a provincial place to a fulcrum of modern(ist) sensibilities and radical ideas as testified by the founding of the Aspen Institute and its Music Festival in 1955 with the likes of Arthur Rubinstein in attendance?

"From the Rocky Mountains to the Hollywood Hills: How the Architecture of the Denver Art Museum and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art Positions the Institutions in the 'American West'"

Wiebke Kartheus (University of Göttingen)

Due to its concrete presence and its symbolic ramifications, architecture constitutes an intersectional arena in which societal and cultural values are not only negotiated but also physically manifested. Museum architecture, in particular, is a productive measure with which to assess the developments of art museums and their communities, as it responds to practical needs, geographical realities, and representational functions.

In my paper, I will trace the ways in which 21st-century architecture ties the history of the Denver Art Museum (DAM) and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) to their immediate mountainous landscapes thereby positioning them within an imaginary 'American West.' I argue that both art museums employ architecture to integrate their institution within a geographical as well as a cultural landscape, which is distinct from that of the established art institutions on the East coast. By comparing Daniel Libeskind's Rocky Mountain-evocative 2007 design for DAM and Peter Zumthor's gas station-aesthetic for LACMA's new design, I will demonstrate how mountains are integrated in the designs to ground the institutions in their geographical context and to establish them within the institutional tradition.

"Remediating Mountains in Disney's Theme Parks"

Sabrina Mittermeier (University of Augsburg)

Since the opening of the Matterhorn Bobsleds in 1959 in Disneyland (Anaheim, CA), Disney's theme parks have used the iconography of mountains for their "narrative placemaking" (a term coined by Imagineer Joe Rohde to describe the practice of theme park design). Sometimes these designs are based on real places: the Matterhorn in Switzerland for the above-mentioned Bobsleds ride, Mount Everest in Nepal for Expedition Everest in Animal Kingdom or the US' Monument Valley for Big Thunder Mountain. In other cases, such as Space Mountain or Splash Mountain, they more superficially evoke the idea of the mountain to engage the visitor in fantastical narratives such as space travel or the plunge into Brer Rabbit's briar patch. In either case, the iconography is used to denote danger, and trigger the age-old human urge to conquer these structures – and thus these attractions are making use of the theme park's basic function to provide a thrilling experience without any actual ramifications. Disney has also built on this idea to sell merchandise for these attractions, such as a recently released T-shirt reading "Mountain Man."

Additionally, the "mountains" tower over other structures in the theme park space and as such function as visual landmarks that both guide the visitors and draw them in, a practice Walt Disney termed "weenie." This paper then wants to analyze the narrative function of these Disney mountains, and thus their contribution to world-building in the Disney theme parks. It will pay particular attention to the attractions based on real life mountains and how these are remediated in the immersive space.

Panel 7: Mountains as Figures of Identity (Room 50105)

Chair: Benjamin Robbins (University of Innsbruck)

"The Mountain of Whiteness: Race and Racial Passing in Jessie Fauset's *Plum Bun*"

Marijana Mikić (University of Klagenfurt)

In his landmark essay "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain" (1926), Langston Hughes, one of the Harlem Renaissance's most renowned writers, uses the "racial mountain" as a metaphor to describe how the belief in white superiority keeps black American artists from expressing their racial individuality. This conscious feeling of standing at the bottom of the American social mountain manifests itself in Jessie Fauset's passing narrative *Plum Bun: A Novel Without a Moral* (1928). The first part of the paper discusses how the system of white supremacy shapes the mulatta protagonist's thoughts, feelings, and actions throughout her childhood and young adulthood, and how the insurmountable odds standing in the way of a happy life and a successful career as a black female artist inform her decision to pass for white. The second part explores how her experiences of racial passing are accompanied by an ever-present consciousness of color, which tragically denies her to adopt a meaningful new identity. Finally, the paper explains the protagonist's realization that it is impossible to reach personal and professional fulfillment as long as she denies her racial background, highlighting how the top can only be reached by conquering the mountains of the mind that prevent racial self-acceptance.

"[T]o help break up the landscape": American Topographical Imagination, Hats, and Wearable Mountains

Stefan Rabitsch (University of Graz)

In his essay collection *On Nature* (2003), Edward Hoagland makes a seemingly simple yet profound observation which the astute traveler of the American West frequently encounters as a proverb, particularly in Texas. In response to the question as to why Texans' hats are so big, Hoagland notes that "[p]eople started wearing big hats not simply because the brims were shady [...] but to help break up the landscape." (98) Early fashion studies scholars such as Mary Roach and Joanne Eicher (1973) have noted that clothes are a (re)mediating fabric/medium in that they are "considered both as environment and as a means of intervening between the body and environment." (xxiv) While some believe that faith can supposedly move mountains, I contend that western hats actually do just that in that they (re)mediate topographical prominences into wearable shapes and signifiers.

Viewed through an intersectional lens of American cultural history, which I have labeled 'hatology', western hats are significant, signifying, wearable, and thus nomadic cultural shapes. Felted together into a dense mesh of Americanness, western hats carry a great abundance of meanings. Both their crowns and brims come with different creases, each bearing one or more distinctive names. Crown creases, such as the Pike's Peak, the Southwest Peak, the Montana Pinch, or the Montana Slope, are of particular interest in that they remediate topographical realities of primarily the Rocky Mountain West. For example, the Montana Peak crease has become a particularly recognizable feature of the so-called "Campaign Hat" which was and in some cases is still worn by US servicemen, the Boy Scouts of America, and US Customs and Border Protection agents. Smokey the Bear, every US National Park Ranger as well as officers of various law enforcement units also don this 'wearable mountain'. Conversely, even a cursory search in the USGS database reveals that hatological discourse has been used to give meaning to topographical realities all across the United States (and beyond), ranging from the various peaks named "Hat Mountain" (e.g. in the Warner Mountains, CA, or in the Black Hills National Forest, SD) to a host of topographical formations that bear names such as "flat top" or "round top," respectively.

In this vein, or rather up this slope, my paper aims to map and investigate 'wearable mountains', i.e. the peculiar and reciprocal dialog between western hats and the American topographical imagination.

"What can I do / to make this mountain taller": Mountains as Transgressive Metaphors in Selected Asian American/Canadian Poems

Marilyn Sook Yuen Lim (University of Graz)

This paper aims to explore the image of mountains in selected poems by Meena Alexander, Rupi Kaur and Ocean Vuong. The lines for the title of this paper are taken from one of Rupi Kaur's poems in her

poetry volume *The Sun and Her Flowers*, which was published in 2017. The comparison between the lyric I and "this mountain" juxtaposes the spatial meditation of "this mountain" with the visual art mountains that are part of the intermedial negotiations and the transgression of Kaur's poem to show how women are like mountains (strong, sturdy), and how they set examples for the speaker of the poem, on the one hand, as well as, on the other hand, for other women who may look up at the speaker as "this taller mountain." The metaphor of "this mountain" as singular and mountains as plural in the visual art transfer the associations of the individual and the community in solidarity and the interrelations between experience and challenge for women. In contrast, Meena Alexander's poem "Lychees," from *Birthplace with Buried Stones* (2013), juxtaposes the Yoshino mountain in Japan and the Dhauladhar mountains of the Himalayas. The names of these mountains evoke the different geographical Asian mountains at a distance, although the 'lychees' that the speaker describes in the poem show the immediacy of the senses to this particular Asian fruit that the speaker is tasting. The analysis of these poems is to address and investigate the poems as expressed in the voices of the different speakers in the individual poems; and how these poems mediate on the mountain as a trope to bring out the presence and visibility of the individual voices. I argue that these poems seek to show the political and aesthetic nuances of the Asian American/Canadian experiences as transgressive and present.

Works Cited:

- Alexander, Meena. *Birthplace with Buried Stones*. Northwestern University Press, 2013. p. 8.
Kaur, Rupi. "I Stand." *The Sun and her Flowers*. Simon and Schuster, 2017. p. 213.

Panel 8: Mountains and Music (Room 50109)

Chair: Camila Torres Carrillo (University of Innsbruck)

"Gustav Mahler's Mountain Soundscapes"

Milijana Pavlović (University of Innsbruck)

As a composer whose scores are well-known for, among other things, off-stage instruments, Gustav Mahler is inevitable in the discussions on sound distribution and effects in symphonic music. However, Mahler did not come up with the idea of such sound experiments out of the blue – they rather came from his mountain experiences and they go far beyond simple sound effects.

Although certainly part of the tradition of the "Sommerfrische", as well as the widely-spread culture of contemplative mountains topos, Mahler did not limit himself to sitting comfortably in the valley and sending postcards with the view he had bought in a nearby rustic shop. He wanted the views he would earn with a strenuous uphill walk. An avid, athletic hiker, but with very high perception levels, Mahler would take in everything around him on his long, solitary mountain walks that played a crucial role in the incubation phase of his creative process.

Without ever falling into the trap of treating nature descriptively in his works, Mahler used the sound of mountain to relay quite different, much more abstract and existential messages, searching for transcendence and accompanied in that search by the frustration caused by the human limitations. In *Song of the Earth* (*Das Lied von der Erde*), Mahler's most personal work, which is quite concretely material, but at the same time very much abstract, Mahler's mountain world achieves breath-taking depth and closes with extraordinary timelessness of the final movement.

"Music of the People, by the People, for the People: Mountain Minstrels from the Alps to the Blue Ridge"

Ryan Hellenbrand (University of Wisconsin, Madison)

Mountain communities are closely tied to their natural environments because of the unique challenges of mountains. These physical barriers manifest culturally and politically through a strong sense of pride in and desire to protect the cultural traditions of a place. Distinct forms of music, for example, evolve. The early Romantic proto-ethnomusicologists popularized the term "Folk Music" to refer to the distinct content, forms, and instruments used in such rural music traditions.

Here, I compare and contrast two major mountain regions that have deep associations with folk traditions in the US and in Austria: Appalachia and Tirol. The popularization of traditional forms by Appalachian artists like Doc Watson (1923-2012) from Deep Gap, North Carolina has grown into a national phenomenon. American folk musicians like Woody Guthrie (1912-1967), Pete Seeger (1919-2014) and others staked out a political position by using their music for social change. John

McCutcheon (b.1952) is a contemporary representative of this trend. The 20th century revival of American folk music also inspired a new generation of singer-songwriters “across the pond” in the music of *Liedermacher* such as Reinhard Mey and Konstantin Wecker. This same political folk tradition is evident in Austria, the home of the *Festival des politischen Liedes* each July in Attersee, where political singer-songwriters from across Central Europe gather.

The duality of global awareness and intense local rootedness connects Appalachian musicians like Doc Watson and John McCutcheon with South Tyrolean musician Max von Milland. I suggest that Max von Milland, in his latest album “Bring mi hoam,” similarly creates a space to explore the far-reaching consequences of the dichotomy between hyper-nationalism and extreme globalism. From the Alps to the Blue Ridge, these mountain minstrels are sounding a clarion call that the stories of folks the world over deserve to be heard and that something must change.

“Mountains and Musicals: Representations of Mountains in the American Film Musical”

Nitya Koch (Free University of Berlin)

My paper examines the representation of mountains in American film musicals. Film musicals tell stories of romance, community, and artistic ambition. They articulate and negotiate desires, dreams, and individual self-expression, and they do this through music, singing and dancing, through bodily expression and in the space of the musical number, where they convey “what utopia feels like.” Musical characters “climb every mountain” metaphorically, conveying their struggles and achievements through embodied musical performance. In conjunction with the emotional intensity produced through song and dance, musicals construct utopian spaces in various locations: theater stages, fancy hotels, or exotic islands. And some musicals – like the iconic *The Sound of Music* (1965) – feature mountains as background or setting. *Sun Valley Serenade* (1941) is set in a chic ski resort in the Appalachians, bringing urban entertainment into a mountain landscape, while in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (1954), snowy peaks serve as backdrop to the building of a white pioneering community. And in *Paint Your Wagon* (1969), mountains constitute a space of both hardship and economic promise in a story of the California Gold Rush.

In my paper, I examine how different American film musicals mediate mountains and construct them visually, narratively, and emotionally. Do mountains appear as utopian spaces (or success, community, arcadian purity and gender reconciliation), or as obstacles to be overcome? I investigate how the films construct mountains as gendered and racialized spaces, sites of nation-building, economic hope and exploitation, and as sites of adventure and athletic self-assertion. I trace their presentation and their changing meanings: Are they subject to a reverent, colonizing, or touristic gaze? How do they connect with the musical’s specific expressive forms as places of communal activity and athletic prowess? I trace the American identities and affective spaces that the mountain settings produce, and examine how the emotional ecologies of the mountain contribute to the film’s emotional landscape.

Panel 9: The Great Divide (Room 40130)

Chair: Juliann Knaus (University of Graz)

“August Spectacles”: The Corps of Discovery at the Great Divide”

Heinz Tschachler (University of Klagenfurt)

When in the early summer of 1805 Meriwether Lewis for the first time sights the great mountains of the American West, he, unlike Percy Shelley in sight of Montblanc, was not “as in a trance sublime and strange” but merely reports “an august spectacle.” The word “august” was not then an aesthetic term, nor did it usually describe visual contact with landscape. Categories that were used for these purposes were the picturesque and the sublime. Whereas the picturesque is a function of an ideal form of nature, derived from landscape painting, the sublime is a term of “aesthetic approbation,” approbative of forces for instance in landscapes that produced overwhelming sensations. As a means to transcend the human scale and clearly perceived limits the effect of the sublime is, in the words of the *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, “simultaneously to make one conscious of one’s own comparative weakness in the face of natural might and to produce a sense of the strength of one’s own faculties.”

There is none of all this in the journals of the Lewis and Clark expedition. In my presentation, I'll offer three explanations for the conspicuous absence of a genuinely sublime mode in the Rocky Mountains sections of the journals: 1) there was no established aesthetic tradition in America at the time that would facilitate an encounter of the Rockies as sublime; 2) even if there had been such a tradition, the actual experience of hardship and adversity during the crossing left no room for aesthetic experiences in the mode of the sublime; 3) Lewis and Clark were not even prepared to encounter the great mountains of the West, expecting instead only gentle rolling hills that would enable an easy portage to the Columbia River.

“Planting the Germ of an American Population on the Shores of the Pacific”: In the Wake of Lewis and Clark through the South Pass”

Louis J. Kern (Hofstra University, New York)

In a letter to Thomas Jefferson in February 1808, less than eighteen months after the return of Lewis and Clark's Corps, John Jacob Astor proposed a bold plan to engross the extensive fur trade of the continent and to undercut the Hudson Bay Company. Astor's American Fur Company would find itself in rivalry with the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company, supported by Meriwether Lewis, Governor of the Upper Louisiana (Missouri) Territory. Although Lewis died mysteriously in September 1809, his favored expedition had set out in June 1809 and tradition holds that Andrew Henry was in 1811 the first European to discover the South Pass across the Continental Divide. Astor's more ambitious expedition set out in September 1810 and reached Astoria in 1812. Returning east (1812-13) the party of Robert Stuart and Ramsay Crooks stumbled upon the South Pass and followed a route that would later become the Oregon Trail.

This paper will examine why it took nineteen years after the discovery of a broad pass through the Wind River Mountains before the entire route of the Oregon Trail would be traversed in a single journey, twenty-one years before the establishment of widespread fur trading posts along the route, and twenty-one years before the first wagon train passed over the South Pass. The Lewis and Clark route through the Bitterroot Mountains was unsuitable for all but the most hardened mountain men; the South Pass was the key to the massive movement of pioneer settlers, estimated at 350,000 to 500,000 between 1840 and 1869, opening a common pathway to the Oregon Territory, California, and Mormon Utah.

Sources for the paper will include: John Jacob Astor and Jedidiah Smith letters; Stuart, Robert, *On the Oregon Trail: Robert Stuart's Narratives of His Overland Trip Eastward from Astoria in 1812-13*; Hunt, Wilson Price, *Overland Diary of Wilson Price Hunt; The Ashley-Smith Explorations and the Discovery of a Central Route to the Pacific, 1822-29*; and Morris, Larry E., *In the Wake of Lewis and Clark: The Expedition and the Making of Antebellum America*.

“The Rocky Roads of Empire: The Rocky Mountains as Hemispheric Nexus and Barrier to Manifest Destiny in Nineteenth-Century American Literature”

Steffen Adrian Wöll (Leipzig University)

As one wave of emigration after another rolls into the vast regions of the west, and our settlements stretch towards the Rocky Mountains, the eager eyes of our pioneers will pry beyond, and they will become impatient of any barrier or impediment in the way of what they consider a grand outlet of our empire. — Washington Irving, Astoria

Since the start of the nineteenth century, setting forth to the newly acquired Louisiana Territory and the far western regions beyond the Rocky Mountains turned into both quest for and spatial performance of the so-called American Dream. In popular discourses, the western vastness provided enough space for everyone to discover their personal fortune and carve out a better existence, suggesting a model of upward mobility that was particularly attractive for the lower tiers of society and leading to the widespread imagination of the American West as a social and political safety valve. On a policy level, the geographic ideology of manifest destiny hailed the movement of Americans across the Rockies and the creation of a continental empire with its hemispheric extension into the Asian-Pacific space as inevitable developments. As part of a dissertation project that traces spatial imaginations of the

West in American literature, this paper presentation reveals the collisions of these canonized narratives with deviant discourses of the Rocky Mountains and the transmontane West in Washington Irving's *Astoria*, Francis Parkman's *The Oregon Trail*, as well as previously unstudied journals and memoirs of western emigrants with a particular focus on the experiences of women and minorities.

Panel Session III, Saturday, November 23, 16:30-18:00

Panel 10: Mining (Room 50101)

Chair: Kamaal Haque (Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania)

"Places of Treasure and Superstition: The Mountains of Spanish America, c. 1550-1800"

Martin Gabriel (University of Klagenfurt)

My paper addresses the role of mountains in early modern Spanish America at the nexus point of economic value and religion, wealth and sacrality, financial gains and moral values. I will focus on the Viceroyalties of Peru and Rio de la Plata, both of which (based on administrative changes) came to include the most important mining city in Spanish American history, Potosí (Bolivia). Huancavelica, which supplied mercury for the refining process of silver ore, is also situated in Peru. Finally, the Andes are a macro-region in which different cultures had incorporated mountains, caverns or subterranean water reservoirs (as well as "deities"/"demons" living there) into their spiritual and cultural heritage, long before the first Europeans arrived. Imaginations of the subterranean as a possibly evil and dangerous, but definitely mysterious space had also shaped European perceptions of mountains. From the 16th century on, however, utilitarian views became more important in political thought as well as economic and social debates. In his 1556 treatise *De re metallica*, Georgius Agricola, Europe's foremost mining expert, mentioned metals as "the greatest necessity to man" and that "one mine is often much more beneficial to us than many fields". A number of intellectuals living and working in Spanish America, like José de Acosta or Juan de Solórzano, discussed the characteristics of mountains, their economic importance, but also the moral and social implications of indigenous forced labor in the mines. As part of the so-called "Bourbon reforms" during the 18th century, the colonial state tried to expand its authority into the subterranean world – new regulations regarding the workings of mines were issued and cartography became an important tool of (re-)organizing the world underground. Many influential administrators and scientists became convinced that the inside of the silver mountains could be transformed; chaotic and dark places of the past were to be integrated into the Spanish realm already controlling the territories above ground, so that the crown, the mine owners, but also indigenous workers would profit from increased wealth, oversight, and the rule of law. Although Spanish officials tried to "modernize" perceptions of the subterranean for many decades, even in the 21st century, traditional views of mountains as places connecting spirituality and economy prevail in many parts of the Andes. The cult of "El Tío" in Potosí still bases the successful quest for mineral wealth on the veneration of a figure that syncretizes elements of the Christian devil with pre-colonial demons, while some communities have resisted new mining projects – like Cerro Quilish in Northern Peru – by way of combining scientific with socio-religious arguments (securing a water supply and promoting the mountain as sentient being and sacred space), thus prolonging the human tradition of remediating the cultural, economic, and spiritual meaning of mountainsides.

"Mediating Moving Mountains: Cinematic Representation of Mining in the 1950s"

Isis Luxenburger (IRTG Diversity – Saarland University, University of Trier, University of Montreal)

In the iron, steel and coal industry, mountains are primarily the resource of human exploitation. "Moving mountains" is a common metaphor used to describe miners' work visible both underground and above ground: the outlines of mountains change and slag heaps are formed from waste products. Many industrial films depicting moving mountains were made throughout the last century, especially in regions characterized and shaped by industries, e.g. the iron, steel and coal industry. Such industrial regions can be found all over the globe: the two regions which will be focused on are Quebec on the North American continent and the Saarland in Germany.

Having investigated industrial films from Saarland and identified significant works, e.g. Henry Bonnière's *Saarland Glück auf - La Sarre, plein Feux* (1950) and Sven Schürenberg's and Günther Meyer's *Deutsch*

ist die Saar - Was nun? (1959), the comparative analysis of industrial films will be based on Quebec's mining industry from the 1950s and focus on Walford Hewitson's *Road of Iron* (1955) and Raymond Garceau's *Ti-Jean in the Land of Iron* (1958). This comparative analysis will shed light on how the films from these two different regions mediate moving mountains. Analyzing their different approaches and the mechanisms they employ will help understand how films accomplish cultural work that shapes culture itself.

Industrial culture is a highly interesting field for cultural studies but has, so far, mostly been investigated by other disciplines such as history or political science. As film is both a powerful mediator of culture and, at the same time, part of culture itself, investigating industrial films from a cultural studies perspective is long overdue. An interdisciplinary approach also including border studies and film studies seems even more promising and allows the investigation of the films as multi-layered texts on a sound scientific basis.

"Changing Topographies, Changing Lives: Impacts of Coal Mining on the Mountains and the People of Appalachia"

Erden El (Independent Scholar)

It is widely accepted that Appalachia is one of the most contaminated regions of the USA. People suffer from health problems such as black lung disease and respiratory problems due to coal mining contamination in Appalachia. The mountain image in Appalachia has become an emblem of livelihood and its loss indicates a disaster. It is widely known that strip-mining, also known as mountaintop removal, is widely practiced in Appalachia. Mountaintop removal arguably causes great damage in the environment. The first step of mountaintop removal is the deforestation of the area and then explosives are used to reach the coal. The deforestation and the explosions arguably cause environmental pollution. It is apparent that the mountaintop removal procedure causes innumerable physical damages in the environment.

However, this presentation intends to show that mountaintop removal does not only affect the health of the people and the land, but it also affects their culture and lives. As Appalachians have a deep attachment to the mountains in economic and cultural terms, mountaintop removal devastates the environment by literally changing the topography and ruins people's lives figuratively by changing people's cultural heritage. Therefore, changing topographies cause dramatic changes in the lives of Appalachian people. The fact that the topographical changes have a great impact on people can easily be seen in the increase in the number of depression and drug abuse issues in Appalachia. Coal mining arguably causes physical illnesses such as asthma and black lung disease, but depression is the psychological outcome of a coal-dependent economy. In Appalachia "one of the factors commonly linked to depression is low socioeconomic status (SES)" and its outcomes (Post et al., 1). In fact, "the prevalence of depression...in the Appalachian Region is 16.7 percent," which is higher than the average of the nation (Marshall et al., 117). To conclude, the environmental problems in Appalachia have been widely studied but more attention needs to be paid to psychological and socio-political issues related to MTR in Appalachia.

Works Cited:

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Post, D. M., et al. "Depression and SES in Women From Appalachia." *Journal of Rural Mental Health*. 2013, May 6. Advance online publication.

Panel 11: Mountains and Masculinities (Room 50105)

Chair: Sandra Tausel (University of Innsbruck)

"Aigner's 'Tower' or Someone Else's? The Mountain as Sexual Emblem in Arthur Schnitzler's *Das weite Land*"

Michael Berger (University of Vienna)

For centuries, the mountains were understood as obstacles that must be overcome in order to reach one's destination. In the 19th century, however, the mountain landscape was re-evaluated as a sublime and picturesque manifestation of Nature. This shift in perception promoted tourism in Tyrol:

guests could enjoy the merits of Sommerfrische while having the possibility to engage in alpinist endeavours. By the end of the century, summer retreats had been established as an annual ritual for the upper class.

Tellingly, the third act of Arthur Schnitzler's play *Das weite Land* is set in the South-Tyrolean Dolomites. The industrialist Hofreiter participates in a tour to the fictitious Aignerturm, one of the most notorious mountains in the area. The summit was first ascended only twenty years earlier by the hotel manager, Dr. Aigner: after parting with his wife and his son, he was looking for existential danger in a spectacular mountain ascent. But 'his' mountain has since become the mountain of others; he himself has not climbed onto it for ages. Hofreiter, too, had refrained from mountaineering after witnessing a fatal accident on this very mountain; but in the presence of Erna, who later becomes his lover, he easily forgets past fatalities.

In a depth-psychology-oriented reading, the Aignerturm presents itself as an emblem of sex. For Aigner, the mountain represents the loss of an irretrievable family life. For Hofreiter, on the other hand, climbing the mountain prefigures his love-night with Erna. His personal crisis is projected onto the dolomite rock and seemingly overcome through its conquest; but in the end, he has to accept that his pursuit of immortality was in vain. Based on Jenneke A. Oosterhoff's understanding of mountaineering in *Das weite Land* as a literary expression of masculinity and on Wolfgang Hackl's observation of the Aignerturm as a symbol for Hofreiter's personal crisis and his looked-for vitality, this presentation wants to further explore the depiction of the mountain's dangers and beauties as symbolic representations of the problematic sexualities of Aigner and Hofreiter.

"Manhood, Murder, Mountains: On Hemingway's Alps and Ecocritical Discomfort"

Matthias Klestil (University of Klagenfurt)

Ecocritical engagement with Hemingway has usually been haunted by a sense of unease. Although environmentally oriented critics have sometimes appreciated the richness of his portrayals of the more-than-human world, there appears to be the default necessity for a *captatio benevolentiae* concerning one's awareness of "Papa's" unforgivable sin: his love of "blood sport" (hunting, fishing, bullfighting), often in conjunction with charges of misogyny, paternalism, and orientalism. Even critics arguing for Hemingway's rehabilitation, such as Maier (2011) or Espiner (2019), are part of an ecocritical tradition that has made sure, as Glen A. Love (1987) once put it, that no one ever forgets the man's "body-count against the earth."

While not denying these problematic dimensions, my paper aims to take an ecocritical perspective that shifts the focus to another aspect of Hemingway's work, namely its representation of the Alps. I primarily turn to *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), but also to journalistic work of the 1920s, to reveal Hemingway's mountain spaces as more than just settings, and his Alpine experience as part of an environmental sensibility. Hemingway's depictions of the Austrian and Swiss Alps, I argue, take on various meanings beyond being part of symbolic landscapes, as mountains come to function as vantage points for readers' emotional engagement, reflections of the expatriate writer's point of view, elements of an ecotourist gaze, and as signifiers of an ethics of Hemingway's modernist-primitivist worldview that has environmental dimensions. The aim of my paper is to further examine this worldview, its shaping power respecting today's environmental crises, and its intersection with those aspects of Hemingway that ecocritics despise. Investigating the ecocritical discomfort with "Papa" cannot only reveal practices and perspectives as roots of today's environmental problems but may also incite self-reflection on ecocritical aims and strategies.

"Heroic Mountain Men and Their Female Partners"

Klaus Rieser (University of Graz)

... from *Der Verlorene Sohn* (Trenker) to *Free Solo* (Chin, Vasarhelyi). The 1934 film by Luis Trenker is famous for its proto-neorealist photography of depression-era New York street scenes but equally well known for a dissolve from the Dolomite Alps to New York's skyscrapers. *Der Verlorene Sohn* has been called one of Luis Trenker's best films but has also been criticized for its conservative agenda. A sense of adventure and the impact of a buddy's tragic mountain death propel Tonio Feuersinger to New York, where he labors as a construction worker on a skyscraper, falls into poverty and finds luxury but ultimately decides to return to his native village and his faithfully waiting fiancé. The film, with its "Heimat" topic constructs a heroic masculinity, defined through adventurousness, disregard for

danger, and single-mindedness – all contrasted with and supplemented by an almost caricature femininity of his love interest. This model has remained amazingly persistent as other portraits of climbers, such as the 2018 *Free Solo*, illustrate. In the aptly named *Free Solo*, Alex Honnold is shown as he prepares for and executes his free solo climb of El Capitan while Sanni McCandless' role bears a striking similarity to Tonio's "Mädel". This talk will trace the combination of adventure, bravura and (melo)drama which constitutes the on-going success of heroic masculinity and exculpates its more toxic elements.

Panel 12: Writing America vis-à-vis Mountain Faces (Room 50109)

Chair: Michaela Hoenicke-Moore (University of Iowa)

"Appalachia, Sierra Nevada, the Rockies: Toward an American Mountain Literature"

Katherine Ledford (Appalachian State University)

Literature of mountains in the United States has been understood in term of ranges, Appalachian literature being the most recognizable and cohesive of the American mountain literatures. Ron Rash, in particular, has brought international attention to the stories of the Appalachian Mountains through his novels, short stories, and poetry, winning the Banff Mountain Fiction and Poetry Award in 2013. Because mountain ranges in the United States are so disparate geographically, culturally, and politically, we lack an understanding of a greater mountain literature telling an American mountain experience, focusing instead on literature of the Sierra Nevada, the Rocky Mountains, the Ozarks, etc. My paper argues for a broader recognition of American mountain literature, one that examines mountain stories outside their geographic and cultural boundaries of specific mountain ranges. What American experiences are told in mountain spaces when we are not focused on the specific stories we tell ourselves about Appalachian hillbillies and mountain men in the Rockies? How has the American mountain experience, regardless of the specific mountain on which a given story takes place, contributed to national identity?

"Peter Matthiessen's Himalayas"

Arno Heller (University of Innsbruck)

In the abundance of American nature writing that has emerged since the 1970s, Matthiessen's *The Snow Leopard* (1978) holds a prominent and complex position. Structurally it follows the common pattern of the genre – a first-person narrator's non-fiction account of the physical exploration of a non-human wilderness. Eventually, however, the narratives widen to spiritual journeys through "interior landscapes". Thoreau's archetypal *Walden* (1854), Annie Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker's Creek* (1974) Richard Nelson's *The Island Within* (1989) or Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms* (1995) may serve as relevant examples. But unlike their American settings Matthiessen bases his work on the autobiographical experience of his 300-mile trek from Nepal to Tibet in 1973 through the overwhelming mountain massives of the Himalayas. On the way to the legendary Shey Gompa pilgrimage monastery he leaves behind conventional transcendentalist premises in favor of Zen, "a religion before religion". His goal is not a pantheistic or mystical union with the divine but a fundamental state of "emptiness" opening up to the real in the here and now. The futile search for the ever-evasive mountain lion serves him as a central metaphor.

"When a Mountain Takes on Face: The Divinity of the Face in Nathaniel Hawthorne's 'The Great Stone Face'"

Gudrun Grabher (University of Innsbruck)

Although Hawthorne's short story "The Great Stone Face," first published in 1850, is one of his most frequently anthologized tales, it has been largely neglected by literary criticism. This may be due to the fact that it is an untypical Hawthorne tale in that it does not concentrate on the dark and sinful mind of the human being, or due to Hawthorne himself having admitted to dislike this artistic product of his. Taking place in New England, perhaps New Hampshire, the story features a mountain and the protagonist Ernest. As a young boy, Ernest learns from his mother that for generations people in their valley have recognized a face in the rock formation of the mountain and created the legend that one day this face will materialize as their prophet. In the course of years and decades, Ernest witnesses the welcoming and glorification of and eventually the disillusionment with three men who are believed

to be the manifestation of this prophetic face: a successful merchant, an intriguing politician, and an inspiring poet. It is the latter who finally recognizes Ernest as the man they have been waiting for: benevolent, humble, and truly wise.

While somebody has argued that this is one of Hawthorne's tales that may be read as conveying an agnostic message, I argue differently. According to the Bible (needless to add that Hawthorne, obsessed with the personal and cultural dimensions of his Puritan heritage, was intimately familiar with it), no human being shall see God's face and live. In the course of human history, mountains, reaching high up into the sky, have often been considered a link to heaven and the divine forces. According to 20th-century philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, who builds his theory of ethics on the face, the human face is a trace of God. Moreover, he contends that God must not be seen as an abstract concept remote from human life but as manifest in the world. It is repeatedly mentioned in the story that the mountain face oscillates between being visible and invisible. I argue that it stands for people's desire to behold the face of God, and that it is only the Emerson-like poet who is capable of perceiving the 'trace of God' in Ernest's face.

Panel 13: Ecological Narratives (Room 40130)

Chair: Eva-Maria Müller (University of Gießen, University of Innsbruck)

"The Snowies from Down Under: Rethinking Humans' Relationship with the Australian Alps through the Works of Banjo Paterson"

Loren Leong (University of Vienna)

This paper discusses the eco-fiction of the Australian pastoral, offering stories and imageries of the endearing Australian alpine landscape at the turn of the 20th century, encapsulated in the literary works of Banjo Paterson. Here we examine the relation between bush literature and ecology, how literature can help us reflect on ecology, past and present, how scholarship in the humanities can help us maintain a humble relationship with nature, and transition into a more ecological way of living. It aims to shed light on the way we think about or rethink the Australian Alps in the narratives of Paterson, putting Australian mountains and ecocritical writers in a transnational perspective. The ecocritical theories of Lawrence Buell on the implication of human history in natural history, and the critiques of Timothy Morton on environmental aesthetics will be discussed.

"Mountains and Hills as Spaces of Freedom and Epiphany in Kim Stanley Robinson's Three Californias"

Mario Grill (University of Klagenfurt)

In his eco-science fiction, the Three Californias series (*The Wild Shore* (1984), *The Gold Coast* (1988), *Pacific Edge* (1990)), Kim Stanley Robinson depicts potential futures of Orange County. My paper investigates how two of these potential futures employ mountains and hills as spaces of freedom and epiphany and how these spaces allow Robinson's characters to recollect themselves. In *Pacific Edge*, a critical utopia, Kevin Claiborne's world is threatened from the inside as he finds himself fighting for Rattlesnake Hill, a place that is significant for him as it feels "as if inhabited by an old Indian hill spirit, small but powerful" (44). Later on, he concludes that what he finds here is "the wind, spirit of the mountains, breathed. Water, the soul of the mountains, seeped downward. Rock, the body of the mountains, stood fast. Held in a bowl like God's linked hands, they slept" (109). As I aim to argue later on, this place is where Kevin recollects himself by being in sync with nature. In the post-war apocalyptic world in *The Wild Shore*, by contrast, Fletcher displays nostalgic longing for a bygone world. As in *Pacific Edge*, Robinson also emphasizes how nature allows both characters and readers to feel at ease when imagining these impressive mountains. Over the course of this narrative, the protagonist Henry Fletcher learns to come to terms with the devastation that has happened to America and only by accepting the past, he can move on. Eventually, he paints a brighter picture of his environment, observing that "[e]ver so slowly the clouds drifted onshore over the valley, and their upside-down twins disappeared under the beach." (337). Even though both novels depict quite contrasting imagines of a potential future, both highlight the importance of mountains and a healthy ecology for the wellbeing of their characters.

"Endurance, Extremes and Enjoyment: Narratives of Transformation in Trail- and Mountain-Running"

Laura Kost (TU Dortmund University)

Countless numbers of ambitious athletes yearly engage in long-distance street running in major cities of every country. Far removed from urban environments however, experienced runners stick to mountain trails, which not only connect the runner to nature but offer increased difficulty due to demanding elevation gains and infinite possible distances compared to e.g. the popular marathon race. Impressive scenery and landscape in the mountains add a sense of exploring as well as the thrilling idea of 'getting lost' and escaping the reality of everyday urban life, only competing against oneself in the wild.

Trail running poses multidimensional challenges and is thus attractive to individuals seeking to explore human limits. (Auto)biographies of athletes reveal the trend that running in the mountains has fundamentally changed their lives, either by helping them to overcome or allowing them to find something they were looking for. In running language, so-called *true north goals* inspire them to push and redefine one's personal limits in the loneliness of the mountains and explain 'the why' of trail-running.

Two runners who have 'found themselves' on mountain trails offer a contemporary take on the transcendentalist philosophy of e.g. Emerson and Thoreau: Lizzy Hawker (*Runner*, 2015) and Scott Jurek (*North*, 2018) showcase that when being exposed to the vastness of nature in unfamiliar territory, athletes experience flow in movement and serendipity unparalleled by running in the streets. Based on these accounts, I argue that running in mountain territory causes a transformation of character under extreme conditions, while offering life lessons through purification and reflection. The idea of losing and finding oneself on the trail leaves the readers and runners with an inspiring question: How far can the human body go?

Panel Session IV, Sunday, November 24, 09:00-11:00

Panel 14: Heimatfilm: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Formats (Room 50101)

Chair: Christian Quendler (University of Innsbruck)

"Auch das Gebirge lebt, nicht nur die Wüste": Austrian Heimatfilm and Hollywood

Ralph J. Poole (University of Salzburg)

The Austrian *Heimatfilm* made up a third of the postwar film production and its main features were stunning depictions of (mostly Alpine) landscapes as well as portrayals of traditional Austrian customs and mentality. As such, the genre served to bolster the precarious national identity and to enhance a collective desire for an imaginary nostalgic *Heimat*. At the same time, the Austrian film industry took severe financial blows and increasingly looked to Germany to market its films there, especially since the overwhelming success of films such as *Schwarzwaldmädel* (1950) led to great popularity of the *Heimatfilm* in Germany as well. To bring the German audiences closer to liking the Austrian variant of the *Heimatfilm*, key features were changed. This included standardizing the Austrian accents and favoring a soft Viennese dialect, stripping the landscape of its local particularity and making it more generically 'Austrian' looking. There was, however, another, less discernible factor playing into the development of the postwar Austrian *Heimatfilm*: the influence of Hollywood. I therefore want to make a case for viewing films such as Franz Antel's *Ruf der Wälder* (1965) in the light of a triangular national context stemming at least in part from an overwhelming presence of Hollywood productions in postwar Austria and causing a reaction to such cinematic authority. These responses included instilling key features of American film genres such as the musical, the western, and sex-and-crime films into the traditional *Heimatfilm*-formula. The talk aims at tracing some of these developments in the Austrian *Heimatfilm* of the 1960s and to look into the longevity of this genre mixing leading up to recent examples such as *Das finstere Tal* (2014).

"The Glacier Is Gone: The Alps and Horrors of the Anthropocene"

Michael Fuchs (University of Graz)

Representations of mountains in Austrian films may be divided into two broad categories. The "Agfa-colored images" (Kaes 1989) depicting pristine nature typical of the *Heimatfilm* evoke nostalgia for a past that never was and yearn for social harmony. On the other hand, the harsh environments of the high mountains symbolize nature (potentially) opposing human will, as they represent obstacles for human progress (on various symbolic levels). These two categories imply a tension at the heart of the mountain film genre: the human drive to subdue nature (to conquer a mountain) vs. the desire to live in harmony with nature (cf. Weinsheimer 2007)—a binary which provides the narrative foundation for innumerable, seemingly timeless tales. Indeed, mountains seem to offer an unchanging narrative backdrop; they seem to exist outside any historical matrix. However, the "seem to" in the previous sentence proves key, for climate change has had a profound effect on (the look of) mountains in recent years.

In my presentation, I will discuss two recent Austrian horror movies, *Blutgletscher* (2013; released internationally as *Blood Glacier*) and *Angriff der Lederhosenzombies* (2016; *Attack of the Lederhosen Zombies*). The two films exploit the effects of anthropogenic actions on the Alps in different ways. Whereas *Blutgletscher* visually transitions from green pastures to barren landscapes while explicitly stressing the vanishing of glaciers and anticipating the coming of a posthuman lifeform in the course of its narrative, *Lederhosenzombies* focuses on (or, rather, satirizes) the potential effects of measures to counteract "the fucking climate change" (and the attendant decline in income generated through tourism), which leads to the spread of a zombie virus. As I will demonstrate, despite their differences, both movies employ the (changing) Alps as a vehicle to address the constant feeling of "out-of-controlness" (Clark 1997) characteristic of the Anthropocene.

"Pseudo-Anthropology: Civilizing and De-civilizing in Mountain Film"

Maximilian Büttner (University of Innsbruck)

Within the two mountain films *Tol'able David* (1921) by Henry King and *Das finstere Tal / The Dark Valley* (2014) by Andreas Prochaska two tales regarding life in a mountain village are told: One set in the Appalachians in America and the other in the European Alps. In Progressive Era America, *Tol'able David* tells the civilizing story of David Kinnemon, who in his empowered role as 'the government's agent' overcomes an outsider threat in the form of the society scorning, early Hillbilly-stereotype Hatburn family, whereas *Das finstere Tal* paints the picture of an exoticized, de-civilized, self-governed mountain village which is 'liberated' by an outsider from America. A wild Appalachian, American mountain model is juxtaposed to a developed European Alps model. Both of these mountain models influence their respective counterpart. While *Tol'able David*, set in the wild and remote Appalachians, draws on notions of a governmental and national infrastructural development, resembling a model of the Alps, *Das finstere Tal* draws on notions of remote and secluded American wilderness, in order to establish its picture of an exoticized, parallel society. Examples include the role of the stagecoach in *Tol'able David* as means of communication, metaphor for the government and nation and link to the outside world, as well as the fact that the mountain village in *Das finstere Tal* is explained to be hard to reach in general and not to be reached in winter at all, thus underlining its remote- and wilderness. Both films tell a seemingly anthropological tale of the inhabitants of a mountain village in America and Europe, striving for authenticity, especially in *Tol'able David*, whereas the actual stories told revolve around a regional civilizing process (*Tol'able David*) and an exoticized, de-civilized parallel world (*Das finstere Tal*).

"You Can Go Home Again: The Mountain Home in Luis Trenker's *Der verlorene Sohn (The Prodigal Son)*"

Kamaal Haque (Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania)

Over the course of his sixty-plus-year career in film and television, Luis Trenker's most famous image remains the match cut in his 1934 film *Der verlorene Sohn / The Prodigal Son*. When the main character Tonio Feuersinger chooses to leave his mountain home for the metropolis across the ocean, the film's viewers see a dissolving match cut from the Dolomites to the skyscrapers of New York City. At first, it appears that Tonio has traded a set of natural mountains for their manmade replacement. Wandering through the canyons of the skyscrapers, however, he quickly learns that life in the city is not at all as he imagined, nor is it like life back in his home village in the Dolomites. Although he quickly hits rock

bottom, his victory in a boxing match allows him a chance at wealth and a new life in America. In short, he could fulfill the stereotypical American legend of the dishwasher who becomes a millionaire. Yet, when he must choose, he will turn down this opportunity and return to his home village in the Dolomites, thereby becoming the sun king in the *Rauhnacht* festivities. The protagonist in *Der verlorene Sohn* rejects the modernity of the American metropolis to return to his pre-modern home in the mountains of the South Tyrol. Premiering in the second year of the Third Reich, this film makes an argument for the primacy of one's rural home over the decadent city. The mountains, and the mountain culture, shown in the film make this argument. My paper will examine these cultural markers – specifically the *Rauhnacht* festivities, Christian religion, and alpinism – as a way of defining Tonio's identity.

Panel 15: Displaced Mountains (Room 50105)

Chair: Cornelia Klecker (University of Innsbruck)

"The Magic Mountain and the American Plains: German-Speaking Émigrés during Two Great Debates, 1938-41 and 1945-49"

Michaela Hoenicke-Moore (University of Iowa)

Key scenes from Thomas Mann's famously hermetic novel will guide this analysis of the role that émigrés played in the two major U.S. foreign policy debates of the 1940s. The refugees, many soon freshly minted US citizens working in and outside the US government, offered profound analyses of Nazi Germany and linked those to prescriptions for US foreign policy.

From 1938 through 1941 Mann crisscrossed the American plains on extensive speaking tours to alert his audiences to the threat that Nazism posed to this country. In his 1938 talks on "The Coming Victory of Democracy," which an estimated 60,000 people attended, Mann rejected pacifism as well as laissez-faire capitalism, and called instead for military preparedness and domestic reform. A year later, he came out more explicitly against opponents of his beloved New Deal President Franklin D. Roosevelt, to whom he set a literary monument in his novel *Joseph and His Brothers*. Wrapping the "socialist clubfoot in pedagogical silk" Mann warned of the "false friends of freedom who confuse love of freedom with their own interests and declare democracy in danger as soon as freedom is balanced by social justice."

By 1940 Mann had joined Hans Kohn, Hermann Broch, Reinhold Niebuhr, Herbert Agar, and Lewis Mumford to form *The City of Man* project, an interventionist group like the more prominent Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies and the Fight for Freedom Group. The group soon divided into "militants and pacifists" highlighting the particular dilemma of left-liberal anti-Nazis. In 1944 Mann campaigned for FDR; in 1948 for the social-democratic Third-Party candidate and former Vice President (and Iowan) Henry A. Wallace. At around the same time both the FBI and the House Committee on Un-American Activities investigated the political commitments and loyalties of Mann and many of his fellow émigrés.

"Enchantment and Disenchantment in the Mountains"

Michael Edward Moore (University of Iowa)

Hermann Broch first completed his 'mountain novel,' *The Spell* (*Die Verzauberung*), in 1935, just a few years before the German take-over in Austria and Broch's arrest and escape. Broch's title and the setting of the book surely reflect an awareness of Thomas Mann's masterpiece, *The Magic Mountain*, *Der Zauberberg* (1924). But the setting and details of Broch's novel were based on his familiarity with Mösern, Austria, where he often visited and where the original version was composed. Broch's novel is an unsettled work which he was unable to bring to artistic completion in successive versions written in the U.S. The current paper focuses on the 1935 original version. With *The Death of Virgil*, published in America in 1945, Broch was recognized as a major figure of literary modernism by Hannah Arendt and others; however, his political and social theories about mass society and the rise of Nazism lay too much on the surface in *Die Verzauberung*. The novel's mountain setting was an obvious symbol for his examination of the dangerous vectors in mass society, and as such the novel is best compared to Broch's political and literary essays.

Unlike Mann's, Broch's mountains are not comprised of vast distances, but of claustrophobic spaces and the dark pull of the earth. *Die Verzauberung* is set in a remote village, occluded in a valley, where

the forces of illiberalism, anti-humanism and fascism unexpectedly arrive. An enchanting visitor captures the village's imagination and institutes a new political order with archaic, authoritarian features. While Broch may have failed artistically, his novel resonates with other writings of the "Mann Circle" in the United States (including Mann, Arendt and Kahler). The themes of the novel have further resonance in our time, as Broch grappled with the grave problems afflicting inter-war Europe and the endemic allure of fascism.

"Underwater Mountains"

Nadja Gernalzick (University of Vienna, University of Mainz)

Seamounts – or underwater mountains – are still vastly unexplored and uncharted. In an era when the colonization and appropriation of the oceans seems complete, the landscapes below the surface of the water and the relations of humans to the rocks and shapes below, including underwater creatures and inhabitants of the oceanic 'lands,' are still comparatively little treated in the media.

This paper investigates the inversions of perspective and experience of elements – from air to water – that come with descriptions of seamounts in marine exploration narratives and the medialization of the geology of the deep sea in print or film. In how far do descriptions of underwater marine discovery still carry the style of last-frontier conquest and adventure writing? How do geography, geology and oceanography share similar patterns of narrating mountains and mountaineering? What is the role of science fiction in the tradition of depiction of seamounts? How is the depiction of underwater mountains related to nationalism or romanticism and to gender as is the depiction of mountains in the air? While "climbing and mountaineering are perceived as acceptable," diving down into the depth of the oceans or caves supported by technology that renders the diver a cyborg or depending on submarine vessels is often still observed with incredulity, and "those participating are often considered more than a little strange" (Farr in Price x). Human senses, whether sight, hearing or touch, have a vastly different application and effectiveness under and above water. What is the role of sound or echo in the locating and rendering of seamounts? What is the relation of visibility and visualization in images of underwater mountains in diverse media?

Works to consider are Jules Verne's transnationally influential science fiction of underwater travel in *Vingt mille lieues sous les mers* (1870) [Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea (English translation 1872)], Marcia Bjornerud's geological historiography *Reading the Rocks: The Autobiography of the Earth* (2005), Duncan Price's *Underwater Potholer: A Cave Diver's Memoirs* (2015), underwater cartography in a variety of media as well as films and graphic novels that have provided standards in the visualization of the lands under the sea.

"Lunar Fantasies of Imperialist Mountaineering"

Johannes Vith (Ohio State University)

Early alpinism and imperialism are very closely related. On the one hand, this can be seen in the fact that the ascent of a mountain is a very practical function of prospecting. On the other hand, this link manifests itself in the fact that ascending mountains, similar to landing on the moon, holds a strong symbolic value. The ascent functions as a representation of territorialization. The entanglement of alpinism and imperialism forms the basis of many films. One of the earliest was Georges Méliès' 1912 film *À la conquête du pôle*, but the later development of the German "Bergfilm" features imperialist themes as well. Examples of this genre include Arnold Fanck's *SOS Eisberg* (1932) or *Die Tochter des Samurai* (1937).

I first want to approach the question of what factors are at play if we look at imperialist expansion in an extraterrestrial setting. What does the delocalization of mountain films to a trans-terrestrial setting tell us about mountain films and their imperialist dimension in general? My second major interest revolves around the question of which attributes are given to a mountain when one looks at extra-terrestrial mountains. Are these attributes complementary to classic mountain films?

My focus is mainly directed towards the dynamic constitution of the mountain and the body. I will explore these topics by comparing two case studies, one very early and one more contemporary extraterrestrial mountain film. Fritz Lang's 1929 film *Frau im Mond* revolves around a group of scientists trying to find gold on the moon and is one of the earliest science-fiction films. James Cameron's *Avatar* (2009) shows a conflict over resources on a foreign moon between invading humans and a native population. The film links the interaction with nature to a bodily experience, as the main character explores this foreign place through an artificial representation of himself, a so-called avatar.

Panel 16: Commodifying Verticality: Symbols, Systems, and Snow (Room 50109)

Chair: Carolin Roeder (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin)

"How Hard Is Hard? Climbing Grades and the Classification of Verticality in the Twentieth Century"

Carolin Roeder (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin)

The core of historical work on verticality is concerned with late eighteenth and nineteenth-century naturalists, geographers, and explorers who ventured out to map vertical spaces with an array of constantly evolving instruments and new measurements which were conceived to comprehend and classify these spaces, be it the deep sea, mines, or high mountains. Sometimes overlapping with scientific endeavors, but in and of itself independent, another activity emerged in the mid-nineteenth century that in addition to scientific endeavors fundamentally altered human's relation to vertical spaces: recreational climbing. Mountain and rock climbing led to new intimate encounters with verticality and opened up new frontiers of exploration on various scales, be it vertical walls close to urban centers or the exploration of unknown mountains in the Himalayas.

This paper is concerned with a particular aspect that scientists and climbers shared in their endeavor: the measuring and charting of verticality. As I will show, climbing grades represented a specific way of understanding and classifying vertical space that in its complexity surpassed scientific methods of measurement. The climbing of steep walls, which turned more and more vertical as equipment and physical training methods advanced throughout the twentieth century, required an approach to measuring vertical environments that considered human physical abilities as well as objective risks posed by unpredictable nature. While scientific measurements of verticality measured nature as observed, climbing grades first and foremost answered the question of how difficult the route was. As such, climbing grades rely on the observer's body as the instrument of measurement while at the same time including the body as the object of observation. As I will show, the epistemological challenges of developing an "objective" classification of concrete space intertwined with bodily practices were enormous. I will explore these challenges and the solutions historical actors negotiated through a review of the historical development of climbing grades and explore how standardization attempts related specific vertical spaces to global verticality.

"Logos on Everest: Commercial Sponsorship of American Expeditions, 1953-1990"

Rachel Gross (University of Montana)

Trips like the 1953 American Karakoram Expedition or the American Mount Everest Expedition in 1963 marked the start of a new approach to the expeditionary enterprise. Commercial sponsors began to supply ever larger portions of the budget of American expeditions, which shifted in nature from scientific to commercial. By 1990, America's outdoor industry—not governments, media, or private organizations—was the primary financier of large-scale expeditions led by Americans. Beginning a history of expeditions with sponsorship contracts rather than with sporting feats on the side of a mountain can help historians understand the capital behind sports that is often obscured. As corporate sponsors negotiated more detailed contracts with athletes, they yielded more control over the photographs and publicity surrounding expeditions. Outdoor manufacturers like JanSport, Eddie Bauer, Du Pont, and Gore effectively defined and publicized the meaning of adventures in the mountains. Outdoor equipment and clothing manufacturers sponsored a succession of expeditions and individual athletes in the 1970s, contributing to the increasing commercialization of adventure sports and to the new status of professional adventure athlete.

The changing landscape of the business of expeditions ultimately reveals how the most long-lasting legacies of these extreme adventures happened far from the trail, and much closer to company boardrooms, makeshift sponsorship manager offices stateside, and retail stores where consumers learned to engage with the narratives companies and athletes had crafted together.

"Making Snow and Designing the X-Games: Technological Innovation and the Production of a New Ski Culture"

Jesse Ritner (University of Texas at Austin)

The history of snowmaking and the ability to ski mountains in order to make profits are closely linked. The measuring of snowfall, temperature, humidity, and water pressure has increased in importance over time. In the east and the mid-west artificial snow is almost essential. Snowfall is too irregular to sustain skiing year in and year out without 'fake' snow. Snowmaking has now progressed to the point that in the east, large mountains like Killington, Stratton, Stowe, Okemo, Whiteface, and many other resorts can open over 75% of their terrain with almost no real snow. Even in places like Colorado and the Mountain West snowmaking plays a central role in maintaining skiable terrain, especially in the early season when snowfall is unpredictable. This is especially important for the Christmas season – the most profitable two weeks of the year for many winter resorts – during which snowfall is generally inconsistent.

My paper explores how starting in the 1950s snowmaking dramatically increased skiable terrain throughout the United States. As technology improved, resort owners began imagining the possibilities for more varied terrain. By the 1990s artificial snow was used to create terrain parks, making room for semi-professional (and later professional) annual events like the winter X-Games. Artificial snow allowed for human-made jumps, halfpipes, and the proliferation of a new ski culture dedicated to all things rad, gnarly, and huckable. A new group of professional skiers and snowboarders emerged, frequently coming from a different class than the wealthy tourists. The extensive snowmaking needed for large terrain parks demanded larger workforces and more machinery. However, it also led to more standardization and the domination of snowmaking by only a handful of corporations.

Panel 17: Reframing Appalachia (Room 40130)

Chair: Katherine Ledford (Appalachian State University)

"Looking at Appalachia": Online Intermediality and Mountain Multiplicity"

Katharina Fackler (University of Graz)

This presentation analyzes how the crowdsourced online photography project *Looking at Appalachia* uses the possibilities of online intermediality to enable the articulation of a multilocal Appalachian sense of place. Launched in 2014 by photographer Roger May, *Looking at Appalachia* seeks to provide visual alternatives to dominant images of Appalachia. These dominant images have portrayed the region and its inhabitants as poor, premodern, distant, and fundamentally different from the US mainstream. *Looking at Appalachia*, in contrast, aims to dissolve simplified insider-outsider dichotomies, inviting contributions from professional and amateur photographers with varying ties to the region. It comprises a range of medial formats that creatively combine photographs and words, including a carefully curated homepage with a visual-verbal call-and-response forum and an Instagram account that is regularly taken over by individual photographers for a week. This presentation demonstrates how *Looking at Appalachia* thus intermedially interweaves different perspectives and, in contrast to earlier representations of Appalachia, refuses to offer a sense of closure. Instead, Appalachia emerges as a multilocal place that comes into being through a multiplicity of voices and whose meaning is constantly renegotiated. On the basis of selected examples that comment on Appalachian mountain ecologies, the presentation explores how the project's contributions re-articulate the relationship between humans and the region's (mountainous) natural environment.

"Confederate Appalachia: Contested Space, Contested Memory"

Robert Tinkler (California State University, Chico)

During the U.S. Civil War, specific social, economic, and political conditions within the southern Appalachian region spawned opposition to the Confederate States government, making it a contested space in America's bloodiest war. Residents of mountainous, low slaveholding areas of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia opposed secession and later Confederate conscription and tax policies in significant numbers, yet many mountain people stayed true to the Richmond-based government. This paper explores the divisions within the mountains as well as popular memory of the conflict into the twenty-first century.

"Saying the Mountains with a Poem: Ron Rash's Appalachia"

Frédérique Spill (University of Picardy Jules Verne, Amiens, France)

How does Ron Rash, a poet whose poetics is reputed for its sparseness and its concision, include mountain ranges, their fauna, their flora, their history and folklore, within his tight lines? What is the strange alchemy thanks to which he encompasses extreme vastness and variety within brief vignettes of life up there? How does he manage to condense and distill the spirit of the place?

Through the reading and scrutiny of a few poems borrowed from Ron Rash's four collections of poems, *Eureka Mill* (1998), *Among the Believers* (2000), *Raising the Dead* (2002) and *Waking* (2011), this paper will endeavor to demonstrate how the poet reconciles apparently incompatible elements not only to "say" the mountains that constitute his constant backdrop and unflagging source of inspiration, but also to somehow let them speak thoughts of their own, in Aldo Leopold fashion, though with the language of poetry.

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate through a few examples how, from one collection of poems to the next, Ron Rash's representation of his mountains evolved in terms of emphasis and perspective toward a voice that renders the secrets and mysteries of the mountains from as objective a poetic perspective as possible.

"[T]he best way to fight them is refuse to leave': Mountain Removal and Vulnerability in Ann Pancake's *Strange as This Weather Has Been*"

Evangelia Kindinger (Humboldt University, Berlin)

In *Strange as This Weather Has Been* (2007), West Virginian author Ann Pancake introduces her readers to the family Ricker See, who resides in the state's section of the Appalachian Mountains. Set in the mid-1990s, the author reflects on the family's history at the foot of the fictional Yellowroot Mountain. This history is shaped by a strong emotional connection to mountains, and dependence from their resources. It is also shaped by the coal mining industry, mountaintop removal, and consequent flash floods that make the whole community vulnerable to (un)natural disasters, injuries, destruction, and death.

I propose a reading of this vulnerable community – of this "hillbilly" community – that is informed by ecocriticism and Critical Whiteness Studies. Since its first usage in the late 19th century, "hillbilly" has had a dual function. It is an expression of regional belonging and pride but also a term used to draw boundaries within whiteness, contest the invisibility of whiteness, and expose a system that is based on labor and soil exploitation, as well as class entitlement. *Strange as This Weather Has Been* makes visible the intersections of "hillbilly" whiteness and class, gender, and particularly place. The mountains, the novel suggest, need to be remedied, because the "hillbillies" who live there – no matter whether they are regional caricatures or not – suffer, and are sacrificed for the well-being of the rest of the nation.

Work Cited:

Harkins, Anthony. *Hillbilly: A Cultural History of an American Icon*. Oxford UP, 2004.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Keynote and Plenary Speakers

BLACKBURN, Jessie (Appalachian State University)

Dr. Jessie Blackburn is Associate Professor and Assistant Chair of the Department of English and Director of the Rhetoric & Writing Studies Program at Appalachian State University, where she is also affiliate faculty in Appalachian Studies and Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies. She is the co-author of "Haute-Appalachia: Wine and Wine Tourism," collected in *The Food We Eat, the Stories We Tell*, published by Ohio University Press. Beyond that, she is the author of numerous articles in her specialties of cultural, digital, feminist, and Appalachian critical regional rhetorics.

CUBITT, Sean (Goldsmiths, University of London)

Sean teaches and writes about the history and philosophy of media and is especially interested in environmentalism, media technologies, media arts, and political aesthetics. He has worked in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the USA and has ongoing research collaborations and honorary appointments at the Universities of Melbourne and Oslo.

Sean is on the editorial boards of a number of journals and is a series editor for Leonardo Books at MIT Press. His most recent books are *Finite Media: Environmental Implications of Digital Media* and *The Practice of Light: A Genealogy of Visual Technology from Prints to Pixels*. He is also half of the thriller-writing team Lambert Nagle.

LIPPARD, Cameron D. (Appalachian State University)

Cameron D. Lippard is Professor and Chair of Sociology at Appalachian State University. His teaching and research interests are broad and include the examination of race and racism, immigration, war, and the sociological investigations of American culture. He is co-editor of the international research journal *Sociological Inquiry* and has authored or co-edited eight books including *Being Brown in Dixie*, *War: A Contemporary Perspective on Armed Conflicts around the World*, *Untapped: Exploring the Cultural Dimensions of Craft Beer*, and *Modern Moonshine: The Revival of White Whiskey*.

PETERSON, Jennifer (Woodbury University)

Jennifer Peterson's research and teaching interests center on cinema and media history, experimental and educational films, aesthetics, and ecocriticism. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. She previously taught in the Film Studies Program at the University of Colorado Boulder, where she earned tenure in 2013. She has also taught at UCLA, UC Riverside, the California Institute of the Arts, and the University of Southern California. Since joining the Communication program at Woodbury in fall 2015, she has taught courses in Media History, Gender Studies, World Cinema, Media Authorship, and the Senior Seminar. In the early 2000s, she worked as an Oral Historian at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and briefly in the Home Entertainment division at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. She was a scholar in residence at the Getty Research Institute in fall 2012. She has served on the Board of the Stan Brakhage Center at CU Boulder, as the editor of *Cinema Journal*'s "Archival News," and as chair of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies Media Archives Committee. Peterson is the author of *Education in the School of Dreams: Travelogues and Early Nonfiction Film* (Duke University Press, 2013). Her articles have been published in *Cinema Journal*, *Camera Obscura*, *The Moving Image*, the *Getty Research Journal*, and numerous edited book collections. She writes occasionally for the "Critics' Picks" section of *Artforum.com* and other journals. Her new book project focuses on the visualization of nature in American film history before 1960.

PÖHLMANN, Sascha (University of Konstanz)

Sascha Pöhlmann is professor of North American Literature and Culture at the University of Konstanz. He is the author of *Pynchon's Postnational Imagination* (2010), *Future-Founding Poetry: Topographies of Beginnings from Whitman to the Twenty-First Century* (2015), and *Stadt und Straße: Anfangsorte in der amerikanischen Literatur* (2018), and the (co-)editor of essay collections on Thomas Pynchon, Mark Z. Danielewski, foundational places in/of Modernity, electoral cultures, American music, and unpopular culture. He has published essays on contemporary fiction and poetry, queer theory, film, and black metal. He is the editor of the volume *Playing the Field: Video Games and American Studies*, forthcoming with De Gruyter in 2019.

Musician

Gregor Blösl

Gregor Blösl, born in 1980, is an Austrian pianist. At the ripe age of 26, he took the courage to go into improvisation and composition, and there he found his true calling. Due to his talent, it worked out, and his skills in playing completely free improvised concerts are very rare to find. In his music, there is a very delicate and sensitive expression which opens your heart with every single piece.

Panelists

BAYER, Ines (Deutsches Filminstitut und Filmmuseum, Frankfurt am Main)

Ines Bayer studied Film and Theater Studies at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, where she received her PhD in 2017 with a dissertation on Anthony Mann. She has worked as project manager, editor, and translator for film festivals, publishers, and cultural institutions. Since 2012, she has been affiliated with DFF – Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum in Frankfurt/Main, where she is responsible for university outreach and special projects.

BERGER, Michael (University of Vienna)

Michael Berger, BA. Graduate student of Comparative Literature and German Studies, undergraduate student of Theatre, Film and Media Studies at the University of Vienna, Austria. Research interests: cultural history of the 19th century, European Romanticism, and the Romantic; otherworlds and their ontology; interactions of opera and literature; librettology.

BONNER, Marc (University of Cologne)

Dr. Marc Bonner currently has a research project "Open World Structures: Architecture, City- and Landscape in Computer Games" funded by the German Research Foundation.

He graduated in art history, history of the modern age, and information science from Saarland University. From 2013 to 2017, he was lecturer at the Department of Media Culture and Theatre at University of Cologne.

Research interests: Architecture of the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries; depiction and use of architecture, cityscapes and natural landscapes in computer games and films; science-fiction film; transdisciplinary research including disciplines such as urbanism, philosophy, landscape theory, environmentalism, and cultural geography, among others.

BÜTTNER, Maximilian (University of Innsbruck)

Maximilian Büttner, born in Starnberg, Bavaria, Germany, finished school in Tübingen before completing his mandatory community service in a youth organization in Munich. Not long after, his love for the mountains and new adventures brought him to Innsbruck, where he has worked, studied, fallen in love, and lived ever since, with a one-year study break in Vancouver, Canada. He is currently finishing his teacher programme degree for the subjects History and English, captains Innsbruck's local Rugby club, and plays for the Austrian National team. When he finds some time in between, he takes to the mountains for all kinds of activities.

CAPELLE, Birgit (University of Düsseldorf)

Birgit Capelle is a postdoc researcher and (graduate and undergraduate) lecturer at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf who also taught at Bonn University. She earned her PhD with a 'summa cum laude' for her transcultural dissertation on 'TIME and Temporality in American and East Asian Thinking,' in which she analyzes structural parallels between American Transcendentalist, Pragmatist, and (Zen) Buddhist ways of conceptualizing temporality and existence. Her thesis was awarded the prize as the "Best Dissertation in The Faculty of Arts and Humanities 2009" and published by Winter-Verlag in 2011. Capelle is currently working on her habilitation project, which is a global study of 'Spiritual Crises in Autobiographical Writing' (America, Europe, Asia - 17th through 20th Centuries).

DUNCAN, Pamela (Western Carolina University)

Pamela Duncan, MA, Western Carolina University, is an associate professor of English and Director of WCU's annual Literary Festival. She is an award-winning author of the novels, *Moon Women*, *Plant Life*, and *The Big Beautiful*. She writes of Appalachian women, their work lives, families, and the humor that makes them resilient.

EL, Erden (Independent Scholar)

Erden El holds a Ph.D. in American Culture and Literature from Hacettepe University, Turkey. He holds a BA in English Language and Literature with a teaching degree from Ankara University, Turkey and an MA in English Language and Literature from Atilim University, Turkey. He has been teaching English since 2003. He had taught English at the Ankara University Language Center and other state schools in Ankara until 2015, and after having passed a scholarship examination, he was sent to Germany by the Board of Education of Turkey to teach Turkish. He currently lives in Rheinfelden, Germany. He has been the co-author of an English textbook titled *Power-Up*, which was studied in Turkish state schools. He attended the "Nature, Culture, Queer!" Conference by the International E.M. Forster Society on 13-14 April 2018 at the Faculty of Education in Ludwigsburg, Germany, with his presentation "How to Apply Slow Violence to the Novels of E.M. Forster." He also attended the international workshop "How Matter Comes into Literature & How Literature Comes into Matter: New Materialist Methodologies for Literary Studies" at Eberhard Karls University Tübingen from 18-20 October 2018 and presented a poster in the workshop. He also attended the "Tracing Non-Human Agency in Literatures in English" Conference (15.11.2018-17.11. 2018) at Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf and presented a paper.

ESCHBORN, Ulrich (University of Graz)

Ulrich Eschborn studied at the University of Mainz and at the University of California, Davis, sponsored by a scholarship of the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service). He passed the first state exam for the teaching profession in English and German and earned a master's degree in American Studies and German Philology. His PhD thesis at the University of Mainz deals with representations of history in the work of John Edgar Wideman. An interview with Wideman about the role of history in his work appeared in *Callaloo* in 2010 and in the appendix of an edition of Wideman's latest work, *Writing to Save a Life: The Louis Till File* (Scribner, 2016). The book *Stories of Survival: John Edgar Wideman's Representations of History* was published in 2011. After his dissertation, he taught German language and culture at the Beijing Institute of Technology (BIT) as a DAAD lecturer. Since 2018, he has been working as a postdoc at the American Studies Department of the University of Graz.

FACKLER, Katharina (University of Graz)

Katharina Fackler is a postdoctoral university assistant in American Studies at the University of Graz. Her research focuses on poverty and social justice, the ethics and aesthetics of visual representation, African American studies, life writing, and oceanic mobilities.

FUCHS, Michael (University of Graz)

Michael Fuchs is a fixed-term assistant professor for American Studies at the University of Graz. He has co-edited six collections, most recently *Intermedia Games—Games Inter Media: Video Games and Intermediality* (Bloomsbury, 2019), and (co-)authored more than 50 journal articles and book chapters which have appeared in journals and volumes such as *The Journal of Popular Culture*, *The Journal of Popular Television*, *The Cambridge History of Science Fiction* (Cambridge UP, 2019), *Ecogothic in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Routledge, 2018), *B-Movie Gothic: International Perspectives* (Edinburgh UP, 2018), and *Horror Television in the Age of Consumption: Binging on Fear* (Routledge, 2018).

GABRIEL, Martin (University of Klagenfurt)

Born 1983; studied history at the University of Klagenfurt (Mag. phil. 2007). Project assistant in various regional, national and EU projects (2008-2012). Lecturer in Modern History, University of Klagenfurt (from 2012-currently). Doctoral thesis on irregular warfare during the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dr. phil. 2019). Guest lecturer in Modern History, University of Graz (2019).

Fields of Interest: Modern empires and great powers (Austria-Hungary, Spain, Great Britain, United States), colonialism, global history, military history, social & economic history; 16th-19th century.

GERNALZICK, Nadja (University of Vienna, University of Mainz)

Nadja Gernalzick is Visiting Professor of English and American Studies at the University of Vienna and teaches as a member of the Adjunct Faculty at the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies at the University of Mainz. She studied at the universities of Mainz and San Jose, California, and at Columbia University, New York, and received an M.A. in Comparative Literature (1993) and Ph.D. and habilitation in American Literature and Culture (1999, 2005) from Mainz University. She has taught at universities in Canada, Germany and Switzerland. She is founding member of Kulturwissenschaftliche Gesellschaft (KWG) and on the board of reviewers for the series *Literature–Culture–Economy* (Lang). Her publications include *Kredit und Kultur: Ökonomie- und Geldbegriff bei Jacques Derrida und in der amerikanischen Literaturtheorie der Postmoderne* (2000) and *Temporality in American Filmic Autobiography: Cinema, Automediality and Grammatology with Film Portrait and Joyce at 34* (2018); she co-edited *Transmediality and Transculturality* (2013), *Developing Transnational American Studies* (2018), and *The Mediality of Sugar* (forthcoming).

GRABHER, Gudrun (University of Innsbruck)

Full Professor and Chair of the American Studies Department at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, and Co-Director of the Center for Inter-American Studies. Her research interests are: American poetry (Emily Dickinson – former president of the Emily Dickinson International Society, E.E. Cummings, Denise Levertov, Sylvia Plath, A.R. Ammons), literature and philosophy, literature and the arts; literary genres; legal narratives; medical humanities. She recently published a book “Levinas and the Other in Narratives of Facial Disfigurement: Singing through the Mask” with Routledge. Her current research interest is in narratives on terminal illnesses and end-of-life themes.

GRILL, Mario (University of Klagenfurt)

Mario Grill is a PhD researcher on the FWF-funded project “Narrative Encounters with Ethnic American Literatures” at the University of Klagenfurt. As part of the project, he uses a cognitive approach to Chicanx literature, investigating how these novels invite readers to feel with their characters and take part in their transcultural journeys. In his research, he is particularly interested in perceptual-associative theories of narration investigating the processes of simulation and imagination, the emotions fear and hope, narrative and affect, and these concepts’ relations with (emotional) memory.

GROSS, Rachel (University of Montana)

Rachel Gross (PhD, History, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2017) is a postdoctoral teaching, research, and mentoring fellow at the Davidson Honors College of the University of Montana, where she teaches U.S. environmental, consumer culture, and public history. In 2019, she is a fellow at the Rachel Carson Center in Munich, and in 2020 she will be Assistant Professor of History at the University of Colorado Denver. Her dissertation, “From Buckskin to Gore-Tex: Consumption as a Path to Mastery in Twentieth Century American Wilderness Recreation,” won the 2018 Herman E. Krooss Prize for Best Dissertation in Business History from the Business History Conference.

HAQUE, Kamaal (Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania)

Kamaal Haque is Associate Professor of German at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The author of articles on topics as diverse as Goethe's poetry, Middle Eastern populations in Germany, and the German mountain film, he is currently working on a monograph on the film and television career of Luis Trenker (1892-1990). His next forthcoming publication is an introduction to and translation of excerpts from the autobiography of Arnold Fanck, creator of the German mountain film (Bergfilm).

HELENBRAND, Ryan (University of Wisconsin, Madison)

Ryan Hellenbrand received his Bachelor of Arts from Appalachian State University in 2017. He completed a double degree in German Studies and Sustainable Development. After studying in Bamberg (SS 2014) and Freiburg i.B. (WS 2015-SS 2016) he completed his Honors Thesis: “Imagining Stewardship: Roots of a Poetic Eco-Politics,” exploring the etymology of the German term *Wirtschaft* and its historical evolution as a term for stewardship, especially in an environmental context. After graduating, he received a Fulbright Community-Based Combined Grant and completed an independent research project in Innsbruck. He will be attending University of Wisconsin, Madison in the Environment and Resources program.

HELLER, Arno (University of Innsbruck)

Arno Heller is a retired full professor of American Studies at the University of Graz, Austria. Before his transfer to Graz he was a faculty member of the American Studies Department at the University of Innsbruck for many years. His numerous publications (8 books and over 100 articles) concentrate on 19th and 20th-century American literature, cultural history, and film. After his retirement, he published books on the cultural history of the American Southwest and Northwest and New England and a biography of Herman Melville. At present, he is working on a book on the wilderness myth in recent American literature.

HOENICKE-MOORE, Michaela (University of Iowa)

Michaela Hoenicke-Moore is Associate Professor of History at the University of Iowa. She won fellowships from the DAAD, the Brookings Institution, and the Fulbright Commission. She wrote *Know Your Enemy: The American Debate on Nazism, 1933-45* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), which won the Book Prize of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations and has edited *Macht und Moral: Beiträge zur Ideologie und Praxis amerikanischer Außenpolitik im 20. Jahrhundert* (1999) and *The Uncertain Superpower: Domestic Dimensions of U.S. Foreign Policy After the Cold War* (2002). She currently writes a book on American foreign policy views at the grassroots level.

KARTHEUS, Wiebke (University of Göttingen)

Wiebke Kartheus is a lecturer and doctoral candidate at Georg-August-University Göttingen, where she works on an interdisciplinary project with the working title "Museum Studies as American Studies." She was the recipient of a Fulbright doctoral research stipend (2017/18) to conduct fieldwork at Northeastern University's School of Architecture in Boston. Wiebke received her MA in American Studies from Leipzig University and her BA in World English Literatures and Cultures and art history from Saarland University. She has been the assistant editor for the peer-reviewed, online journal *American Studies Journal* since 2016.

KERN, Louis J. (Hofstra University)

Professor Emeritus of History at Hofstra University. PhD, 1977, Rutgers University; MA 1967, Clark Coll. WA; AB, 1965, Clark Coll. WA.

KINDINGER, Evangelia (Humboldt University, Berlin)

Evangelia Kindinger is Associate Professor for American Studies at Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany. She is the author of *Homebound: Diaspora Spaces and Selves in Greek American Return Narratives* (Winter, 2015), and co-editor of *After the Storm: The Cultural Politics of Hurricane Katrina* (transcript, 2016) and *The Intersections of Whiteness* (Routledge, 2019). Her research interests include Southern Studies, Gender Studies, Critical Whiteness Studies, and class(ism) in American popular culture and nineteenth-century American culture.

KIRSTEN, Karina (University of Marburg)

Karina Kirsten, M.A., studied Media and Film at Marburg and Paris. From 2014 to 2018, she was a research associate at the department of Media Studies at Marburg University and worked as PR-Coordinator at the Equal Opportunities Office at the Goethe University Frankfurt in 2018 and 2019. She is finalizing her dissertation, "Genresignaturen in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* und medienkulturelle Verhandlungen des Duschmords in populären Fortsetzungen", supported by a completion scholarship from the University of Marburg. She is a member of the European Network for Cinema and Media Studies and the German Association for Media Studies.

KLESTIL, Matthias (University of Klagenfurt)

Matthias Klestil is conducting a postdoctoral research project as Postdoc Assistant in American Studies at the University of Klagenfurt. He received his PhD in American Studies on the development of an environmental consciousness in nineteenth-century African American literature from the University of Bayreuth in 2018. His research interests include African American literature and culture, nineteenth-century U.S. literature, and ecocriticism. Klestil has given papers at national and international conferences and has published articles on E.T.A. Hoffmann (2015) and Zora Neale Hurston (2016); upcoming publications examine Kafka's *The Man Who Disappeared*, Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad*, and nineteenth-century African American writing on Niagara Falls.

KOCH, Nitya (Free University of Berlin)

Nitya Koch studied Film, North American Studies and Comparative Literature and has just submitted her dissertation about women's dancing and representations of femininity in the Hollywood musical. Her research interests include Hollywood cinema, musicals, American dance cultures, gender and feminism, and she has taught various seminars on these topics. She has presented her work at several international conferences, speaking about Dance and Mobility in the Thirties Musical, Women's War Entertainment Work in the World War II Musical, and about 'Ballet, Empowerment, and Domestication in the Musical of the 1950s', and she contributed to the Filmmuseum Potsdam's 2017 publication on dance and cinema.

KÖHLER, Susann (University of Göttingen)

Susann Köhler is a lecturer in American studies at the University of Göttingen. She has recently submitted her PhD thesis entitled "Picturing the Rustbelt: Deindustrialization, American Ruin, and Urban Change in Postindustrial Photography," in which she analyzed contemporary photobooks that represent the economic, environmental, and social legacy of heavy manufacturing in postindustrial cities. Her recent publications include a co-edited special issue of the *American Studies Journal* on "Cultures of US-American Conservatism" (<http://www.asjournal.org/65-2018>), as well as an essay on "Picturing Ruin in the American Rustbelt: Andrew Borowiec's Cleveland: The Flats, the Mill, and the Hills" in the edited volume *Ruin Porn and the Obsession with Decay* (Palgrave Macmillan 2018).

KOST, Laura (TU Dortmund University)

Laura Kost is a research assistant and PhD student at the department of American Studies at TU Dortmund University. She has earned both her BA and MA in Applied Literary and Cultural Studies with minors in Linguistics and Sociology from TU Dortmund University. Her dissertation project explores running as a cultural narrative in autobiographies of athletes and on social media. She is currently teaching introductions to American Literary and Cultural Studies. Her research interests include LGBTQ* representation in popular culture as well as Spoken Word and performance poetry. She is an avid marathon and trail runner.

LADINIG, Anna (University of Innsbruck)

Anna Ladinig studied Slavonic and Romance Studies at the University of Innsbruck and at the Kazan Federal University. In her dissertation "De- and Re-Territorializations of the Central Asian Cinema," she focuses on questions of nation building in the five (Post)Soviet republics from a postcolonial and gender-studies perspective. Since October 2019 she has been the director of the International Film Festival Innsbruck.

LANGE, Julia (University of Hamburg)

Julia Lange is a PhD candidate and a research and teaching assistant at the Institute for English and American Studies at the University of Hamburg. She studied American Studies, English Literature, and Law at the University of Hamburg and the University of Oxford. After receiving her MA in 2011, she was granted a PhD scholarship from the *Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes*. Her publications include a monograph entitled *Herman the German: Das Hermann Monument in der deutsch-amerikanischen Erinnerungskultur* (Münster: LIT, 2013). More recently, she edited a volume entitled *Entangled Memories: Representing Atrocity in a Global Age* (together with Marius Henderson; Heidelberg: Winter, 2017). Julia has held research fellowships at Harvard University, Columbia University, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies in Washington, DC. In her dissertation, she examines the interrelation between the politics of memory of German-American organizations and the Holocaust discourse on both sides of the Atlantic.

LEDFORD, Katherine (Appalachian State University)

Katherine E. Ledford holds a PhD in American literature from the University of Kentucky. She is an associate professor of Appalachian studies at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina. From 2009 to 2016, she served as program director of Appalachian studies, advising and mentoring both graduate and undergraduate students. Dr. Ledford teaches undergraduate courses in Appalachian literature and graduate seminars on comparative mountain studies and higher education pedagogy. She serves as a contributing editor for the *Heath Anthology of American Literature* and has published articles and reviews in *ATQ*, *Appalachian Journal*, *Studies in Travel Writing*, *Journal of Appalachian Studies*, and *Mountain Research and Development*, among others. Dr. Ledford co-edited *Confronting Appalachian Stereotypes: Back Talk from an American Region* (1999) and the media section of the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* (2006). A past president of the Appalachian Studies Association (2011–2012), she is founding chair of the association's International Connections Committee, which fosters communication between Appalachian studies scholars and mountain studies scholars around the world. Dr. Ledford is co-editing a comprehensive anthology of Appalachian literature, which will be published by the University Press of Kentucky in spring 2020.

LEONG, Loren (University of Vienna)

Loren Leong graduated from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Melbourne, majoring in Media and Communications. She wrote about the interconnectedness between social media and the visually-impaired community for her BA thesis. She is currently pursuing her Masters in Anglophone Literatures and Cultures at the University of Vienna, and has written about subversive femininity in David Fincher's films, race and gender in African literature, and smart power strategies in Africa. She is interested in research in media and cultural narratives, gender representation, and power struggle in marginalized communities.

LIM, Marilyn Sook Yuen (University of Graz)

Marilyn Sook Yuen Lim is a Malaysian student currently pursuing her M.A. in English and American Studies at the University of Graz, Austria. She hopes to complete her M.A. this autumn semester in 2019, and she plans to continue her post-graduate studies. After completing her undergraduate studies in Music at Middlesex University, London, her interest in literature has encouraged her to further her studies in both literature and cultural studies. Her interest is in 'marginalized' literature, and her current focus is on Asian American poetry.

LUKOVIC, Dejan (University of Innsbruck)

Dejan Lukovic earned his bachelor's degree in German Studies at the Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck and is enrolled in the two master programs "Media" and "Comparative Literary Studies". He has just completed a master's thesis about human-machine interactions in speedrunning.

LUXENBURGER, Isis (IRTG Diversity – Saarland University, University of Trier, University of Montreal)

Isis Luxenburger is a doctoral researcher in the International Research Training Group "Diversity. Mediating Difference in Transcultural Spaces" at Saarland University, the University of Trier and the University of Montreal. Her research interests include the cultural studies of (industrial) films and, in general, investigating research subjects rooted in other disciplines – especially Film Studies, Computer Gaming Studies and Translation Studies – from a Cultural Studies perspective. She is currently working on her interdisciplinary dissertation project on the mediation of industrial culture in films and documentaries in Quebec and the Greater Region Saar-Lor-Lux.

MIKIĆ, Marijana (University of Klagenfurt)

Marijana Mikić is a PhD researcher on the FWF-funded project “Narrative Encounters with Ethnic American Literatures” at the University of Klagenfurt. As part of the project, she explores African American literature from a cognitive cultural studies perspective. She is interested in analyzing the ways in which literary texts by African American authors use empathy and emotion to offer meeting points with the racial Other. Her research builds on the belief that emotional engagements with fiction are important vehicles for renegotiating race, and that cognitive narratological theories are particularly relevant for demonstrating the political potential of storytelling in Ethnic American literature.

MARTINEZ, Diane (Western Carolina University)

Diane Martinez is an associate professor of English and Director of the Professional Writing Program at Western Carolina University, where she teaches technical and professional writing and environmental and science writing. Her research interests include environmental and science communication, global communication, and more recently, she has been exploring studies in literacy.

MILLER CLAXTON, Mae (Western Carolina University)

Mae Miller Claxton is professor of English at Western Carolina University. She teaches classes in the South, Appalachian, and Native American literature. She is editor of *Conversations with Dorothy Allison* (2012) and co-editor of *Conversations with Ron Rash* (2017) and *Teaching the Works of Eudora Welty: Twenty-First-Century Approaches* (2018), all published by the University Press of Mississippi. She is currently working on a collection of writings by Horace Kephart with co-editor George Frizzell. Articles have appeared in *Mississippi Quarterly*, *South Atlantic Review*, the *Southern Literary Journal*, and *Southern Quarterly*, among others.

MITTERMEIER, Sabrina (University of Augsburg)

Sabrina Mittermeier completed her dissertation on Disney's theme parks at LMU Munich in 2018. She is the co-editor of an essay collection on *Star Trek: Discovery* (Liverpool University Press 2020), *The Routledge Companion to Star Trek* (2021), as well as the volume *Here You Leave Today – Time and Temporality in Theme Parks* (Wehrhahn 2017) and has further published on diverse topics of American popular culture. Her teaching has focused on American history, as well as film and television studies. She is currently working on a postdoc project dealing with LGBT public history in the U.S. and Germany.

MOORE, Michael Edward (University of Iowa)

Michael Edward Moore, Ph.D. University of Michigan, is an associate professor of medieval and European history at the University of Iowa. He has held research fellowships at Trinity College (Dublin), the Library of Congress in Washington, the Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften in Vienna, the Max-Planck-Institut für europäische Rechtsgeschichte, Frankfurt, the Herzog-August-Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, and the Leibniz-Institut für europäische Geschichte in Mainz. He is the author of two books: *Nicholas of Cusa and the Kairos of Modernity: Cassirer, Gadamer, Blumenberg*; and *A Sacred Kingdom: Bishops and the Rise of Frankish Kingship, 300-850*; and various articles on medieval and modern cultural and intellectual history.

MÜLLER, Eva-Maria (University of Gießen, University of Innsbruck)

Eva-Maria Müller is a doctoral researcher and lecturer at the Department of English and American Studies at the University of Gießen, Germany. She is currently completing her doctoral project in postcolonial literature and mountain studies, funded by the German Excellence Initiative and the Mellon foundation. Her research is driven by a keen interest in alpine spaces and focuses on postcolonial theory, travel writing, and mountain fiction. Müller also studied and researched at the University of Alberta, Canada, and is currently an associate researcher at Christian Quendler's mountain/film/studies project.

NUNES, Marc (Appalachian State University)

Mark Nunes is Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies and Chair of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies at Appalachian State University. He is author of *Cyberspaces of Everyday Life* (Minnesota, 2006) and editor of a collection of essays entitled *Error: Glitch, Noise, and Jam in New Media Cultures* (Continuum, 2011.) His most recent work is entitled "The Affordances of Place: Digital Agency and the Lived Spaces of Information," forthcoming in the online journal, *Media Theory*.

POOLE, Ralph J. (University of Salzburg)

Ralph J. Poole is an American-German researcher who teaches as Professor of American Studies at the University of Salzburg, Austria. He taught at the University of Munich, Germany, at Fatih University in Istanbul, Turkey, and was a research scholar at CUNY's Center for Advanced Studies in Theater Arts in Manhattan, at Concordia University, Irvine, at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, at the Center Austria in New Orleans, at the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica, at Uniwersytet Jagielloński in Kraków, Poland, and at the Venice International University in Venice, Italy. His publications on Austrian-American cultural relations include essays such as "'Isn't there a ghost in this romantic old castle?' American Studies at Salzburg's Schloss Leopoldskron", "Sexy Tourism. Die Attraktion des Uneigentlichen im Weißen Rößl" (with Annette Keck), and "'Zurück nach Wien, zurück zu Dir': Zweig and Ophüls in Hollywood – Failed Hopes and Belated Success," as well as a two-volume set, co-edited with Joshua Parker, on *Austria and America: Cross-Cultural Encounters*.

PAVLOVIĆ, Milijana (University of Innsbruck)

Milijana Pavlović is a researcher at the University of Innsbruck's Department of Music. She holds a PhD in Musicology from the University of Ferrara, Italy. Her primary research interests are Gustav Mahler, mountains in music, cultural transfer, music and the Holocaust, and gender studies.

RAAD, Danielle (University of Massachusetts Amherst)

Danielle Raad is a PhD student in Anthropology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She holds an MS in Materials Science and Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, an MA in Chemistry from Harvard University, an MEd in High School Education from Lesley University, and a BS in Chemistry from Brown University. Danielle is also an adjunct faculty member at Greenfield Community College. Her research is at the intersections of cultural anthropology, archaeology, and public history. She investigates human-landscape interactions on mountain summits, drawing methods from community-engaged cultural resource management, and theory from decolonization and landscape studies.

RABITSCH, Stefan (University of Graz)

Stefan "Steve" Rabitsch is fixed-term assistant professor in American Studies at the University of Graz and is teaching American cultural history as visiting post-doctoral lecturer at the University of Klagenfurt. A self-declared "Academic Trekkie", he is the author of *Star Trek and the British Age of Sail: The Maritime Influence throughout the Series and Films* (McFarland 2019) and co-editor of *Set Phasers to Teach! Star Trek in Research and Teaching* (Springer 2018). He is co-editor of *Fantastic Cities: American Urban Spaces in Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror* (UP Mississippi 2020) and co-editor of the forthcoming Routledge Handbook to *Star Trek* (2021). He is also a founding editorial board member of *JAAAS: Journal of the Austrian Association for American Studies*. In his endeavors, he focuses on American Cultural Studies, Cultural History, and Science Fiction Studies across media. His professorial thesis project—"I wear a Stetson now. Stetsons are cool!": A Cultural History of Western Hats—received the 2019 Fulbright Visiting Scholar Grant in American Studies which allowed him to work at the Center for the Study of the American West at West Texas A&M University.

RITNER, Jesse (University of Texas at Austin)

Jesse Ritner (MA, History, University of Texas at Austin, 2019) is a doctoral student at the University of Texas at Austin, where he studies environmental history in the United States during the twentieth century. His dissertation is tentatively called: "Making Snow: Technology and the Growth of Winter Mountain Resorts." He will also be the 2019-2010 coordinator of The Gender Symposium at the UT Austin, and he is currently the assistant editor for *Not Even Past*.

RIESER, Klaus (University of Graz)

Klaus Rieser is Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of Graz, Austria, where he teaches in (visual) cultural studies. He has chaired the Department of American Studies from 2007 to 2013 and from 2016 to 2017. His major areas of research comprise US film, representations of family, gender and ethnicity, and visual cultural studies. His monographs have dealt with immigration in film; experimental films, and masculinity in film. He has also published a number of articles and co-edited four volumes, amongst other topics on Iconic Figures and on Contact Spaces. He co-edits the book series "American Studies in Austria" and is co-editor of the Open Access journal JAAAS – Journal of the Austrian Association for American Studies, which is being launched in 2019.

RIESER, Susanne (University of Graz)

Susanne Rieser is a lecturer at the University of Graz where she teaches US history and society as well as cultural studies. She has also been teaching at the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Vienna for the past two decades. Her fields of research include film studies, gender studies, communication studies and end-of-life-care studies. She has published and co-edited articles, contributions and books and organized several gender studies conferences.

ROBBINS, Benjamin (University of Innsbruck)

Ben Robbins is a Postdoctoral Researcher and Lecturer in the Department of American Studies at the University of Innsbruck. His work on Faulkner, modernism, popular culture, and gender studies has appeared in the *Journal of Screenwriting*, the *Faulkner Journal*, and *Genre*. His piece on Faulkner and the digital humanities, which was published in *Studies in American Culture*, received the Jerome Stern Award for the best article in the journal in 2016. He has been a visiting fellow at both the University of Virginia (2012) and l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris (2018). His current research focuses on twentieth-century queer exile literature in its transnational contexts.

ROEDER, Carolin F. (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin)

Carolin F. Roeder is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science. She received her PhD in Modern European History from Harvard University in 2017 and was a visiting lecturer at Mount Holyoke College in 2016-2017. She has published on nature conservation in the former Habsburg Empire and Yugoslavia, the Soviet search on the Abominable Snowman and has an article in press on internationalism and mountaineering in the interwar period. Roeder is currently working on a transnational history of climbing in the twentieth century.

ROSSHOLM, Anna (University of Stockholm)

Anna Sofia Rossholm, PhD, is an associate professor in Cinema Studies at Stockholm University, Sweden. Rossholm has published articles and two books on intermedial and transcultural relations in European cinema. Rossholm's latest book examines Ingmar Bergman's notebooks and screenplays from a perspective of genetic criticism. Her current research project deals with eco-critical perspectives on cinematic mountain imaginaries.

SIELKE, Sabine (University of Bonn)

Sabine Sielke is Chair of North American Literature and Culture and Director of the North American Studies Program and the German-Canadian Centre at the University of Bonn. Her publications include *Reading Rape* (Princeton 2002) and *Fashioning the Female Subject* (Ann Arbor 1997), the series *Transcription*, and 20 (co-)edited books, most recently *Nostalgia: Imagined Time-Spaces in Global Media Cultures* (2017), *Knowledge Landscapes North America* (2016), New York, New York! *Urban Spaces, Dreamscapes, Contested Territories* (2015), and *American Studies Today: New Research Agendas* (2014), as well as 130 essays on poetry, (post-)modern literature and culture, literary and cultural theory, gender and African American studies, popular culture, and the interfaces of cultural studies and the sciences.

SPILL, Frédérique (University of Picardy Jules Verne, Amiens, France)

Frédérique Spill is Associate Professor-HDR of American literature; she teaches at the University of Picardy Jules Verne in Amiens, France, where she also supervises the research group EA4295 CORPUS. She is the author of *L'Idiotie dans l'œuvre de William Faulkner* (PSN, 2009). She contributed to *Critical Insights: The Sound and the Fury* (Salem Press, 2014), to *Faulkner at Fifty: Tutors and Tyros* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), and co-edited *The Wagon Moves: New Essays on As I Lay Dying* (L'Harmattan, 2018). Her publications include articles in French and in English on various 20th and 21st-century American authors, including Willa Cather, William Faulkner, Flannery O'Connor, Robert Penn Warren, Cormac McCarthy, Richard Ford, Jonathan Safran Foer, Nicole Krauss, Toni Morrison, Russell Banks, etc. For the past five years, her research and publications have mainly been focusing on the work of novelist, short story writer, and poet Ron Rash. She contributed to *Conversations with Ron Rash* (UP Mississippi, 2017) and to *Summoning the Dead* (South Carolina UP, 2018). Her monograph, *The Radiance of Small Things in Ron Rash's Writing*, published by SCUP, came out in September 2019.

TINKLER, Robert (California State University, Chico)

Robert Tinkler is Professor and Coordinator of Graduate Studies in the History Department at California State University, Chico. A specialist in the political history of the nineteenth-century United States and the American South, he earned his A.B. from Princeton University and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. He was researching pro-Union political activity within the Confederacy during the U.S. Civil War.

TSCHACHLER, Heinz (University of Klagenfurt)

Heinz Tschachler is a former Associate Professor of English and American Studies at Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt. His academic interests were and still are relations between representation, ideology, and material conditions, the discursive constructions of national identity, for instance through the Lewis and Clark expedition, as well as, more recently, the cultural dimensions of America's money. He has also published on, inter alia, Ursula K. Le Guin, Margaret Atwood, James Dickey, science fiction, and Lewis Mumford, and has written numerous articles on America's money and published several books, including *The Greenback, The Monetary Imagination of Edgar Allan Poe* and, most recently, *Americans for George*. At present, he has two books forthcoming, *George Washington on Coins and Currency* and *George Washington and Political Fatherhood*.

VERNON, Laura (Radford University)

Laura Vernon is an associate professor in the English Department at Radford University in Radford, Virginia. She teaches professional and technical writing courses and produces scholarly work in environmental rhetoric. Her article titled "Crossing Political Borders: How a Grassroots Environmental Group Influenced a Change in Public Policy" was recently published in *Communication Design Quarterly*. Before earning her PhD in 2013, she had a successful 12-year career as a professional communicator, working primarily in state government, including the Utah Department of Environmental Quality.

VITH, Johannes (University of Innsbruck)

Johannes Vith graduated as Mag. Phil. in English, Geography, and Education from the University of Innsbruck in May 2019. His thesis "School Shootings in the United States: The Presentation of the Columbine High School Shooting in News Coverage and Film" is nominated for the 2019 Fulbright Prize in American Studies. In August 2019, he started his position as a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant at Ohio State University in Columbus. His research interests lie in the societal reception of school shootings, Mountain Film Studies, and the cultural identity of German-speaking mountain regions. His first essay "Remaking Columbine" (*Journal of the Austrian Association of American Studies*) is currently in review.

WÖLL, Steffen Adrian (Leipzig University)

Steffen Wöll received his master's degree at Leipzig University in 2016 with a thesis titled "American Spaces: Renegotiations of Cultural Geographies and Counter-Drafts to Spatial Master Narratives of the American West in Jack London's Short Stories." His research interests include historical imaginations and representations of national and cultural metanarratives, the literary construction of agency and Otherness, as well as religious and cultural radicalism in the US. He is currently employed as a research fellow at a Leipzig research center, pursuing a PhD that explores discursive spatialization processes in the American West as they reveal themselves in nineteenth-century literature.

ZINDEL, Hannah (Leuphana University Lüneburg)

Zindel's work explores the history of geosciences through the lens of media theory. She has published numerous articles and is currently preparing a book on ballooning in the 19th century (Fink 2020). A new project examines city utopias in meteorology. As of 2017, Zindel is a postdoctoral researcher at Leuphana University Lüneburg, Institute for Cultural Studies. She received her PhD from University of Erfurt in 2017. From 2011 to 2016 she held doctoral fellowships at Bauhaus-University Weimar, University of Erfurt, and University of Trier. Zindel received her academic training in media, literature, theater, and film studies.