

Call for Papers

Building Bridges, Bridging Gaps 1: English and American Studies in a Pluralist Europe

First Conference for Students and Alumni of the MA English and American Studies

Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg

15-16 May 2020

The recent rise of populism on both sides of the Atlantic, thoroughly researched as a political phenomenon, also calls for investigation from the vantage points of Cultural and Literary Studies as well as Linguistics.

This interdisciplinary conference in the field of English and American Studies invites students current and former to engage in an academic exchange about cultural and literary reworkings of recent sociopolitical affairs as well as their impact on the English language. Drawing on the global mindset of students and alumni of our MA programme, this conference intends to bring together participants not only from diverse fields of academia but also young, aspiring scholars from different cultural backgrounds to create a multi-faceted picture of the vying populist and pluralist tendencies.

To inaugurate this new format, the first conference under the heading “Building Bridges, Bridging Gaps” will focus on such topics as the ongoing Brexit debate, the linguistic, literary and cultural repercussions of mass migration, the rise of populism in the US and the UK, the so-called special relationship between the US and the UK as well as the strained ties of the UK with ‘the Continent’ and its political and cultural institutions. We would like to explore how these discourses have filtered into the emergence of literary and cultural forms and how literature and culture have negotiated the dynamics of populism and nationalism. What is the manipulative potential of language for political agendas? How and to what end do writers explore transcultural identities and postnational citizenship in the realm of fiction? Why and how does the use of English matter to a postnational European identity? These questions are certainly only a fraction of the plethora of topics that can be explored. Proposals are very much welcome to add further research questions.

Topics may include but are not restricted to:

- Constructing transnational or postnational identities in the Anglophone world
- The representation of nationalism and populism in culture, literature and language
- Transnational interdisciplinarity
- Theories of globalization and cosmopolitanism
- The linguistic dimension of contemporary political discourses
- The literary, cultural and linguistic responses to recent political developments
- The sociopolitical impact of/on digital communities
- Discourses of citizenship
- The positionings of Europe in the Brexit discourse
- Re-negotiations of the Special Relationship
- The participation of cinema and visual culture in current sociopolitical debates
- The relevance of the English language in constructing a post- or transnational European identity

- Language and the post-factual age

Please send your proposals (250 words) together with a brief biographical note including your academic cycle or year of graduation at the University of Bamberg (100 words) to the conference organisers (conference.englit@uni-bamberg.de) by 15 February 2020.

Applicants will be informed by the first week of March.

Please note: no funding available.

With the submission of your proposal, you consent that any data you submit will be saved by the organisers until the end of 2020 or the publication of the conference volume if you submit a paper to be published. Your e-mail will be used for the limited purpose of informing you about updates and news relating to the conference and will not be passed on to any third parties.