

Contributors

Mita Banerjee is Professor and Chair of American Studies at the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies at Mainz University. Her research interests include postcolonial literature, issues of naturalization and citizenship, and medical humanities. She is the author of six monographs, including *Color Me White: Naturalism/Naturalization in American Literature* (2013) and *Medical Humanities in American Studies* (2018). She is a Principal Investigator in the Research Unit “Human Differentiation” and co-speaker of the research training group “Life Sciences, Life Writing: Boundary Experiences of Human Life between Biomedical Explanation and Lived Experience,” which is funded by the German Research Foundation.

Erika Canossini is a PhD candidate in Sociology at the University of Toronto. Her research interests lie at the intersection of the sociology of punishment and socio-legal studies. Specifically, she is interested in exploring individuals’ life experiences after coming into contact with the criminal justice system. Her dissertation research on the Canadian pardon and record suspension program asks what clemency means for applicants, recipients, and grantors and explores the relationship between the power to punish and the power to forgive. She holds a B.A. in Foreign Languages and Literature from the University of Bologna, a B.A. in Sociology from Queen’s University (Kingston), and a M.A. in Sociology from the University of Toronto.

Vanessa Evans is a settler scholar and Assistant Professor of Indigenous Literatures at Appalachian State University. Her current research is interested in the ways diverse and distinct Indigenous novels from North America, Oceania, and South Asia represent resurgence through storytelling, language, and relationship with land. Her essays appear in *The Palgrave Handbook of Incarceration in Popular Media* (2019), *Studies in the Novel* (2022), and *The International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design* (2022). Vanessa is also an Associate Managing Editor for the *Journal of Transnational American Studies*.

Mitchell Gauvin is SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow in English Literature at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. His interdisciplinary research examines citizenship and literature with particular focus on the rhetorics of political, legal, and nationalistic conceptions of personhood in fiction and literary theory. Concentrating on Anglo-American and British contexts, his research comparatively analyzes both literary and legal texts to unravel how literary works engage with, circulate, or protest exclusionary forms of political subjecthood, with emphasis on issues of governmentality, state management, and nationalistic imaginings of citizenship in the contemporary period and the long-eighteenth century.

Sonja Georgi is a Lecturer in American Studies at Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, Germany. She received a Master of Arts degree in American Studies, Applied Linguistics, and Economics and a doctoral degree in American Studies from the University of Siegen, Germany. Her research and teaching interests are ethnic literature, African American studies, science fiction and film studies. She is currently working on a book project that investigates African-Native American literatures, histories, and cultures in the context of transnational American Studies.

Jessica Hanselman Gray is a Lecturer in the English Department at the University of California, Davis, where she also completed her PhD in Literature with a designated emphasis in Science and Technology Studies. She received her M.A. in English Literature at Wright State University in Ohio and her B.A. in English at the University of North Florida. Her current project focuses on intersections of literature, experimental science, metaphors of the reproductive body, and the construction of authoritative knowledge in the seventeenth century.

Nina Heydt received both her B.A. in American Studies and French and her M.A. in American Studies from Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. Her theses explored ethnic representations in American literature and popular culture. Currently, Nina is a PhD candidate and lecturer (wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin) at JGU's Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies. Her PhD project focuses on the intersection of law, literature, and popular culture in US prison narratives. In her teaching, she also explores images of gender and ethnicity in US literature and culture. Further research interests include African American Studies, Whiteness Studies/Critical Race Theory, and crime fiction.

Marcus Llanque holds the chair of Political Theory at Augsburg University. He is the co-founder of the journal *Zeitschrift für Politische Theorie*. Research interests: history of political ideas, especially the history of democratic thinking and the political theory of republicanism. He recently completed a research project on the conflict structure of Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone* (together with Katja Sarkowsky).

Scott Obernesser is currently Assistant Professor of English at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, Texas. He received his PhD from The University of Mississippi in 2018 and taught at the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies in 2019. His research includes “What It Means to Be On The Road: Mobility and Petrocultures During the Mid-Twentieth Century,” published in *ISLE Journal*, and “‘So Many Strange Plants’: Race and Environment in John Muir’s *A Thousand-Mile Walk to the Gulf*,” published in *Ecocriticism and the Future of Southern Studies*.

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Anah-Jayne Samuelson is an English Instructor at Red Deer Polytechnic in Red Deer, Alberta. Her teaching and research interests include children’s and young adult literature, Indigenous literatures, and the intersections between activism and literature. She has been published in *International Research for Children’s Literature*, *Studies in the Novel*, and collections on Neo-Victorianism and Space and Identity within Children’s Literature.

Katja Sarkowsky holds the Chair of American Studies at Augsburg University. Her research and publication foci include life writing, Indigenous literatures in Canada and the United States, and literary citizenship studies. In collaboration with political theorist Marcus Llanque, she recently completed an interdisciplinary project on the conflict structure of Sophocles’ tragedy *Antigone* and its relevance for understanding how modern reworkings of the play negotiate contemporary political conflicts.

Kristen Smith earned her PhD from York University in 2023 with an intermedial dissertation that examines the multifaceted presence/absence of sound in varieties of visually-oriented poetry from the 1950s to the 2010s. Her academic work has been published with the *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*, *Interdisciplinary Discourses*, *Inter-disciplinary Press*, and *Somatechnics*. She has two chapters forthcoming in separate anthologies with Cambridge Scholars Publishing and an article in the special issue “New Sonic Approaches in Literary Studies” with *English Studies in Canada (ESC)*. In both her academic and creative work, she is interested in how art is created in community, connection, and collaboration.

Nasra Smith is a PhD candidate in English at York University. In 2021–2022, she was a Visiting Lecturer at the Obama Institute for Transnational American Stud-

ies at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. Her dissertation focuses on Eastern African literatures and Indian Ocean Studies, centralizing coastal nations and their archipelagoes from Eritrea to Mozambique. In addition to *Cultures of Citizenship* and *African Studies Quarterly*, she has forthcoming articles in *Studies in Canadian Literature: Black Lives Matter* and *Aquatic Cartographies: Oceanic Imaginaries, Histories, and Identities* (Ethics Publishing).

Malaika Sutter is a PhD student at the University of Bern. She studied English Languages and Literatures and Contemporary History at Bern and earned a second master's degree in English from the University of Rochester NY as a Fulbright grantee in 2019/20. She received a four-year grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation for her interdisciplinary doctoral thesis project "Crafting the Needle: Text(ile)-Image Constellations in Contemporary North American Fiction and Art," which is supervised by Gabriele Rippl and Janet Catherine Berlo.

Amina Touzos is a PhD candidate in the doctoral research program "DIAPASON – Digital Information Landscape and Its Impact on Student Learning" at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. She is also a research assistant at the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies at JGU and she holds a Master of Education in both English and Philosophy from JGU (2021). Her studies and areas of interest primarily include video game studies and medical humanities, with a specific focus on disability studies and trauma studies, gender and queer studies as well as education sciences.

Julia Velten is an Assistant Professor at the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies at Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz. She received her doctorate from JGU in 2021. She was a member of the DFG Research Group "Un/doing Differences: Practices of Human Differentiation" from 2016–2019 and was hosted as visiting PhD student at the Trent Centre for Aging and Society in 2017. Her research focuses on aging, medical humanities, and cultures of knowledge in the North American context. Her book, *Extraordinary Forms of Aging: Life Narratives of Centenarians and Children with Progeria*, was published with transcript in 2022.

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