

## About the Contributors

---

**Martin Butler** is Professor of American Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Oldenburg, Germany. His research focuses on popular culture, specifically on music of protest and resistance, forms and figures of cultural mobility, and cultures of participation in new media environments. His publications include the monograph *Voices of the Down and Out: The Dust Bowl and the Great Depression in the Songs of Woody Guthrie* (Universitätsverlag Winter, 2007) and a number of co-edited books, among them *Sound Fabrics: Studies on the Intermedial and Institutional Dimensions of Popular Music* (Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2009), *Precarious Alliances: Cultures of Participation in Print and Other Media* (transcript Verlag, 2015), and *Resistance: Subjects, Representations and Contexts* (transcript Verlag, 2017). He has also co-edited a special issue of *Popular Music and Society* on musical autobiographies (vol. 38, no. 2, 2015) and a special issue of *AAA: Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik* on science and popular audiovisual media (vol. 47, no. 2, 2022).

**Alena Cicholewski** is currently an academic writing instructor at the University of Bremen, Germany. She also teaches at the Institute of English and American Studies at the University of Oldenburg, Germany, where she obtained her PhD with a dissertation on temporal disruptions in Afro diasporic speculative neo-slave narratives. Her research interests include science fiction, video games, and young adult literature. Alena is particularly interested in connecting postcolonial approaches to the analysis of popular culture. Her work has been published in several edited collections and academic journals such as *Games and Culture*, *European Journal of American Culture*, and *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures*.

**Sina Farzin** is Professor for Sociology at the Universität der Bundeswehr München. She is a member of the Fiction Meets Science research network and works in the fields of social theory and cultural sociology. Her research interests include the sociology of literature and the intersection of science communication and culture. Sina is the author of numerous articles and books. Recent publications include *Under the Literary Microscope: Science and Society in the Contemporary Novel* (co-edited with Susan

M. Gaines and Roslynn D. Haynes; Penn State University Press, 2021) and *Soziologische Gegenwartsdiagnosen 3* (co-edited with Henning Laux, VS Springer, 2023).

**Michael Fuchs** is currently a visiting assistant professor for American studies at the University of Innsbruck in Austria. Most of his recent work connects representations of 'nature' and science to his interests in horror and the gothic, but he has also published on topics such as intermediality, sports media, and cult stars. Michael has co-edited seven other volumes, including *The Gothic and Twenty-First-Century American Popular Culture* (Brill, 2024) and *Fantastic Cities: American Urban Spaces in Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror* (University Press of Mississippi, 2022). For more on his past and ongoing work, see his website at [michael-fuchs.info](http://michael-fuchs.info).

**Ingrid Gessner** is Professor for English and American Studies at the University College of Education Vorarlberg in Feldkirch, Austria. Her book *Yellow Fever Years: An Epidemiology of Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture* (Peter Lang, 2016) has been awarded the Peter Lang Young Scholars Award. She is the author of *Kollektive Erinnerung als Katharsis? Das Vietnam Veterans Memorial in der öffentlichen Kontroverse* (Peter Lang, 2000) and the award-winning *From Sites of Memory to Cybersights: (Re)Framing Japanese American Experiences* (Universitätsverlag Winter, 2007). Further publications include articles on feminism and gender studies, on questions of transnationalism, and on teaching American studies. Since 2019, she serves on the editorial boards of two prestigious open access journals, *Amerikastudien / American Studies* and *JAAAS: Journal of the Austrian Association for American Studies*. Since April 2024, she is the President of the European Association for American Studies.

**Fabian Hempel** is a doctoral student in sociology at the University of Bremen and a research fellow at the QUEST Center for Responsible Research, Berlin Institute of Health at Charité. Previously, he worked at the University of Bremen, the Universität der Bundeswehr München, and the Freie Universität Berlin. In Munich, he was a member of the research project "Fiction Meets Science II: Pandemic Meets Fiction," which examined cultural responses to the COVID-19 outbreak. His dissertation explores how science novels reflect the cultural understandings of the autonomy and social responsibility of science. His research interests include social and cultural studies of science, social theory, cultural sociology, and political sociology.

**Till Hilmar** is a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Sociology, University of Vienna. He is a faculty fellow at Yale University's Center for Cultural Sociology and an associate editor of the *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*. His research interests include qualitative approaches to inequality, cultural and political sociology, social memory, post-1989 transformations, and text-as-data. He is a PI in the Horizon Project CIDAPE on inequality, climate change, and the force of political emo-

tions. His book *Deserved: Economic Memories after the Fall of the Iron Curtain*, published by Columbia University Press in 2023, examines popular experiences of the East German and the Czech post-1989 transformations from a comparative perspective.

**Anton Kirchhofer** is Professor of English Literature at the University of Oldenburg. His research has focused on literature in its discursive environments, including the formations and functions of sexual knowledge in eighteenth-century fiction, the history and genealogy of critical discourse in the nineteenth century, and the genealogy of literature in secular societies. He is a founding director of the interdisciplinary research group Fiction Meets Science and has published widely on the narrativization of science in contemporary fiction and other public discourses, as well as the theoretical dimensions of cross-disciplinary engagement. The co-edited volume *Science, Culture, and Postcolonial Narratives* is forthcoming.

**Anna Marta Marini** is currently a postdoctoral research fellow for Latinx Studies at the Instituto Franklin-UAH, Spain. Her work focuses on critical discourse analysis and cultural representations in the North American context, in particular related to the US–Mexico borderlands, Mexican American communities, migration, and Mexican political discourse. She has published and presented extensively on her research; among others, she is the editor of *Latinx Representation in Popular Culture and New Media* (Brill, 2024) and author of *The US–Mexico Borderlands in Contemporary Horror: Crossing the Boundary* (Edinburgh University Press, 2025). She is currently the president of the PopMeC Association for US Popular Culture Studies and chief editor of the peer-reviewed academic journal REDEN.

**Rocco Paolillo** is a researcher at the Institute for Research and Social Policies of the National Research Council in Italy. His research interests include collective and emergent phenomena, such as public opinion and social segregation, studied through computational methods such as agent-based modelling and text analysis. In addition, he works on the development of synthetic populations. His work for this chapter was supported by the project “Corona Crisis Narratives–Framing Economic Imaginaries post-2020 (CoroNarrate),” funded by Volkswagen Foundation through employment at SOCIUM University of Bremen 2021–2023. He is a PhD student at the Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences.

**Sara Polak** is university lecturer in American studies, research fellow in the NWO project “Playing Politics: Media Platforms Making Worlds,” and PI in the ERC project “Worlding America: How Play Shaped the United States between New Media and New Politics” at Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. Sara was a Rubicon fellow at the Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture at the University of Gießen (2016–2017) and Fulbright scholar at Yale University (2014–2015). She has written

*FDR in American Memory: Roosevelt and the Making of an Icon* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2021) and co-edited *Violence and Trolling on Social Media: On the History, Affect and Effects of Online Vitriol* (Amsterdam University Press, 2020) and *Embodying Contagion: The Viropolitics of Horror and Desire in Contemporary Discourse* (University of Wales Press, 2021). She is currently working on a book about Donald Trump and play, and regularly contributes to public media (newspapers, radio, television) about American history, politics, and culture.

**Patrick Sachweh** is a professor of sociology at the University of Bremen, Germany, and dean of the Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS). His research interests lie at the intersections of social inequality, comparative welfare state research, economic sociology, and research methods (especially mixed methods). He is especially interested in the values and justice orientations as well as the potentials for solidarity and conflict that accompany the market-oriented transformation of contemporary welfare societies. He obtained his doctorate from the University Bremen in 2009 and held postdoctoral appointments at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies in Cologne and at the University of Frankfurt. His research has been supported by grants from the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft/DFG), Volkswagen Foundation, and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). His publications have appeared in journals such as *Socio-Economic Review*, *European Sociological Review*, *Social Indicators Research*, *Journal of Social Policy*, and *Acta Sociologica*.

**Jim Scown** is Lecturer in Environmental Humanities at the University of Exeter's campus in Cornwall, UK, where he is co-director of the Centre for Environmental Arts and Humanities. From 2021–2023, he worked for the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission, where he is now an advisor. He is a BBC New Generation Thinker, regularly sharing his research on BBC Radio 3. His research focuses on the intersections of soils, literature, and science.

**Małgorzata Sugiera** is a full professor at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Poland, where she chairs the Department for Performativity Studies. Her research concentrates on performativity theories as well as environmental and decolonial studies, particularly in the context of the history of science. She has published twelve monographs in Polish and co-edited several books in English and German, most recently *Crisis and Communitas: Performative Concepts of Commonality in Arts and Politics* (Routledge, 2022). Currently, she is directing a four-year research project titled “Epidemics and Communities in Critical Theories, Artistic Practices and Speculative Fabulations of the Last Decades,” which is funded by the National Science Centre (NCN).

**Yvonne Völk** is the author of *Jüdische Erinnerungsdiskurse in der frankophonen Migrationsliteratur Quebecs* (Peter Lang, 2013) and *Spectatoriale Geschlechterkonstruktionen: Geschlechtsspezifische Wissens- und Welterzeugung in den französisch- und spanischsprachigen Moralischen Wochenschriften* (transcript Verlag, 2022). She has co-edited several collections, including *À la carte: Le roman québécois contemporain* (2015–2020) with Gilles Dupuis and Klaus-Dieter Ertler (Peter Lang, 2021) and *Pandemic Protagonists: Viral (Re)Actions in Pandemic and Corona Fictions* (transcript Verlag, 2023) with Julia Obermayr and Elisabeth Hobisch.

**Keir Waddington** is Professor of History at Cardiff University, where he is co-director of the ScienceHumanities initiative, which explores interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary ways of working. His research focuses on the intersections of medical and environmental history, with a particular focus on how communities in the past thought about the environment around them. A key part of this research examines questions about water scarcity. He also publishes on literature and science, examining how medicine and the laboratory are represented in gothic texts.

**Martin Willis** is Professor of English at Cardiff University. He is the author of eight books on the subject of literature and science, including the award-winning *Vision, Science and Literature, 1870–1920* (Pickering and Chatto, 2011). He is the founding editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Literature and Science*, co-director of the Cardiff Science-Humanities Initiative, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. He has just completed an AHRC-funded international project titled “The Sound of Nature: Soundscapes and Environmental Awareness, 1780–1940.”

