

Inaugural Grad Conference Hosted by the Department of American Studies, Uni Graz
Space, Place and Time:
The Construction of Identity in American Literature and Popular Culture
December 10–12, 2010

The Department of American Studies at the University of Graz is hosting its 1st Graduate Student Conference on December 10-12, 2010. This conference seeks to provide a space for critical and interdisciplinary discussions of issues pertaining to place and belonging within the context of American literature and popular culture. Is there such a thing as an American identity, and if yes, how would one start to conceptualize it? How is ‘Americanness’ presented and perceived (both within the Americas and abroad) and how are such conceptions and perceptions changing over time? What is the role of literature and (popular) culture in the formation of such an identity, or rather: identities? And what does space have to do with all this? How do aspects such as gender, ethnicity, race, social class shape our understanding of the spatial, especially within an American context? And what role do parallel realities such as cyberspace or videogames play in our conceptualization of space, time and identity?

While this conference will be open to all, it is especially geared towards graduate students (students working either on M.A. or PhD theses). We encourage submissions from those working within such fields as English and American Studies, Cultural Studies, Musicology, Sociology, Linguistics, Philosophy, Theology, and History. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- American Exceptionalism/Manifest Destiny
- Utopian and Dystopian Spaces
- Gendered and/or Racialized Space
- Body, Space, and Identity
- Ethnicity and/or the space of the ‘Ethnic’ in American Texts
- Transnational Spaces and Identities
- Homeplaces and/or Third Spaces
- Spaces of the Subject
- Land(scapes) in American Culture
- Situated/Spatialized Identities
- Spatializing Time and/vs. Temporalizing Space
- (American) Identity in Film and Popular Culture
- ‘Real’ and ‘Fantastic’ Places
- Film and Photography as Spatial, Temporal, and/or Spatio-Temporal Texts
- Cyberculture and Cyberspace
- Non-places (Augé)
- Places of memory/Lieux de mémoire (Nora)
- “Pseudo Events” (Boorstin) and ‘Real’ Events (e.g. 9/11; wars)

Please send 250 word proposals as well as short biographies (of no more than 100 words) and contact information to both Maria-Theresia Holub mtholub@yahoo.de and Michael Fuchs m.fuchs@uni-graz.at by October 17, 2010. If you have any questions prior to your submissions, direct them to Michael.