

18th SAAS Conference "Negotiating Identity
and Power: Resistance, Rebellion, and
Resilience in U.S. Literature and Culture"

Universidad de Oviedo, 15 · 16 · 17 Marzo 2027

ACCEPTED PANELS
(open to submission of papers)



PANEL 1

Speculative Ontologies: The Posthuman, the Eerie, and Cultural Memory in US Media and Narratives

CHAIR/S:

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This panel explores speculative fiction in US culture as a critical lens for examining power, history, and futurity across literature, film, television, and digital media. Drawing on Cultural Studies, feminist, queer, posthuman, and decolonial frameworks, it highlights speculative narratives as tools for interrogating late capitalism, technological mediation, racialized and gendered subjectivities, and ecological crises. Emphasizing counter-hegemonic futures—through Afrofuturism, Indigenous and Latinx futurisms, and minoritarian practices—the panel considers how speculative texts reimagine temporalities, ontologies, and modes of resistance. Contributions are invited on topics including posthumanism, queer futurities, climate fiction, utopian/dystopian imaginaries, speculative horror, transmedia storytelling, and participatory world-building, aiming to foster interdisciplinary dialogue on alternative futures and cultural critique.

KEYWORDS:

Speculative, futurisms, Posthumanism, Climate fiction, dystopian imaginaries



PANEL 2

Resistance, Rebellion, and Resilience to/in the Domestic.

CHAIR/S:

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The house, as a habitus, indicates a series of habits, ways of living, or styles of embodiment that always exceed the house and merge with the social and the political. The title of the 18th SAAS Conference stimulates a reflection on the domestic space as either a site of identity and power or as a site of resistance, rebellion, and resilience to identity and power.

This panel asks the questions:

- how can alternate modes of inhabitation, and with them alternate modes of embodied living, subvert oppressive forms of social and political organization?
- to what extent can we envision houses themselves as sites of resistance that emerge with these alternate modes of embodied living?
- when encountering narratives of resistance, how can we pay renewed attention to the spaces in which (un)housing takes place?
- can the concept of unhousing speak to the emancipatory potential of leaving, of freeing oneself, and of inhabiting one's body, one's house, one's community, or one's nation differently?

The panel aims to analyze texts of American literature that imagine alternative domestic spaces or alternative ways of living within the domestic spaces we already have. We aim to examine the political valences of how the instability brought about by houses and households that do not work may give rise to new modes of more open relationalities and to new habitabilities beyond the domestic and domesticated, as well as to alternative subjectivities such as those of the transient, the squatter, the migrant, the wanderer, the communitarian, the utopian, the universalist, and the subject prepared to exit into the world who, from a position of exposure and fragility, chooses to live for others. We aim to challenge the notion of the domestic so as to emancipate from or, at least, radically question, those normative structures of the home that have pernicious effects on the subjects who inhabit them.

As the panel understands the studies of the domestic as participating in a number of intertwined critical contemporary discourses (queer theory, feminism, decolonization and indigenous studies, affect, neoliberalism, aesthetics) and across different genres, it seeks contributions that may draw on affect studies, posthumanism, ethics, philosophies of the home, spatial studies, new materialisms, and thing theories, among other theoretical frameworks, that may help us rethink housing and unhousing and their application as hermeneutical tools in the study of American literature.

KEYWORDS

Domestic Space Studies; Unhousing; Power; Resistance; Rebellion; Resilience.



PANEL 3

Trans-formations: Queer Narratives of Resistance

CHAIR/S:

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This panel seeks to explore contemporary literary and cultural productions in the US under the lens of queer and trans studies. Understood as a broad term, queer serves to address narratives that resist normative and hegemonic paradigms (Ahmed 2019, Halberstam 2011, Muñoz 2009). Additionally, the idea of trans* helps to better understand the limits of “the human” as a biopolitical tool which privileges a few and dehumanises/inhumanises/nonhumanises the many (Hayward and Weinstein 2017). This notion can be applied not only to gender and sexuality, but also to issues of race, class and disability (Bey 2022, Halberstam 2018, Snorton 2017). The panel welcomes the critical analysis of written, visual and/or musical texts that celebrate “a communicative ethics of alterity” (Escudero-Alfías 2026, 430). A key consideration is how the selected texts can open venues for transformation and resistance through radical uses of the imagination.

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KEYWORDS

Queer Studies; Trans Studies; Resistance; Narratives



PANEL 4

Illness Narratives in/and “the American Way”: Resistance, Resilience, and the Fabrication of Pathographies

CHAIR/S:

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A strong premise shared among scholars in the Critical Medical Humanities is that the ill body presents a powerful site from which to articulate narratives of resistance that challenge stigmatizing cultural perceptions about vulnerability and illness. Storytelling is perceived as an affirmative act of agency in the exploration of the physical, psychological, and social liminalities of illness. These explorations often resist the disciplining and surveillance of the body in the course of medical treatment, while simultaneously facing the deconstruction of the sense of self, and the subject's newfound connections to the material and to (historical) time. Sigrid Nunez famously wrote in her novel *What Are You Going Through* (2020) that “[d]ying is a role we play like any other role in life,” emphasizing how social expectations shape the “performativity” of being (terminally) ill, creating rituals and discourses associated with the public presence of illness. Attempting to reflect on how identities are shaped by codified acts of resilience and rebellion, this panel asks whether fiction and nonfiction illness narratives suggest that there is a particularly American way of “performing,” confronting and aestheticizing these experiences. We seek proposals analyzing how American forms of storytelling (in literature, film, or other art forms and media) impact and transform the conceptualization of (self-)identity in the context of pathographies. Some considerations prompting discussions along these lines include: How does Americanness define the cultural expectations associated with being a patient (or a healthcare professional)? How is illness experienced from within the complex of the US healthcare system, where class, race and gender evince institutionalized inequality in the name of capitalist interests? How do monomyths of individualism, meritocracy and (religious) faith inform discourses on (terminal) illness, shape doctor-patient interactions, and situate the subject in an “American” point in history? How do American perceptions of gender and ethnic identities influence these experiences and discourses? Which American traits regarding behavioral codes, etiquette, and spaces of interaction shape the personal and/or social experience of being ill (that is, sickness)? Which kinds of symbols and tropes emerge in the shaping of a collective, American imagery of illness and what can they do for social advocacy?

KEYWORDS

Illness (Narratives); American Identity; Healthcare; (Auto)Pathography, Critical Medical Humanities



PANEL 5

Identity and Power in the American West (Resistance, Rebellion, and Resilience)

CHAIR/S:

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Identity and power in the American West have historically been defined by a complex struggle over land, resources, and representation, shaping a region characterized by a violent conquest and profound resilience. The "Wild West" myth was used to justify the displacement of Indigenous peoples and to create a context where white settlers were depicted as bringing civilization to an "empty" wilderness.

This traditional "frontier myth" of rugged individualism and lawless freedom has been critically re-evaluated to show that the West was built through settler colonialism and the intentional marginalization of Indigenous, Hispanic, and Asian communities. Modern historians, such as Patricia Limerick and other "New Western Historians", reject the earlier Frederick Jackson Turner "frontier thesis" by treating the West as a diverse region shaped by conquest and by focusing on the region's diverse inhabitants, the role of women, and the marginalized experiences of people of color. Despite brutal removal and forced assimilation, Indigenous communities have maintained a centuries-long fight for their lands and cultures against colonial oppression, with moments such as the Wounded Knee Occupation of 1890 representing a continued struggle for survival.

Within this context, recent literature, film, popular culture, and related cultural productions about the West (often termed post-western) show the American West as a place where "civilization" was built upon the destruction of its victims, and as a place defined by the lasting resistance and resilience of those who refuse to vanish. We are looking for papers that deal with these cultural products. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Narratives of power, violence, and identity in the American West
- Resistance, Rebellion, and Resilience in the American West
- Post-Western culture, books and films
- Identity and Power in Western Film and Television
- Indigenous strategies of cultural resistance in the American West
- Narratives of migration, displacement, and border resistance in the American West
- Climate change and environmental justice in the American West
- Hispanic identity and resistance in the American West
- Resistance to systemic racism, gender-based discrimination, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia in (cultural texts about) the American West
- Beyond the West: Identity, power, and resilience in transnational Westerns.

KEYWORDS

West, Western, Post-Western, Migration, Native Americans, Identity, Power, Resilience



PANEL 6

Singing Alternatives: Identity, Power and Music

CHAIR/S:

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Music shapes personal, social, and cultural identities. It not only reflects who we are but also actively participates in the formation of our sense of self and community. In times of uncertainty, it becomes a vital force through which discontent, resilience, and hope are voiced. At the same time, music allows us to envision different futures, articulate dissent, and imagine alternatives. Simon Frith emphasizes this dimension by arguing that “the experience of pop music is an experience of identity.”

Throughout the history of the United States, music has played a revealing role. During the era of Westward expansion—when notions of a distinct national identity were taking shape—western swing and country music provided a cultural soundtrack that helped frame and reinforce that narrative. The musical traditions of Native Americans, the blending of European musical forms with African rhythms, and the continual mixing of diverse influences that later developed into modern popular genres speak to the deeply multicultural foundations of the country. Across subsequent periods of conflict and social transformation, music has consistently accompanied these movements, both reflecting their tensions and shaping the emotional and cultural responses.

We welcome proposals that investigate the intersections of identity, power, and music. We consider research focused on any musical genre or historical period within the geography of the United States, also work that engages with questions of ethnicity, class and gender. Proposals may analyze song lyrics as cultural texts, but they may also approach music from alternative angles. We therefore encourage submissions that adopt political, social, economic, sociological, historical, or cultural perspectives to illuminate the complex ways in which music both reflects and shapes the aforementioned intersection between identity, power and music in the United States.

- Representations of protest, rebellion, resistance and dissent in U.S. music.
- Resistance to systemic racism, gender-based discrimination, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia in music.
- Narratives of resilience in music.
- Power, surveillance, and the politics of identity in contemporary U.S. music.
- Climate change, environmental justice in U.S. music.
- Songs of migration, displacement, and border resistance.
- Music and colonial narratives in the American West.

KEYWORDS

Music; American Popular Culture; Identity; Power; Politics; Western Studies



PANEL 7

Bordering Resistance: Narratives of Migration, Displacement, and Counter-Hegemonic Memory in U.S Literature and Culture.

CHAIR/S:

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This panel invites contributions that examine how U.S. literature and culture engage with migration, displacement, and border structures through the lens of memory as a site of power and resistance (*lieux de mémoire*). In the current context marked by increasingly militarized borders, anti-immigrant rhetoric, and the MAGA movement, literary and cultural texts not only analyze the violence embedded in national and racial boundaries but also interrogate how memory functions as a structure of power. This panel seeks to explore undocumented experiences, diasporic identities, and transnational crossings in U.S. literature and culture and to question how literary or cultural texts contest mainstream and institutionalized narratives that legitimize exclusion and recover histories that have been silenced. Thus, this panel is interested in examples of acts of remembering and remembrance that function as forms of border resistance and as strategies for imagining new ways of belonging. We welcome proposals that address literary texts, film, visual culture, or performance that interrogate the intersections of migration, memory, and power throughout U.S. history. Contributions may also address how these narratives engage with broader structures of power, race, gender, sexuality, class, and environmental injustice and how they interact with earlier formations of colonialism.

KEYWORDS

Migration; Border; Displacements; Memory; Counter-Memory; Transnationalism; Diaspora



PANEL 8

Rebellious Poetries, Subversiveness and Social Change

CHAIR/S:

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"For centuries, there has been a sense that poetry—perhaps because of its formal freedom and immediacy—is better suited than narrative when it comes to enacting protest and dissidence, opposition and subversiveness. In his 1965 poem "Black Art," written in the wake of Malcolm X's assassination, Amiri Baraka brings forward the idea that "poems are bullshit" (l.1) unless they are revolutionary, that is, that the divide between art and politics is infructuous, and that poems should be "useful," alive "souls splintering fire" (ll. 6, 12). Since then, terms such as "oppositional poetics" (Hunt 1989), "impertinent voices" (Yorke 1992), "stubborn poetries" (Quartermain 2013), "queer difficulty" (Kim and Reed 2017) or "poetry of social engagement" (Rankine and Dowdy 2018), among others, have confirmed poetry's inherent drive towards provoking social and literary change. The aim of this seminar is to explore the rebellious capabilities of poetry from a 21st century perspective, taking into account the realities that may hinder such subversiveness—i.e. the rise of AI, difficult political climates—and those that may enhance it—i.e. the evolution of experimental forms or an increased demand for oppositional literature. We welcome papers that consider the potentialities of poetry (contemporary or otherwise) to question power and/or grapple with forms of domination. Participants may approach these issues from a variety of perspectives, from queer, feminist and affect studies to formal and genre subversiveness.

Suggested topics include but are not limited to:

- Readings of new and old poetic voices that are impertinent, rebellious, difficult, subversive of the political climate, anti-patriarchal, etc.
- Lyric theories / theories of poetic form that go against the grain of Western academia.
- Analyses of poems that are formally rebellious, questioning linearity and lyricism as forms of domination.
- Poetry that defies genre, poems that escape traditional definitions of "poetry."
- Poems by queer folk and dissident identities.
- Political poems that contribute to questioning 21st century problems.
- Papers that explore the possibilities and limitations of poetic experimentalism in the 21st century.

KEYWORDS

Poetry; Experimental Poetry; Subversiveness; Form; Lyric; Queer



PANEL 9

Gothic Resilience in American Literature and Culture

CHAIR/S:

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Gothic narrative has long served as a powerful mode for interrogating American social structures and the buried histories of inequality and violence that animate them. Often read through monsters, haunted spaces, and the representation of death, American Gothic texts expose the persistence of trauma and the ways suppressed histories continually resurface.

Yet the Gothic is not only a literature of decay but also of endurance. As David Punter observes, its power lies in the fact that it “continues... against the odds.” This resilience invites new readings that foreground the Gothic’s capacity to imagine survival, resistance, and transformation. Drawing on Kate Rigby and Evi Zemanek’s notion of “resilience narratives,” which examine vulnerability across human and more than human collectives, this approach highlights how Gothic texts envision alternative forms of care, interdependence, and world building. Gothic resilience is not triumphant or restorative; it is shaped by haunting and the lingering presence of harm. Its recursive temporality makes it uniquely suited to representing structural violence and the afterlives of trauma. At its core, Gothic resilience names the refusal of the “disposable” to disappear. Racialized, colonized, disabled, queer, and impoverished bodies return to challenge erasure, while ghosts act as witnesses who insist that violence has consequences. Ecogothic dimensions further reveal resilience in toxic landscapes, feral spaces, and multispecies networks formed under late capitalism and climate crisis. Gothic resilience also emerges in alternative socialities (monstrous families, queer intimacies, and communities of survivors) that imagine new forms of endurance and belonging.

This panel welcomes proposals examining American texts (including literature, film, television, video games, and visual art) through any of the following (or related) lenses:

- Political haunting and resistant revenants
- The perseverance of “disposable bodies” as a counter narrative
- Gothic depictions of resistance to structural vulnerability, precarity, and necropolitics
- Caring as resistance in communities of monsters and “monstrified” individuals
- Found families and collective survival in Gothic contexts
- More than human resilience: animals, plants, fungal and microbial Gothic
- Ruins, landscapes, and environments that “refuse to die”
- Gothic witnessing and the politics of remembering as resistance
- Resilience building in Gothic post disaster worlds

KEYWORDS

American Gothic, Resilience, Haunting, Precarity, Resistance



PANEL 10

Indigenous Voices, Decolonial Visions: Native American Literature and Culture as Resistance

CHAIR/S:

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Throughout history, Native American communities have persistently refused erasure, both through political activism and through the sustained power of storytelling, image-making, and cultural production. At a moment when the United States is threatening Indigenous tribal sovereignty with unprecedented rollbacks of Indigenous rights, a persisting Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women crisis, and the dismantling of institutions like the Indian Child Welfare Act, the literary and cultural work of Native American writers and artists is more urgent than ever. It is also particularly visible, as observed in the flourishing of the third wave of Indigenous writing, the vibrant expansion of Indigenous expression into graphic novels and the visual arts, or activist movements like Land Back, NoDAPL, or MMIW, which have generated their own aesthetic languages and thus blurred the boundaries between personal narrative and collective resistance, between activism and art.

Drawing on the conference's central framework of resistance, rebellion, and resilience, this panel invites critical explorations of how Indigenous peoples in the U.S. negotiate identity and power through creative expression. Grounded in key theoretical frameworks such as Gerald Vizenor's concept of survivance, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's resurgence, Glen Coulthard's grounded normativity, Vanessa Watts' Place-Thought, or Robin Wall Kimmerer's relational epistemologies, the panel welcomes contributions that engage with Indigenous literary and cultural production in its many forms. We will be exploring the creative ways in which Indigenous aesthetic practices open spaces for counter-historical narration, reimagine community and relational identity, and work toward decolonial futures, thus challenging settler colonial power structures.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Representations of historical and intergenerational trauma and healing
- Land, sovereignty, and place-based resistance in Native creativity
- Decolonial aesthetics and Indigenous counter-archival practices
- Native American women's literary and cultural leadership
- Relationality, kinship, and alternative ontologies in Indigenous literature and art
- Activism and cultural production: NoDAPL, Land Back, MMIW, and related movements
- New genres: crime fiction, YA, graphic narrative, and Indigenous futurisms

KEYWORDS

Native American Literature, Indigenous Studies, Decolonial Aesthetics, Indigenous Sovereignty



PANEL 11

Narrating the Posthuman Wound: Identity, Power, and Resilience in 21st-Century North American Fiction

CHAIR/S:

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The "posthuman turn" has brought about a radical paradigm shift, moving from a humanist, analog system to a digital and data-based one. This transition has inflicted what can be termed the "posthuman wound": a series of blows to human exceptionalism and narcissism driven by the Fourth Industrial Revolution, big data, and the climate crisis. This panel seeks to explore how contemporary North American narratives negotiate identity and power at the site of this wound, where human agency is often perceived as fragmented or displaced by non-human forces.

While classical trauma studies often view the shattered subject as in need of reconstruction, critical posthumanism sees this fragmentation as an opportunity to expand the boundaries of the self. We argue that the posthuman wound serves as a site of "radical vulnerability" that allows for a productive opening to the "other"—whether that other is technological, biological, or environmental. This panel invites papers that analyze how literary texts "imagine what is possible" by transforming digital and ecological vulnerabilities into narratives of resistance and resilience.

We welcome contributions that examine the formal and ideological representation of the posthuman wound through various lenses, including but not limited to:

- Digital Vulnerability: Resistance against surveillance capitalism, the power of algorithms, and the "invisible power" of Large Language Models.
- Ecological Resilience: Narratives of the Anthropocene, "eco-technological" traumas, and transcorporeal ethics in the context of environmental devastation.
- Post-Classical Trauma: The meeting point between trauma studies and posthumanism in 21st-century fiction.
- Narrative Agency: The conveyance of the posthuman condition through the use of non-human narrators, formal fragmentation, and experimental narrative techniques.
- Intersectional Posthumanism: The interactions between the posthuman wound and gender, race, and disability to confront systemic oppression.

By examining these narrative assemblages, the panel will explore how contemporary fiction articulates different forms of rebellion against the changing conceptions of agency and imagine new modes of resilience in an ecologically fragile world mediated by technology.

KEYWORDS

Posthuman Wound, Agency, Resilience, 21st-Century Fiction, Digital / Ecological Vulnerability



PANEL 12

Generic Disruption and Strategies of Resistance in Asian American Writing

CHAIR/S:

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In her book *Contesting Genres in Contemporary Asian American Fiction* (2010) Betsy Huang defends that genre fiction has become “the loci where some of the most compelling contemporary Asian American writers contest genre imperatives to disrupt well-worn ‘generic’ narratives of Asian America.” Following this idea, this panel seeks to examine different strategies writers employ to address and confront systemic racial and gendered violence against Asian Americans in the United States across different genres.

The memoir, magical realism, crime fiction, and speculative fiction are some of the genres that Asian American writers have explored and often hybridized; subverting genre expectations has become a tool and a strategy of resistance within traditionally white literary landscapes. In this way, Asian American writers defy racist practices, confront Orientalist scripts, and challenge the gendered dimension of anti-Asian narratives, such as the feminization, sexualization and fetishization of Asian bodies.

We intend to create a conversation around these strategies and the alternative modes of subjectivity and relationality that Asian American writers propose through their work. With special attention to renewed anti-Asian sentiments in the US political context and intensifying tensions surrounding race, identity, and immigration, we invite exploration of the political impact of works that confront dominant narratives by centering Asian American voices and bodies. We welcome contributions that explore these dynamics across a range of genres and media, including fiction, poetry, and film.

KEYWORDS

Asian American Literature, Genre, Speculative Fiction, Resistance, Racism, Sexism, Orientalism.



PANEL 13

Of Mothers and Motherlands: Memory, Hospitality and Belonging in US Literature and Popular Culture

CHAIR/S:

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The dominant socio-political landscape of the US continues to produce discourses that contribute to establishing an unwelcoming climate surrounded by increased polarization and, consequently, finding places of belonging has become increasingly challenging. As a response, we propose a closer analysis of the archetype of the mother/motherland as a source of kinship and attachment, highlighting its connection to memory and identity, from the perspective of hospitality studies.

The panel aims to reclaim mindsets that invite the opening of spaces in which the positive and the negative can be re-evaluated for productive criticism to emerge. Mothers can be perceived as caring or vindictive, evoke nostalgia or resentment, and be either a source of claustrophobia or emancipatory empowerment. All these perceptions can be brought together under a sense of hospitable care and/or intergenerational trauma. In many contemporary works, maternal figures become repositories of struggle, histories of colonization, displacement and injuries that shape the present. This panel looks for proposals that explore maternal narratives as stories of hospitality (or lack thereof) that establish threads, linking histories of memory, migration and resistance, as well as connection with how the motherland might be conceptualized.

This association of the land with the mother figure—which has its roots in the etymology of the word “native,” that comes from “nation” and that, in turn, comes from the Latin word *natio* (birth)—allows for an identification of the native land with a sort of “womb” figure, so that one becomes the substitute or embodiment of the other and equating the native land with images of protection and belonging. In this way, the motherland, like the actual mother figure, can become a central part of a person’s or a community’s identity, evoking both feelings of tenderness and/or rejection; of warmth and/or suffering.

With recent legal developments, from control of reproductive rights to social justice struggles and direct attacks on the lives of migrants, maternal narratives can be of key social significance. This panel invites proposals that center on examining how US literature and popular culture narratives reimagine, challenge and represent dynamics of care, affective labor and mothering through intergenerational relations, memory and hospitality.

KEYWORDS

Motherland, Hospitality, Motherhood, Memory, Identity, Belonging



PANEL 14

The Ethics and Aesthetics of the Poetry of Subversion

CHAIR/S:

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“pity this busy monster, manunkind” e.e. cummings
“If we must die, let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot” Claude McKay
“Let America be America again.
Let it be the dream it used to be.” Langston Hughes

This panel invites contributions that explore the ethics, aesthetics with particular attention to the role of the poet in times of crisis. Taking as its point of departure Hölderlin’s enduring question—“What are poets for in a time of distress?”—the panel seeks to examine how poetry responds to, resists, and reimagines conditions of social, political, and cultural upheaval, while also addressing the relationship between aesthetics and activism. W.H. Auden lamented in his elegy for W.B. Yeats that “poetry makes nothing happen”, yet for writing a poem, poets went to jail in totalitarian states, especially in Eastern Europe.

Across time, American poets have acted as dissenting voices and cultural agents, mobilizing the subversive power of language to confront war, injustice, and systemic violence, while at the same time resisting the lure of open political advocacy. From speaking truth to power to exposing the mechanisms of oppression—political, economic, social, racial, and gendered—poetry has remained a vital site of resistance and critical reflection. Frequently emerging from moments of crisis, whether in outright protest or as an expression of individual anguish, poetry bears witness to the forces that threaten human dignity, while amplifying marginalized and silenced perspectives.

In particular, the panel welcomes papers that engage with American poetry and its interrogation of national identity, materialism, and cultural decline, as well as its critiques of consumerism, corruption, racial injustice, war, social inequality, and human rights abuses.

KEYWORDS

American Poetry, Aesthetics, Ethics



PANEL 15

Domestic Space as a Site of Female Resistance

CHAIR/S:

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"Space is integral to the mythology of the United States: those who have worked and protected the land and those who have exploited and sought to conquer it have shaped the nation's culture (Dunbar-Ortiz 2014, 1). Regardless of their connection to the land, individuals have navigated the territory in search of a place to call home. This is particularly relevant to women who, with time, found in the house a level of agency that was not afforded to them elsewhere. Though the house could undoubtedly be confining, women could also use it as a site of resistance. As a result, the idea of home has been both revered (Anderson 1990, 4) and contested (Reid 2009, 11) through American literary history, and has seen numerous characters either seek or flee the house. However, there have been many others for whom the house itself is a site of resistance (hooks 2015, 43; Andrés 2022, 6). Examples include Harriet Jacobs defying her master by sheltering in the garret in her narrative (1861); the unnamed narrator in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892) challenging her husband; Countess Olenska in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* (1920) resisting conventions through the freedom she finds in her apartment; Merricat and Constance in Shirley Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (1962) conceiving their dwelling as a bulwark against the community.

This panel welcomes proposals dealing with female resistance and resilience within the domestic sphere in American literary texts through the lens of Spatial Studies. How do the female characters reconfigure space to undermine authority and find protection? How does the space itself physically shelter them and allow them to rebel? Is it the whole house or is it a particular room that provides solace? Can such resistance be misguided? Is there a price to pay for it?

KEYWORDS

Domesticity, Feminist Geographies, Spatial Literary Studies, Resistance, Resilience



PANEL 16

(Eco)Narratology and Justice: Critical Narratives of Resistance, Rebellion, and Resilience in Times of Polycrisis

CHAIR/S:

Isabel Pérez Ramos, U. de Oviedo, GIECO-Instituto Franklin UAH

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Currently, the US administration is targeting civil rights—with a clear xenophobic intent—as well as policies aimed at ensuring environmental protection and addressing social and environmental injustices within the US. In the process, it is also dismantling all policies aimed at tackling climate change both nationally and internationally. In parallel, it is waging international wars and conducting military actions to alter foreign governments—without consulting the US Congress or NATO. All these decisions are communicated and justified through an incendiary and demagogic rhetoric that simplifies complex problems into classical tropes such as good vs. evil, safety vs. danger, or us vs. them. In these post-truth times of entrenched inequalities, polycrisis, and bigotry, it is more necessary than ever to be able to identify and deconstruct the rhetorical elements within these messages as well as within alternative narratives that question and expose such simplistic discourses, showing the complexities of social and environmental realities.

This panel seeks proposals that analyze, from an (eco)narratological perspective, narratives of resistance, rebellion, and resilience with a focus on social and/or environmental justice issues. In these uncertain times, it is more necessary than ever to identify specific narrative techniques with the potential to construct productive narratives that portray hopeful alternatives, resilient communities, and peaceful worlds as well as to investigate the connection between such techniques and the narratives' potential affective appeal. Moreover, the question of which narrative form and genre are best equipped to address complex and uncanny social and environmental challenges, such as climate change, remains unanswered, as Amitav Gosh eloquently argues in *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016). Contributors are thus invited “to tarry at the juncture of form and affect,” to quote Nicole Merola’s words in *Affective Ecocriticism: Emotion, Embodiment, Environment* (2018).

This panel welcomes contributions that deal with (eco)narratology and justice in fictional works and other cultural products with a narrative component. Decolonial, postcolonial, and affective perspectives are particularly welcome.

KEYWORDS

(Eco)Narratology, Social and Environmental Justice, Decolonial and Postcoloniality, Affect Theory



PANEL 17

Queer Bounds: Circulating Affects in Contemporary Ethnic US Literature

CHAIR/S:

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Perceived as quintessentially American, optimism has been tied to fantasies of national inclusion and upward mobility since the country's inception. From the illusory nature of American exceptionalism to the typically unfulfilled promises of the American Dream, a sense of rather-deceitful optimism has come to define American identity over time. Even when often overlooked and even positively rendered, this political rhetoric does not accurately represent the experiences of many in the country, who cannot be contained within its essentialist political imaginary. Notably, Black American populations have expressed the ways in which the nation's conventional narratology fails to render their experiences legible, resulting in their omission from public debate and life (Palmer 2017). This conscious barring from national myth, "fantasy," and representation is perhaps best synthesized in Lauren Berlant's notion of "cruel optimism" (1991, 2011), which outlines a somewhat bleak scenario whereby expectations of personal development within the nation remain impossible to fulfill for some. This panel wishes to explore the ways in which contemporary ethnic and queer American literature resists these tropes, negotiating structures of power to mobilize alternative ways of feeling and being in the world. Hence, it explores literary renditions of a failed good life that result in alternative expressions of intimacy and experience, particularly centering on ethnic and queer expressions of American life. It approaches these ideas from the correlation between the expectations of a good life and notions of "queer temporalities" (Halberstam 2005), "orientation" (Ahmed 2006), or un/happiness (2011), among others, seeking proposals that examine the ways in which contemporary ethnic and/or queer American fiction can test the limits of normative Americanness and public life. Thus, the panel addresses expressions of intimacy that detach from normativity and conventions (Hartman 2019) and move outside the bounds of the personal, placing value on the social circulation of emotions (Ahmed 2004) and their political im/productivity (Ngai 2005) from the lens of ethnic and queer studies, exploring literary interventions that oppose any regulatory practices of the nation-state to embrace mutual interdependence and kinship structures as a means to intervene in the erasure of ethnic and queer interiorities resulting from discrimination.

KEYWORDS

Ethnicity; Queerness; Affect; Neoliberalism; Narrative Resistance.



PANEL 18

Creating the Nation One Page at a Time

CHAIR/S:

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This panel proposes a critical examination of the role of the press in processes of nation-building and identity formation in the United States, understood not as an isolated project but as one embedded in transnational, transatlantic, and hemispheric networks of print culture. It invites scholars to explore the impact of periodical publications from the emergence of the first daily newspaper, The Pennsylvania Evening Post (1783), to contemporary print and digital media.

The panel welcomes contributions addressing periodicals of all kinds, including newspapers, magazines, little magazines, activist journals, and digital-born platforms. It is open to studies of publications that explicitly positioned themselves as mouthpieces for political parties, reform movements, or activist causes—such as suffragist periodicals—as well as magazines like The Atlantic Monthly (now The Atlantic), which served as key platforms for major literary figures. Particular attention is paid to periodicals as sites where literary production, political debate, and cultural authority intersect, often shaped by cross-border circulation, international intellectual currents, and imperial or postcolonial contexts.

In this vein, the panel calls for papers that foreground the interplay between literature and socio-political activism, examining writers and editors as public intellectuals, social agitators, and authors of literary or cultural manifestos operating within and beyond national boundaries. Contributions may address the circulation of U.S. periodicals abroad, their dialogue with foreign presses, practices of translation and reprinting, or the influence of transnational movements such as abolitionism, feminism, anti-imperialism, and civil rights on American print culture.

By foregrounding periodical culture as a dynamic and relational arena of debate and negotiation, this panel seeks to illuminate how U.S. national imaginaries have been constructed, contested, and continually reshaped through the material and ideological circuits of print—one page at a time.

KEYWORDS

Literary Public Spheres, Cultural Nationalism, Transnational Literary Circulation



PANEL 19

Cultural and Literary Responses to the Erosion of Democratic Values and Civil Rights

CHAIR/S:

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The erosion of democratic values and civil rights in the United States has become increasingly visible through the convergence of war discourse, border enforcement, and the expansion of executive and carceral power. If the language of democracy once promised equal civil rights and political recognition, the contemporary moment has exposed democracy's vulnerability to the suspension and selective application of law. The normalization of exceptional measures through militarized language and action in the name of national security, such as the acts of violence committed by ICE, as well as the violent management of dissent, points to a contemporary political culture in which democratic legitimacy is weakened through exclusion, surveillance, violence and coercion. At the same time, recent waves of protest in and beyond the United States, such as No-Kings marches, pro-Palestine campus mobilizations, and anti-war demonstrations, have made visible the extent to which domestic struggles over rights are inseparable from border politics and contemporary forms of neoimperialism. This conjuncture invites us to reconsider the relationship between literary and artistic production and political resistance, and the extent to which they establish and challenge the idea of democracy within (neo)liberal orders. Literature, artistic practices, performance, and protest media generate memories and archives that challenge official narratives of intervention and war-waging (including kidnappings, killings, sanctions and embargoes), border securitization, and national belonging.

This panel seeks contributions that examine the cultural life of political resistance to show how texts and performances corroborate/challenge official accounts of war and state violence; how diasporic communities create (counter)archives of repression and solidarity; how protest aesthetics travel across borders; and how mobilizations abroad reverberate into U.S. protest culture and domestic border politics, and vice versa.

Suggested topics include, but are not limited to:

- Imperial imaginaries and narratives of intervention
- ICE, deportation regimes, and the cultural politics of border enforcement and securitization
- Literature and art in response to the erosion of civil rights
- Protest aesthetics and the representation of dissent
- Diaspora counter-archives, memory, and political solidarity

KEYWORDS

Democracy, Neoimperialism, Resistance, Artistic Practices, Borders, Dissent



PANEL 20

Miscellaneous.

Open to submissions of papers that do not fit in the list of accepted panels above.

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