

AAAS Conference 2011 (38th International Conference)

IS IT CAUSE IT'S COOL? AFFECTIVE ENCOUNTERS WITH AMERICAN CULTURE

Organized by the Department of English and American Studies, University of Vienna, and the Department of British, North American and Anglophone Studies, Saarland University

November 4-6, 2011
Schloss Leopoldskron

This conference intends to focus on the conjunction between the appeal and the rejection of “American culture” since the end of the Cold War. What factors are there on the affective level that make certain products/texts popular or unpopular? And more importantly, what happens when American culture becomes entangled in affective encounters with worldwide consumers?

An analysis of how people feel about “America” raises interesting questions concerning the construction of identities of audiences and consumers through these affective encounters. Processes of Americanization can connect affect (associated with popular culture in general and new media in particular) to national and transnational identity formations in Europe and around the world. Such analysis of the politics of culture also shifts critical attention away from notions of American culture linked to a specific place (i.e. the United States) to the processes of flows and processes of transfer across places, in which “America” is an imaginary cultural descriptor. In what ways are consumers invested in this cultural transfer and the diverse appropriations of “America,” and which effects do these affective investments have?

We are looking forward to receiving proposals for papers from a wide variety of academic disciplines including American Studies, Cultural Studies, Media Studies, Film Studies, History, Political Science, Sociology, Communication Studies, and Gender Studies. We also encourage talks by practitioners in the media and culture industries, teacher, and educators.

Possible topics for papers include, but are not limited to:

- Processes of transfer of American culture and its local appropriations in Europe (e.g. music, film, style, etc.)
- Recent receptions of American popular culture (music, film, TV, etc)
- New currents in Transnational American Studies from the point of view of embodied experiences and affective relations; the role of affect in the encounters with “American” culture
- Reactions to issues of globalization, Siliconization, McDonaldization, etc. in different countries in Europe
- Theoretical contributions which provide critical perspectives on academic theories regarding Americanization, McDonaldization, globalization, etc. and the limits of their productivity in light of recent cultural developments
- Global marketing of “American” icons
- Fan-cultures
- World-wide appeal of “American” music

Organization:

The conference will be organized by Astrid M. Fellner (Saarland University), Eugen Banauch and Klaus Heissenberger (University of Vienna)

Location:

The conference will be held at Schloss Leopoldskron.

Contact:

Proposals for entire panels are more than welcome. For paper proposals, please send your abstract (about 300 words) and a short scholarly biography (in one file) **by May 15, 2011**, to

amerikanistik@mx.uni-saarland.de