PURSUING THE TRIVIAL

INVESTIGATIONS INTO POPULAR CULTURE

UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED ARTS VIENNA & UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA,
JUNE 1-2, 2012
INVITED SPEAKERS
Braidt, Andrea B. (University of Fine Arts Vienna, Austria)

**Melancholia at the End of the Series**

Friday, 01.06.2012, 17:50 – 18:10, Panel: Nostalgia

According to psychoanalytic-semiotic Apparatus theories of the 1970s, spectators get expelled at the end of a filmic narrative in which they were “stiched/sutured” in due to the mechanisms of the seamless narrative. They remain wanting and broken subjects, at least for a little while. For narrations lasting not only 90 minutes but several seasons consisting of numerous episodes, this feeling of melancholia must be all the more dramatic – not only, I would like to argue, in a quantitative sense, but also in a qualitative, phenomenological way. In my paper I will explain in what way the specific narrative techniques of the serial induce the feeling of sadness and melancholia at the end of a series. I will look at *The Sopranos* (USA 1999-2007, 6 seasons) and at *Friday Night Lights* (USA 2006-2011, 5 seasons) for exemplary analyses.

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**Andrea Braidt** is currently the Vice-Rector for Art and Research at the University of Fine Arts Vienna. She previously worked as a Senior Scientist in Film Studies at the Department of Theatre, Film and Media Studies at the University of Vienna. Her research interests include feminist film theory, genre theory, and queer film theory.

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Evans, Caroline (University of the Arts London, United Kingdom)

**The Peculiar Invisibility of the Fashion Model**

Saturday, 02.06.2012, 15:20 – 15:40, Panel: Paraphernalia

The earliest fashion models were considered disgraceful by their nineteenth century contemporaries. In the early twentieth-century, by contrast, the professional fashion model was seen as an interesting
modern type. Scandalously dressed at the races, startingly on show on the modelling stage, she was much written about in the press. She remained curiously invisible, however, as this short paper investigates. Spectacular yet anonymous, she had talent for objectifying herself, and a gift for ‘becoming’ the dress she modelled. Ultimately, the modernity of the mannequin lay in her paradoxical agency whereby she constituted herself as an object through the eloquence of her mute performance.

Caroline Evans is Professor of Fashion History and Theory at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design (University of the Arts London) where she teaches and writes on twentieth-century and contemporary fashion. She is a visiting professor at the Centre for Fashion Studies, Stockholm University. Her recently completed book *The Mechanical Smile: Modernism and the First Fashion Shows in France and America, 1900-1929* is due from Yale University Press in spring 2013.

Huck, Christian (Christian-Albrecht University of Kiel, Germany)

**Inside/out. Public Cocooning as an Example for the Transversality of Popular Culture**

Friday, 01.06.2012, 11:50 – 12:10, Panel: In/Outdoor

The paper will present transversality as a central attribute of popular culture. Whereas official culture is characterized by a will to cultivate, administer and maintain borders between different spheres, systems or discourses, popular culture is either indifferent to such borders (and becomes trivial) or attempts to cross such thresholds (and become subversive). Examples of transversality are manifold: pop music is both artistic and commercial, music videos ignore the distinction between diegesis and reality, fairs invite rich and poor alike, carnivals invite to transcend gender categories, football combines entropy and negentropy, blogs blend earnest topics with easy language, etc.

One of the borders patrolled by those legitimizing official culture is that between the privacy of the home and the public sphere outside. In my talk I will present different historical examples of how
popular practices and media have transversed this distinction by enabling mobile cocoons: car
driving, for example, allows to dwell in a home away from home; reading creates private spaces
within crowded trains and noisy airports; listening to Ipods shelters the urban walker from the
demands of city life, etc.

Christian Huck is Professor of Cultural and Media Studies, as well as Head of the
English Department, at the Christian-Albrechts-Universität in Kiel. His research
interests lie in theory, practice, and history of popular culture; pop-music, music-
videos, documentaries, fashion, and football. His publications include: The Medial
Limits of Culture (2006), Documentary Films and the Creative Treatment of
ACTuality (2007), Postmaterial Britishness: Playing Football Like a Gentleman
(2008), Rockumentaries: Documenting Music on Film (2007 and 2008), and Fashioning Society, or,

Monk, Claire (De Montfort University Leicester, United Kingdom)

Web 2.0 Fandom and James Ivory’s/E. M. Forster’s Maurice (UK, 1987). Or
What Tumblr, LiveJournal and YouTube Can Teach Us About the Life of Texts,
Transnational Reception and the Redundancy of ‘Heritage Film’ Criticism

Saturday, 02.06.2012, 17:50 – 18:10, Panel: In/Outdoor

In a Web 2.0 sequel to the study presented in my monograph Heritage Film Audiences: Period Films
and Contemporary Audiences in the UK (Edinburgh University Press, 2011), this paper draws on my
ongoing research to explore emerging forms of 21st-century online audience activity, fandom and fan
productivity around quality period films. More specifically, it considers the 21st-century reception and
(re-)appropriation of key films originally released in the 1980s to early 1990s which academic
criticism has routinely constructed and dismissed as prime exemplars of the heritage-film ‘genre’:
Merchant Ivory Productions’ cycle of adaptations from the novels of E. M. Forster.
My case study is the current and seemingly growing phenomenon, and specific forms, of online fandom and (often passionate) fan investment around Forster’s gay male *bildungsroman* and love story *Maurice* and its 1987 film adaptation, 25 years after the film’s initial cinema release. This paper explores the forms of *Maurice*’s 21st-century reception, (re-)appropriation and remixing as evidenced in Web 2.0 activity, and reflects on some of the implications: whether for our understandings of *Maurice* (Forster’s novel/Ivory’s film) as a cultural–historical object and a far from fixed or closed text, or for our wider understanding of fan engagement and productivity as expressed within participatory Web 2.0 cultures. The specific forms of this appreciation, appropriation and creative activity – among surprisingly young audiences, substantially female but sexually diverse – and in a markedly transnational context – demonstrate how far the label ‘heritage film’, and established framings of the Merchant Ivory films in relation to *English* heritage, may have become all but redundant in the age of digital convergence.

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**Dr Claire Monk** is Reader in Film & Film Culture at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK, and a founding member of DMU’s Centre for Adaptations and CATH (Cinema & Television History) Centre. She has published widely on the cultural, socio-political and contextual understanding of post-1970s British film and is known especially for her contributions to the debates around the cultural and sexual politics of the ‘heritage film’. Key publications include *Heritage Film Audiences: Period Films and Contemporary Audiences in the UK* (Edinburgh: EUP, 2011) and *British Historical Cinema* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), co-edited with Amy Sargeant. Prior to her full-time academic career she was a film critic for *Sight & Sound* for much of the 1990s.

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**Spitaler, Georg (University of Vienna, Austria)**

**Fictional Political Theory? Relating Theory and ’Subversive’ Pop Culture in Dietmar Dath’s Novel *Für immer in Honig***

Friday, 01.06.2012, 15:20 – 15:40, Panel: Fiction
In the last decades, debates on *pop culture and the political* have transgressed academia and have also been prominent in pop(ular) media. Amongst the various contributions at the intersection of art, theory and entertainment are the novels and essays by the German authors Thomas Meinecke and Dietmar Dath. Taking the example of Dietmar Dath’s novel ‘Für immer in Honig’ (Berlin 2005/2008) the paper tries to identity specific literary forms of political theory. Drawing on Thomas Ernst’s conceptualization of ‘subversive writing’ it will be discussed how the novel reloads and ‘theorizes’ relations of pop culture and radical politics. How does the fictional text give life to theory and which aesthetic strategies are adopted in the course of this? How on the other hand does fiction uncover contradictions and blind spots of political theory?

On a general level, the paper focuses on the possible insights of reading fictional texts and genres for political theory.

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**Georg Spitaler** is an independent researcher and part-time lecturer at the Department of Political Science at the University of Vienna. He is also a member of the editorial board of the Austrian football magazine, *Ballester*. His research interests include political theory, football history, and the intersections between politics and popular culture, especially when it comes to sports.

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**Storey, John (University of Sunderland, United Kingdom)**

**The Game of Love**

Saturday, 02.06.2012, 11:50 – 12:10, Panel: Games

My paper will present the theoretical framing and some of the research findings of a research project called Media Love. The project (which I am working on with a colleague) looks at how young people (aged 18 to 25) use media when they fall in love. By use we mean two things: the use of media discourses and the use of media technologies.
The paper will be divided into two parts. The first part will present the theoretical framing of the project, including a) claims about the ‘mediatization’ of romantic love, and b) our understanding of the romantic power of the media. The second part of the paper will focus on some of the findings of 38 discursive questionnaires, and 10 semi-structured interviews (almost 15 hours of recorded material).

John Storey is Professor of Cultural Studies at the University of Sunderland. Director of the Centre for Research in Media and Cultural Studies, his research focus is on cultural studies, especially cultural theory, cultural history and theoretical as well as historical approaches to popular culture. His extensive list of publications on Cultural Studies includes: Inventing Popular Culture: from Folklore to Globalisation (2003), Cultural Theory and Popular Culture (5th ed. 2009), and Culture and Power in Cultural Studies: The Politics of Signification (2010).
POSTGRADUATE SPEAKERS
Armbruster, Stefanie (Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain)

Re-Interpreting the Past. Nostalgia and Reruns of Popular Television Series

Friday, 01.06.2012, 16:30 – 16:50, Panel: Nostalgia

Today, television is a field of hard competition in which innovation is demanded in order to gain the central good of desire – the attention of the audiences. As Kiefer highlights, while the entrance of an artwork into the archive is more likely to be a stimulus for the commercial art market, the declaration of a popular culture artefact to the category of the well-known things rather means its loss of value for the media industry (see Kiefer 1998, p. 102). However, above all since privatization, television channels relied increasingly on reruns. Audiovisual content each time occupies more space in the world-wide-web with ‘old’ television series as one of its priorities. This paper wants to focus on this phenomenon without highlighting it as an economical praxis.

Interestingly, already the philosopher of art Broder Christiansen has hinted to the fact that a piece of art may ‘grow’ and gain new “differential quality” within the course of time (see Christiansen 1909, p. 124). With a look on the macro-level, Kompare (2005) argues that reruns are more than a mere repetition of the ever-same for its viewers. He explicitly refers to nostalgia. This paper wants to bring these thoughts together. Focussing on the micro-level and within the frame of a media and cultural studies perspective, it scrutinizes how the television reruns may appear with new ‘differential quality’ when they undergo a nostalgic re-interpretation from the side of the audiences. Drawing back on the literature on nostalgia (see e.g. Davis 1979, Tannock 1995, Sprengler 2009 or Jameson 1991) and television reruns (see e.g. Kompare 2005) I will intend to work out how and on which layers – from the rerun as an artefact as such to the single layers of the audiovisual text – a once popular television series put into a new (temporal) context may favour such a subsequent shift of meaning.

References


Stefanie Armbruster is a PhD-candidate at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) and a member of the research group GRISS. With her dissertation she explores nostalgia in German and Spanish television. Her research focus includes media studies, cultural studies and qualitative methodology in media studies, with special interests in innovation in popular television and nostalgia.

Cachola, Ana-Cristina (Portuguese Catholic University, Portugal)

Pursued by the Trivial. Joanas Vasconcelos’ Public Artworks

Saturday, 02.06.2012, 14:00 – 14:20, Panel: Paraphernalia

Any material is possible, any technique is possible, you can draw from fashion, from music, theatre, even from MTV, but the problem is, in the middle of all that, what makes this or that a work of art?

Joana Vasconcelos

Joana Vasconcelos is a Portuguese contemporary artist. In the first decade of the 21st century, she attained international renown with her high profile contribution to the 2005 Venice Biennial, where
she presented *A Noiva* (*The Bride*) a monumentally scaled chandelier made from around 25,000 feminine tampons. In Portugal, she became the youngest artist ever subject of an anthological exhibition (*Netless*, 2009).

The utilization of objects taken from daily routines has been one of the defining characteristics of the Joana Vasconcelos ‘brand’, which through its multiplication and repetition expresses irony as to the euphoria of contemporary society and its habits regarding consumption. Within the imaginary universe of the artist questions of identity occupy a high profile due not only to the constant recovery and resorting to clichés of Portuguese cultural identity but also constantly returning to gender related issues. By using different ordinary materials (tampons, different textiles, ties, plastic flowers, ceramic dogs, etc), Vasconcelos interrogates Portuguese and world history, myths, propaganda, traditions, and aspects of gender identity through the invocation of folkloric forms. The Portuguese artist repeatedly convoked the formal qualities of a given material in order to comment on the condition of humanity in a globalized world, on the ideals held as true or the symbolic aspects that accompany everyday life.

Commissions and site-specific public art installations have assumed a singular relevance in Vasconcelos’ work. Some of her most recent and important public artworks are; *La Theiere*, Paris (2010); *Sr. Vinho*, Torres Vedras (2010); *Varina*, Ponte D. Luís I, Porto (2008); *The Jewel of the Tagus*, Tower of Belém, Lisbon (2008).

Against this backdrop, this paper aims to analyze how the artist’s public art interventions carved up aesthetics of triviality and banality (near the kitsch), which pursued the spectator in the public space.

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Ana Cristina Cachola is a PhD candidate in Culture Studies, at the Faculty of Human Sciences, Portuguese Catholic University. Her dissertation focuses on representations of cultural identity in contemporary art, through which she seeks to explore visual narratives of identity and their contribution to the evocation of the collective memory. Her main subjects of interest are Portuguese contemporary art and the visual representations of cultural identity.
The daily practice of making one's way is as much as quotidian as intriguing. Abundant vocabularies in the English language describe the diverse ways of walking. Meandering, strolling, plodding, marching, prowling, scurrying, hobbling, staggering are only a few that capture the various experience of walking. It is a gesture that sets our body in motion. We perceive and feel the world on the move. Our bodily perceptions and sensations are in constant negotiation with the material surroundings. Social relations are often unravelled in the analysis of walking.

Artistic interests in the walking practice flourished in the 1970s' Britain. The paper proceeds with some detailed description of the pedestrian scenes in the film *Fergus Walking* which was produced by the artist William Raban. Both the bodily gestures of pedestrian form of walking and the landscape of derelict East End in London are portrayed. With a specific focus on rhythms, I intend to conceive walking as a movement with distinct (albeit amenable to changes) tempos, accents, beats and intervals. Heartbeat, alternating footsteps, swinging arms configures the temporal basis of the body in relation to a vast array of rhythms in which the body is situated. By locating the rhythm of walking in a specific social and historical background, I argue that quotidian culture is both made and manifested in the bodily engagement with the world.

Yi Chen is currently doing a PhD on Cultural Studies at the University of Sussex. Her research focuses on the exploration of contemporary British culture through temporal-spatial analysis, particularly the rhythmicity of everyday life. Her research interest includes visual culture, everyday practices in the urban context and psychoanalytic theories.
Taking a Hike. The Cultural Politics of Outdoor Recreation

The conference contribution “Taking a Hike” will investigate the cultural and political implications of outdoor and “wilderness” recreation. Using examples from North America’s Pacific Northwest, “Taking a Hike” will show how activities such as hiking, climbing, or paddling are made into markers of regional, social, and sometimes even ethnic, identities, and lay claims onto the physical landscape.

The non-trivial nature of exercising outdoors has already been noted by Thoreau. But what still is seen as an assertion of the individual, whether as purely physical exercise or imbued with spiritual meaning, does in fact mark cultural and physical territory, especially in the Pacific Northwest, where outdoor recreation and the bodies it produces are seen as essentially regional.

The cultural production—including the advertisement strategies of the outdoors industry—of “healthy” and “athletic” bodies exercising in natural settings often claims them to be representative of the region. Yet these bodies are conspicuously white, and the obligatory equipment and wear/fashion conspicuously expensive. Outdoor recreation is—with significant exceptions—a privileged assertion of leisure, often denoting an urban, mostly white, background of the practitioner, and the ability to afford the increasingly expensive equipment.

Similarly problematic is the often explicit claim on the physical space the practitioners make. By demanding the “protection” of natural settings and by using the highly problematic label of “wilderness,” outdoor recreation enthusiasts assert very specific and privileged meanings for the spaces they use. They thus engage in an act of producing a landscape that denies non-leisurely or simply different uses to these areas’ socially less-privileged inhabitants.

Hiking and other outdoor activities may seem trivial, even apolitical. The presentation “Taking a Hike,” however will show that they are anything but.

Georg Drennig studied North American Studies at the University of Vienna, Austria, and Georgetown University, U.S., and is now a PhD candidate in the Advanced Research in Urban Systems program at the University of Essen/Duisburg, working on the Utopian Imaginaries of Vancouver. His main interest is in spatially-turned Cultural Studies and Ecocriticism. Within the latter
field, he has been called an adherent to the “school of stone-kicking realists,” and association which he is glad to be guilty of.

Eschbaumer, Malaika (University of Vienna, Austria)

A Testimony of Embodied Mundaneness around 1800. Costenoble's Theatrejournal

Friday, 01.06.2012, 14:20 – 14:40, Panel: Fiction

Carl Ludwig Costenoble (1769 - 1837) was an actor, director and playwright. Operating at the former Hamburger Nationaltheater, where Lessing wrote his "Hamburger Dramaturgie" as well as at the Wiener Burgtheater, he left a voluminous diary of his period.

Initially part of a so called "Wandertruppe" - a loosely associated group of actors, traveling through Germany at the end of the 18th century - Costenoble experienced the siege of the French during his time in Hamburg. Upon achieving a lifetime engagement at the Burgtheater he immerged into the societal bustle of urban Viennese cultural life. The distinct ambiences that are embodied and verbalised in his diary can be regarded as a treasure of trivial everyday life. The diarist is for example indulging in one of his theatre-colleague's love affairs and subsequent marital quarrels who he therefore refers to as "Nemo" throughout the diary; or describing in detail the beloved sumptuous carp meals, especially after extensively consuming alcohol: "Wir ließen den im Magen begrabenen Fisch tüchtig im Punschmeere schwimmen." And of course the daily routine behind the stage is a fascinating issue of the memoirs: Try visualizing the drunk prompter lashing about when getting to his box, the actually loaded gun that was to be used on stage for Kotzebue's "Menschenhauß und Reue" or the many faintings of female audiences and actresses ("Madame Becker glaubte sich heute vom Publikum beleidigt, und fiel aus Kränkung in Ohnmacht. Ob die Ohnmacht wirklich oder theatralisch war, mag der Teufel entscheiden bey diesen Prinzessinnen.").

Costenoble's diary (obtained from the handwritten original document) is a rich source of the common in the late 18th and early 19th century and provides fascinating insights into the mystery and mundaneness of the activity of an endearing genuine man.
Gerrard, Steven (University of Wales Trinity Saint David, UK)

The Victorian Music Hall

Friday, 01.06.2012, 16:50 – 17:10, Panel: Nostalgia

The Music Hall grew during the Victorian era to become the mass populist entertainment for the population. Every town in Britain had one, a place where people from all strictures of society could come to see and be seen; to be entertained for two hours by a variety of acts that not only showed off the performers’ skills, but also linked the disparate audiences together for a single evening.

As the years passed, so the notoriety of the Music Hall acts and camaraderie that was produced within grew. Eventually, entrepreneurial businessmen tapped into this commercial enterprise and had purpose-built buildings daubed in the latest architectural fads and whimsies to provide a ‘home’ for these acts and his punters. The buildings were a status symbol of his ‘power’ and influence, and with names such as The Apollo and The Coliseum to give them gravitas approaching Olympian ideals, so the owners basked in wealth and glory.

The acts were varied, ranging from singers, joke-tellers and comics, to acrobats and dancers. They all aimed to entertain. But they also did something remarkable: through the two hour show, the audience were entertained; they made the audience share a symbiotic relationship with one another; they became recruitment officers for the Army; they inspired War Poets to write about them; they made short films that made them stars across the country. And, they and the buildings they performed in began to reflect both the ideals and foibles of their era.
This paper will briefly discuss the history of the rise in popularity of the Music Hall – an intrinsically *British* construction – and then explore aspects of sexuality, gender, and class as part of the Music Hall tradition. It will be delivered by Steve Gerrard, Lecturer in Film and Visual Culture at University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

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**Steve Gerrard** is a lecturer in Film, Media and Visual Culture at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. He has recently finished his PhD which examined the cultural specificity of the Carry On Films as representations of British life and tradition. His interests are mainly in ideas of British 'low culture' such as: the seaside and saucy postcards, the Music Hall, Britain's horror and science fiction cinema, British sitcoms of the seventies, and the music of Status Quo. Steve also loves Doctor Who.

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**Harrer, Sabine (University of Vienna, Austria)**

**A Quest for Salient Truth. How Games Represent Loss, Mourning and Overcoming**

Saturday, 02.06.2012, 11:30 – 11:50, Panel: Games

One central motivator of this project is to challenge a well-established belief about games: That games and their mechanisms are simply too trivial to express deep human experience. I want to challenge this belief by asking: *What does it take to represent loss, mourning and overcoming in games?* The hope is that my thesis will contribute to the efforts of those who wish to further expand the range of what games can be, including, but not limited to, game designers, art critics, educators, but most of all: players. The combination of game design and cultural theory as a tool for knowledge acquisition is particularly compelling as it allows research to dwell deeply in both the theoretical and the practical dimensions of knowledge: Hands-on design offers a way to make tangible what we know in theory – and vice versa. So another goal of this project is to test this methodological mix and develop a view on knowledge and theory that is able to encompass a creative aspect of
understanding: Experiential design as a research perspective complementing well-established theoretical positions.

Sabine Harrer studied English, cultural and media studies at the University of Vienna, and is currently doing her PhD on digital culture and game design. She has taught courses on related subjects at the departments of communication science and English, Vienna, and is now pursising her interdisciplinary interests by teaching design courses with hands-on game practitioners. In her work, she is particularly interested in relations of power, identity and game culture.

Kaerlein, Timo (University of Paderborn, Germany)

Playing with Personal Media. Pursuing the Trivial in Present-Day Mobile Technology

Saturday, 02.06.2012, 16:30 – 16:50, Panel: Emerging

Mobile technology is ubiquitous and an integral part of everyday media usage. One remarkable development in the field of personal devices (smartphones, tablet computers etc.) is the trivialization of their interfaces and appearance, especially when compared to the complexity of the underlying software and hardware. The iPhone and its successors trump with usability, they offer simple and seemingly direct access to many functions. Software can be handled with basic hand gestures or voice control, no expert knowledge is required to use the devices. Rather, current apps and operating systems are designed for a playful approach that favours unbiased exploration. Albeit the wide array of possible applications, the materiality of the device as such raises to prominence as another key factor of user approval. Contemporary personal media invite users to play with them, to fumble with the device, to stroke, pat and touch them constantly. Using personal media is a strangely intimate procedure, the bond between user and device tightened by habitual use.

The presentation shall investigate forms of the trivial in both device materiality and interface architecture from a media studies perspective. Playing with personal media - in the ways briefly mentioned above - is analysed as a crucial way of adopting a new technology. A focus shall be placed
upon the process of blackboxing, a technique of invisibilization common to media technology wherein the social and material prerequisites of a given artefact are hidden from the user. Playing with personal media is situated between the poles of user infantilization and the freedom of exploring new practices. The trivial is ambiguous in that it denies insight into more fundamental processes but at the same time creates a space for playful variation not requiring professional knowledge.

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Timo Kaerlein is a doctoral researcher at the DFG-funded Research Training Group Automatisms at the University of Paderborn (Germany), which investigates decentralized processes of structural change in information technology, media and culture. His research interests include digital culture, personal/mobile media, cultural theory of play and sociological technology studies.

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Kilvington, Daniel (University of Sunderland, United Kingdom)


Saturday, 02.06.2012, 10:30 – 10:50, Panel: Games

This research examines the barriers facing British-Asians in English professional football. At present there is a vast under representation as there are only five playing professionally despite there being a population of over 3.6 million. This exclusion is further highlighted when we consider the 1.8 million black demographic who represent over 250 players at professional level. Hence, this begs the question, ‘Where are the British-Asian football players?’ Thus, the paper will highlight possible factors such as physicality, cultural difference, social segregation and lack of role models with the aid of semi-structured interviews with professional British-Asian players as well as other elite figures and organisations. The aims of the paper will be to (a) provide a historical account of British-Asians and then contextualise the argument by placing the community in contemporary society, (b) highlight
their relationship with sport and in particular, football (c) critically examine their exclusion focussing on the multi-faceted barriers and (d) relate this problem to wider society indicating how football can act as a tool in bringing diverse communities together which currently live parallel lives with little communication. It is imperative that we address and tackle such barriers that have excluded British-Asians from English professional football for so long. Arguably, as long as certain groups, ‘races’ or ethnicities are excluded from the beautiful game, football cannot be called a level playing field.

Daniel Kilvington is a third-year PhD candidate of Media and Cultural Studies at the University of Sudnerland. His areas of interest are ‘race’, racisms and national identity, and his current research examines the exclusion of British Asian footballers in English professional football. His publications include: British Asians and Racism within contemporary English Football (2011), The ‘Asian Frame’, Football and the Sport Media (2012), and his co-authored book, ‘Race’, Racism and Sports Journalism (2012).

König, Anna (University of the Arts London, United Kingdom)

A Stitch in Time. Cultural Constructions of Household Mending in Everyday Life

Friday, 01.06.2012, 11:30 – 11:50, Panel: In/Outdoor

In contemporary consumer culture, few activities are deemed so pointless as those that involve the repair and conservation of everyday items such as clothing. Indeed, as mass-produced goods have become ever cheaper for the global population, it has become a sign of prosperity to be able to dispose of any item that is less than perfect, however minor or superficial the damage.

Yet growing interest in the sustainability of material goods has led to a small body of work around craftsmanship (e.g. Sennett, 2008; Crawford, 2009). Related to this is the notion of ‘everyday’ skills that two or three generations ago were commonplace (Burman, 1999), but which have tended to
disappear as economies flourish. Specifically, my interest lies in those mundane mending skills that have typically been practiced and taught by women, such as the repair and alteration of clothing.

Many feminists of the 1970s and 80s rejected such unpaid labour (and therefore also lost the skills), but in an age of global economic uncertainty, there are indications of a re-engagement with the values of domestic craft. Does this, however, represent a genuine revival of mundane household skills, or is it merely the middle-classes dabling with nostalgic ideas of craft?

Changing gender roles; notions of valued versus unvalued labour; and Veblenian themes of conspicuous consumption and waste are all relevant to this discussion. The subject also invites questions relating to the meaning of repair and mending on a more abstract level. Is the desire to mend driven purely by economic necessity, or does it reflect a deeper unconscious desire to preserve and protect valued objects? If this is taking place on a societal level, does it reflect changing values, a move away from rapacious consumption, or is it merely a temporary change in behaviour in the face of economic uncertainty? Many intriguing questions arise from the apparently mundane practices of mending, and they deserve to be explored in more detail.

Bibliography


Anna König is a lecturer in Cultural and Historical Studies at the University of Arts, London. She completed a degree in Applied Psychology at Sussex University before studying art and design at Central Saint Martins and then fashion history at the London College of Fashion. She has contributed to a number of academic texts on fashion and the fashion media, and has written for several national newspapers and magazines in the UK. Current research interests include the representation of fashion and issues around sustainable fashion production and consumption.
Köster, Katharina (University of Würzburg, Germany)

**Fashion's Final Frontier. The Correlation of Gender Roles and Fashion in Star Trek**

Friday, 01.06.2012, 14:00 – 14:20, Panel: Fiction

Since its creation in 1966, *Star Trek* has been a dominant part of popular culture and as thus served as the source for many cultural references. *Star Trek*’s creator Gene Roddenberry wanted to realize his vision of a utopia but at the same time, he used the futuristic setting of the show to comment on the present time, on actual social and political circumstances. This means that each series can be regarded as a mirror image of the time in which it was created. The clothing of the characters in the different series is one part of that image. The uniforms of *The Original Series* show influences of the 1960s pop art movement as well as the mini-skirt trend that experienced its peak in that decade. In the course of almost 40 years, however, many things changed. In the 1990s, in *Deep Space Nine* and *Voyager*, a unisex uniform replaced the mini-dresses, with few exceptions; the colorful shirts gave way to ones that were mostly black. This trend continues into the new century. In my paper, I will interpret the evolution of the female officers’ uniforms from feminized dresses to androgynous clothing over the development of the series as a reflection of the change of gender roles in contemporary American society. The general function of the female characters’ uniforms will be central to my analysis. The few, but noteworthy exceptions to this pattern will be given specific attention. And one of the most intriguing lines of enquiry will be, how the prequel series *Enterprise*, supposed to be set before *The Original Series*, but produced and aired from 2001 to 2005, fits in the picture.

Katharina Koester just graduated from the University of Würzburg with an M.A. in American Studies. Her research interests include Women’s and Gender Studies, focusing especially on the portrayal and construction of women and gender images in Euro-American pop culture and media.
Usagi-e. The Hare-Pictures of the Early Meiji-Era

Saturday, 02.06.2012, 14:20 – 14:40, Panel: Paraphernalia

Ukiyo-e, the pictures of the floating world, is not an unknown term in the world of art anymore. They were frowned upon as inferior art before the 20th century, but nowadays, some of these Japanese woodblock prints have an equal value to a single family house in Japan. The motives most known are landscapes, beauties and Kabuki-actors, which are traditional Japanese theatre actors, well-known and loved at the time. Consequently, research has been focused mainly on these topics and other ones are still relatively unexplored by scholars. This is the case with usagi-e, the woodblock prints containing illustrations of hares and rabbits, which have only surfaced for two consecutive years, Meiji 5 and 6 (1872-1873), simultaneously with the rabbit-boom which took hold of Tokyo for this short period of time. Until now, no Ukiyo-e-scholar has done any research on this topic and no collection, specifically on these hare-pictures, has been made, which I want to redeem with my dissertation.

The woodblock-topic of rabbits only surfaced for brief two years, that is to say Meiji 5 and Meiji 6. A veritable rabbit-boom is said to have happened in these two years, driven by the government. How did this boom emerge and what were the reasons for it? Why did it only last for two years? Do the contents of the prints give an answer to those questions? Which themes do the prints contain and which significance do they have? The purpose of this thesis is to contribute to the research of a field of Ukiyo-e, which hasn’t been investigated and known yet. New prints, which have not yet been analyzed, will be investigated, collected, analyzed and interpreted. The core of this work consists primarily of the analysis of the prints. A classification of the prints in different categories and an assignment according to their motives will also be made.
Maeder, Dominik (University of Vienna, Austria)

Laboratories of Banality. Poetics of Containment in Contemporary Reality TV

Saturday, 02.06.2012, 16:50 – 17:10, Panel: Emerging

While TV has a long history of depicting the ordinariness of everyday life, the past decade has seen the rise of multiple transnational programs like Big Brother, Germany’s/America’s/Austria’s Next Topmodel or Survivor which do not only monitor, but systematically and explicitly produce artificial environments and circumstances of banality. (Wright 2006) These procedures of staging the trivial themselves have to be regarded as essentially non-trivial, because they provide a discursive and narrative framework through which the trivial can be perceived as meaningful.

My presentation will focus on one of these procedures, probably best typified by the material habitats of Big Brother: Containment. Being a 360 degrees TV studio and a rigid social environment for its inhabitants at the same time, I shall argue, that the container serves as an experimental device (Stäheli 2000), allowing for the observation of the ordinary within a highly competitive framework. Rather than being a theatre, staging the play of neoliberal entrepreneurship (McCarthy 2007; Couldry 2008), containment might best be described as producing laboratorial situations. In these laboratories of banality, televisual techniques of surveillance and neoliberal imperatives are assembled in order to create epistemic and affective uncertainty about the ordinary for the participants and the viewers alike.

Works Cited


Dominik Maeder (Vienna/Konstanz) holds an MA in Media and Cultural Analysis (2009) from the Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf and is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Vienna. Since 2011 he is a fellow at the Graduate School “Das Reale in der Kultur der Moderne” (University of Konstanz) with a project on televisual governmentality in contemporary US TV series and German reality shows.

Metzner, Alina (Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany)

Land of the Stupid, Home of the Brave. Diesel Island between Subversion and Conformity

Saturday, 02.06.2012, 15:00 – 15:20, Panel: Paraphernalia

My presentation deals with the clothing company Diesel, which is famous for its provocative ways of advertising such as mocking at environmental and geopolitical problems, nonconformity, exaggerated representation of sexuality, including sadomasochistic elements and allusions on masturbation or group sex. I am investigating Diesel’s outstanding provocative mode of communication, which refers to kitsch, camp and subversion. In its advertising campaigns Diesel tries to construct its own eccentric actuality by means of mocking and trivializing a profound reality. For example the Daily African (2001) campaign reverses the positions of Western and African societies: African people are depicted as hedonistic and affluent, whereas the Western ones as economically and socially underdeveloped. Love Nature (2004) is probably one of the most sexually loaded advertising campaigns, since heavy hints at intercourse and genitals are hard to misinterpret. Global
Warming Ready (2007) represents a captivating colourful world in the aftermath of environmental disasters: cities as islands dived into a sea or the North Pole as a global beach. The Be Stupid (2010) campaign deconstructs the idea of being stupid and provides it with the characteristics of being smart. Transforming hegemonic established concepts and values, Diesel defies “Are You Smart Enough to Be Stupid?” (N. a., Be Stupid Catalogue F/W 2010).

My presentation will focus on the advertising campaign Diesel Island: Land of the Stupid, Home of the Brave (2011). This one is particularly provocative and intertextual, since it combines the constructed Diesel reality, tracing back to all provocative techniques of its previous campaigns on the one hand, and well-defined conformity on the other hand. Diesel Island’s origin, laws and social structure are direct allusions to the USA’s origin, laws and social structure, which are nevertheless criticized. Does it make Land of the Stupid subversive or is it just a part of the system it tries to undermine?

Alina Metzner studied English and German Studies at the V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Ukraine, and the Ruhr University Bochum. She is doing a PhD on Cultural Studies at the Ruhr University Bochum and is currently teaching German and English at the Gesamtschule Holsterhausen in Essen. Her dissertation focuses on provocation and its simulation in Diesel’s advertising campaigns. Her research interest includes subversion in fashion and advertising, its influence on reality construction, as well as its cultural meaning.

Priebe, Sören (University of Vienna, Austria)

The Rebirth of the Trabi. East German Consumer Identity as Counter-Memory

Friday, 01.06.2012, 17:30 – 17:50, Panel: Nostalgia

For over ten years, both scholars and journalists have wondered about the East-German predilection for everyday objects of the vanished GDR state: Katharina Witt’s TV appearance in a blouse of the FDJ (the youth organization of the GDR), sales of devotional objects of the MfS (secret service of the GDR), and „tourist safaris“ with „Trabis“ through East German cities triggered an enormous response in the media and scholarship. Especially literary studies have argued intensively about the depiction
of a „pure“ adolescence in the GDR. The omnipresent label “Ostalgie” for this type of memory is as common as it is controversial.

This presentation argues that the term “Ostalgie” falls short, because it implicates a private, glorifying and in the end passive retrospective, which neglects that the memory of the trivial contains its own value for the discourse about the GDR. The memory of the everyday life and its symbols challenges the common view of the GDR as an “Unrechtsdidaktur”, and avoids taboos of the memorialization through addressing them with material representatives. Thus, re-enacting the consumer goods of the „socialist economy of scarcity“ facilitates the otherwise marginalized memorialization of the GDR as a „Heile Welt der Diktatur“.

This mode of remembering through the trivial is both integrative and exclusive: It defines a community of shared memory and excludes the inexperienced. The affirmative devotion for the GDR does not only serve the self-assurance of a group’s communicative memory, but can also be employed to criticize an experienced reality without necessarily developing alternatives. By analyzing recent representations of the GDR (especially the DDR-Museum Berlin and Moritz von Uslar’s novel “Deutschboden”), I will outline the changes in the depiction of everyday life in the GDR since the “Ostalgie-Welle” of the early 2000s. I argue that the trivial has its own productive meaning to establish otherwise marginalized forms of memory, both within literature and museums.

Sören Priebe is currently a PhD-candidate at University of Vienna. He studied at University of Greifswald and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research focuses on childrens literature as well as on memory studies.
While the mediascape is constantly subject to changes executed by different actors, creative acts lead to expansions, transformations and re-designs of medial formats. Certainly not just a recent phenomenon, these developments can be observed especially inside and outside the professionalized cultural industry. As the fields of profession and fandom become increasingly intertwined, particularly recent computer-based game concepts show the implementation of cross-medial elements to generate a multi-layered gaming experience entailing a conversion of set patterns and user-generated-content.

To facilitate the creation of immersive and interactive aspects the key elements are frequently derived from particular narrative forms that are based in popular culture. In exploring creative acts of transmedial storytelling, wherein one central aspect is the appropriative use of certain topoi rooted in the popular. In consequence, curiosity and secrecy appear as a motivation for engagement leading to ludic but nevertheless committed, resourceful and eventually imaginative actions.

Alexander Schwinghammer works as a research associate for Theory and History of Visual Communication at the Bauhaus University in Weimar. Alexander's academic background is in cultural studies, anthropology and theatre studies. His research interests include performance theory, visual culture, the visuality of war, approaches to appropriative acts and the anthropological momentum of reporting.

Voigt, Kati (University of Leipzig, Germany)

Becoming Trivial. The Book Trailer

Despite the introduction of audiobooks and e-books, the printed issues of new stories still are in high demand. However, in a globalized world which is more and more ruled by mass media and technology, it is increasingly difficult for writers and publishers to promote their books. The solution is almost ironic: popular media, which is supposed to decrease readership, is turned into a tool to
increase the number of readers. In 2003 the book trailer emerged as a new web-based marketing strategy for the launch of new books. While video advertisements for books were made before 2003, *Dark Symphony* by Christine Feehan was the first proper example of this new form of media. Since then the appearance of the book trailer has changed considerably. The paper examines specific examples and highlights methods that establish the relationship between the content of the book and its representation in the book trailer. Although guidelines apply for the production of book trailers, such as constraints relating to time and content, there are no limitations for the imagination of the producers. A book trailer may be simple, supported only by music and pictures, but they may also be as complex as short films. Additionally, book trailers are not limited to the promotion of one specific genre or age group. Depending on the viral potential of social networks such as MySpace, YouTube and Facebook, book trailers reach a global audience and, therefore, open up new markets.

It can be argued, while book trailers have not yet reached the realm of the everyday, they depend on common tropes found in popular film. Over time, they will gradually come to the attention of communication and media studies and this paper wants to present a starting point for this development.

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**Kati Voigt** studied English and Mathematics at the University of Leipzig and is currently working on her PhD. Her research focuses on the development and characteristics of time travel in children’s and young adult fiction. Her main interests include the fourth dimension (in time and space), mathematics in literature and fantasy literature. She currently teaches courses in Cultural and Literary Studies at the University of Leipzig.

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Waha, Aimee (University of Würzburg, Germany)

007 - The Man with the Golden Taste. (A) Bond between the Trivial and the Exclusive

Friday, 01.06.2012, 15:00 – 15:20, Panel: Fiction
Towards the beginning of the latest James Bond novel, *Carte Blanche* (2011) by Jeffery Deaver, the double-0 agent awakens in his Chelsea flat, exhausted after a dangerous mission, and starts a morning routine in which the accessories are described in detail: He shaves with a “double-bladed safety razor, its handle of light buffalo horn”. He puts on “a navy-blue Canali suit, a white sea island shirt and a burgundy grenadine tie, the latter items from Turnbull & Asser. He donned black shoes, slip-ons; (...) Onto his wrist he slipped his steel Rolex Oyster Perpetual, the 34-mm model” (pp. 27-28).

This focus on trivial detail is not a new development in the James Bond novels. In fact, authors writing in the series continue a style set up by the creator of 007. When Ian Fleming introduced his secret agent in the 1950s, he took great care in describing and naming everyday goods used by his hero – a style that Kingsley Amis has called the “Fleming Effect” (*James Bond Dossier*, 1965). Invariably, these items are of the luxurious kind (e.g. marmalade bought at Fortnum & Mason’s), which suggests a lifestyle of luxury that is set out meticulously yet carried off effortlessly. The trivial is married to the exclusive.

This paper proposes to show that the Fleming Effect is at the root of the product placement that audiences of the 007 films have become so familiar with - be it the seemingly accidental display of a Sony Ericsson mobile or an Omega watch. By looking at the novels and the films, this paper will trace the development from Fleming’s fastidious attention to name-branding in the novels to the product placement of brands in the films. This paper will explore how highlighting the trivial in a super-hero’s life serves the needs of an audience over the decades – from post-war Britain to the globalized market of today.

Aimée Waha holds an M.A. in Irish Studies from Boston College and an M.A. in English Literature from Eichstätt University. She is a teacher for English and German at the Regiomontanus-Gymnasium in Haßfurt where she is currently teaching a seminar called “James Bond and Beyond – The Spy in Popular Culture”. She is also working on a dissertation in contemporary Irish drama at the University of Würzburg.