

ABSTRACTS AND BIOS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Lecture: Contemporary Native American Protest and Environmental Justice

Laura-Isabella Heitz (MLU Halle-Wittenberg)

This presentation will provide an overview of contemporary Native American struggles for self-determination, sovereignty, and environmental justice by way of discussing examples of Indigenous resistance. Amongst other things, we will look at protests against the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) at Standing Rock, North Dakota, in 2016 and early 2017. At Sacred Stone Camp, 10,000 Indigenous activists, environmentalists, and Water Protectors came together using non-violent direct action to fight for their environmental and civil rights. Nonetheless, actions ended in the brutal dispersal of protestors, arrests, and denial. Looking at the objections against DAPL as well as more recent examples of Native American struggles for self-determination, I will discuss relevant concepts, political issues, and forms of resistance that help approach the topic of Indigenous Environmental Justice (IEJ) within a settler-colonial society like the United States. The talk and subsequent discussion will also address primary material to use in the EFL-classroom to broach such issues of contemporary Indigenous (protest) culture.



Laura-Isabella Heitz is a PhD candidate at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg where she received her B.A. degree in Intercultural European and American Studies (IKEAS) in 2016 and her M. Sc. degree in International Area Studies in 2019, having written a thesis on environmental activism in the United States. In April 2020, she was awarded a postgraduate scholarship (Graduierföderung des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt) to write her thesis on *Form and Function of Native American Environmentalism in the 20th and 21st Century*. Her research interests include Native American resistance and protest cultures, environmentalism, as well as women studies in the United States.

Lecture: Monuments and the Eroding Landscape of White Supremacy

David Goldfield (UNC Charlotte)

It has not been a good year for the monumental South. Controversies over Confederate statues and memorials—most erected one or two generations after the Civil War—have roiled the South and the nation. Why now? The controversy surrounding these icons is often distilled into a conflict between heritage and hate: some white Southerners claiming that these artifacts represent homage to ancestors, not symbols of prejudice; and Blacks charging that these are marble and stone endorsements of slavery and white supremacy. The controversy, however, is part of a larger drama encompassing a series of “losses” for some white Southerners, of which the monuments are one among many examples of eroding white hegemony in the

region. "Monuments and the Eroding Landscape of White Supremacy" explores these losses and their impact on racial dynamics, including the economic and political advances of African Americans; the transformation of the regional economy to service and knowledge functions; the economic and demographic decline of rural areas and small towns; and the growing prosperity and diversity of Southern cities. The conflict between modernization and tradition—a key theme of Southern fiction—is still being played out in the contemporary South. The central place of whites, especially those residing in small towns and rural areas, has retreated in regional culture, economy, and politics. The embrace of the monuments, then, is less about Southern history, than about the perceived decline of white supremacy in the 21st-century South.



David Goldfield is the Robert Lee Bailey Professor of History at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte. A native of Memphis, he grew up in Brooklyn and attended the University of Maryland. He is the author or editor of sixteen books including two, *Cotton Fields and Skyscrapers* (1982) and *Black, White, and Southern* (1991), nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in history. His most recently published book is *America Aflame: How the Civil War Created a Nation* (2011). His newest book, *The Gifted Generation*, about life and the transformation of American politics after the Second World War (2017) was described by NPR as one of the “great books to hunker down with in 2018.” Goldfield is the Editor of the *Journal of Urban History*, and serves as Distinguished Lecturer for the Organization of American Historians and as an expert witness in

voting rights cases. He is Past President of the Southern Historical Association (2012–2013). His hobbies include reading southern novels, watching baseball, and listening to the music of Gustav Mahler and Buddy Holly.

Lecture: Making Black Lives Matter in the Classroom

Lecia J. Brooks (Southern Poverty Law Center, Montgomery, AL)

Educators play a crucial role in helping students talk openly about the historical roots and contemporary manifestations of social inequality and discrimination. Learning how to communicate about such topics as white privilege, police violence, economic inequality and mass incarceration requires practice, and facilitating critical conversations with students demands courage and skill. Teaching about the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement allows each of us to chew on multiple injustices simultaneously. We are able to teach not only about racism, its history and its present manifestations, but we also are able to point to solutions and methods of action so our students don't become disillusioned. We can talk about sexism and patriarchy, but we can also leverage conversations about sexuality using gender-neutral and affirming language.

Teaching about BLM isn't just about police brutality and the ways an organization is seeking to end it. Bringing this movement to the classroom can open the door to larger conversations about truth, justice, activism, healing and reconciliation. The work required to teach about Black Lives

Matter is extensive and heavy, but this topic can be addressed effectively in classrooms—at any grade level.



Lecia Brooks is the chief of staff for the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), where she provides counsel to senior leadership, assists with strategic planning and works with people from across the organization to ensure the SPLC's success. Before her current role, Brooks served as the SPLC's chief workplace transformation officer, where she supported leadership and staff efforts to build a culture of inclusiveness and ensure a continued focus on diversity and equity. Brooks also previously served as the SPLC's outreach director, where she traveled across the U.S. and abroad to speak about hate and extremism. Earlier, she was director of the SPLC's Civil Rights Memorial Center, an interpretive experience designed to provide visitors to the

Civil Rights Memorial with a deeper understanding of the civil rights movement.

Brooks, who joined the SPLC in 2004, has a wealth of experience in diversity advocacy training for corporations and nonprofit organizations, including Walmart, Lyft, Pixar, the Salzburg Seminar, and the Newark Public Library.

Organizers:



Julia Nitz is Lecturer of Anglo-American Cultural Studies at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. She has served as Executive Director at the Center for American Studies and is co-founder of the Intercontinental Crosscurrents Network for the study of transatlantic women's networks in the long nineteenth century (crosscurrents.uni-halle.de). Her research focusses on the American Civil War, women's life writing, intertextual cultural studies, historiographic and museum narratology as well as Anglophone (Caribbean) film and adaptation studies. Her

publications include *Georg III. Rezeption und Konstruktion in den britischen Medien (1990–2006)* (WVT, 2010), *Towards a Historiographic Narratology* (2011), and with Sandra H. Petruionis and Theresa Schön, an edited volume on *Intercontinental Crosscurrents: Women's Networks across Europe and the Americas* (2016). Her most recent monograph *Belles and Poets: Intertextuality in the Civil War Diaries of White Southern Women* (LSUP, 2020) establishes the extent to which literature offered a means of exploring ideas and convictions about class, gender, and racial hierarchies in the Civil War-era South.



Marie Schönherr studied English and History at Leipzig University and at ITT Dublin. She received her first degree in 2009 and qualified as a teacher in 2011. Afterwards she worked at several public schools in Saxony and taught courses on British and Irish culture, history and society at the English Institute at Leipzig University. Between 2003 and 2011, she was art director of the English Drama Group Leipzig. In 2013, she joined the English Institute at Martin Luther University Halle and works in the field of didactics. Here she teaches seminars, conducts student teaching at schools in and around Halle and gives talks and workshops at teacher trainings. Her interests in EFL-teaching and -research include language games, drama activities, language varieties, short fictional texts and comedy TV-series.