

1ST HELAAS YOUNG SCHOLARS SYMPOSIUM

Exploring Trends and New Directions in American Studies

Abstracts & Bios



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THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF GREECE - DEREË
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Abstracts

1) **Michał Kapis: “Orality in Contemporary Aboriginal Canadian Prose: Merging the Oral and the Written”**

The paper analyses fragments of novels by aboriginal Canadian writers, including *Ravensong* by Lee Maracle, *Kiss of the Fur Queen* by Tomson Highway, and *Green Grass, Running Water* by Thomas King, in order to identify various techniques used by Indigenous authors to introduce elements of oral tradition into their writing. Through a creative use of, among others, repetition, line breaks, typographic spaces, and circular perception of time, the authors create a unique type of prose, which might be referred to as "oralized prose." They consequently close the divide between the oral and the written. The authors draw inspiration from their Indigenous heritage and continue the storytelling traditions in a different form. As writing has sometimes been described as a tool of colonization, oralized prose may also be seen as a way of adapting this technology to the needs and cultures of Indigenous communities. The paper draws from Indigenous literary studies, Canadian literary studies, and orality studies and is a part of a larger study looking at Indigenous prose originating from different parts of the world.

2) **Sigrid Thomsen: “Mental Mobilities: Thinking of the Caribbean in the U.S.”**

My recently started Ph.D. in American Studies explores cultural and linguistic mobility in the works of several Caribbean-American writers: Junot Díaz from the Dominican Republic, Edwidge Danticat from Haiti, and Jamaica Kincaid from Antigua. At the HELAAS Young Scholars Symposium, I would like to introduce one aspect of my current work: The way the characters in Díaz's, Danticat's and Kincaid's fiction think about their home islands while living in the U.S. This theme encompasses Lucy's unwillingness to think about the West Indies at all (and her antipathy when she does think about them) in Jamaica Kincaid's novel *Lucy*, Yunior's loving, detached musings on the DR in Díaz's short story collection *This Is How You Lose Her*, and the characters in Edwidge Danticat's *Krik? Krak!* thinking about Haiti as a place of trauma and familial loss. In thus putting the emphasis on the character's mental mobilities, I want to tease out the ongoing and multifarious nature of their relationship to the Caribbean. In doing so, it will become clear that the stories these characters tell themselves about their home, while contradictory, context-dependent and fluctuating, also offer a kind of home in themselves.

3) *Ourania Zygouri*: “(Un)reliable Voices: Staging Campus Sexual Violence”

The proposed paper will discuss how twenty-first-century American plays deal with and dramatize the phenomenon of sexual violence across American campuses. The MeToo movement, the publicization of numerous cases of sexual assault, and the rather unprecedented attention to sexual attacks on campuses have put the human experience and the politics of sexual violence in the spotlight of the 2010s' American society and culture. In light of a constantly increasing public conversation over sexual (mis)conduct on American campuses and the new dimensions that this brings to the politics of gender and sexuality in general, contemporary American plays expose how fragile and vague the boundaries between consent and assault are. This paper will address plays by Paul Downs Colaizzo (*Really, Really*), Kim Davies (*Stet*), and Anna Ziegler (*Actually*). Some of the paper's main concerns are: In what ways do these plays comment on the ambiguities and inadequacies of the system, and specifically, how do the college authorities respond to allegations of sexual assault? What is the plays' contribution to the debates over sexual violence on campuses and generally over rape culture? By examining the plays comparatively, I will attempt to explore the narrative aesthetics and techniques employed to represent the epidemic of sexual violence on American campuses; to trace recurrent motifs and themes; and, finally, to provide an outline of the political agenda that these plays serve and/or create.

4) *Aikaterini Delikonstantinidou*: “Contemporary Greek American Theatre: From Greek Roots to Transnational Routes

Since the dawn of the new millennium, Greek American theatre practitioners have been making their presence increasingly felt in the performing arts landscape of the United States. Their works evince that Greek American theatre has come a long way from the Greek Diaspora theatre which began in Chicago at the end of the nineteenth century and flourished in several U.S. cities during the interwar period. Whereas contemporary Greek American theatre has not dismissed its ties with the Greek American community, its existence is not as tightly interwoven to the community as it was in the past, while its ideological motives are markedly different from those underpinning the early agents of Greek American theatre in the U.S., whether individual practitioners, troupes, or companies. The aim now is not to serve the ethnic imperatives of cultivating the Greek language, spreading Greek culture, and staying in close contact with the ancestral roots. Instead of serving the centripetal forces of Greek history and tradition, as well as the imperatives of ethnic identity and belonging, the latest works of Greek American theatre artists are animated by the centrifugal powers of the desire for a reconfigured trans-national selfhood. Their commitments lie more squarely than ever before with extroversion, movement,

mixture, and interaction. This paper offers an overview of contemporary Greek American theatre. Through this overview, it argues that contemporary Greek American theatre acts upon the will to assemble a viable and generative, yet obstinately unpredictable because performing and performable, Greekness from heterogeneous formal and conceptual elements, drawn from diverse sources, in line with an ethic that we shall call, after Vassilis Lambropoulos (2016), trans-compositional.

5) *Mariza Tzouni*: “Inter/ Nationalizing the Spectacle: The Politics of Spectatorship in Neo-Burlesque Performance”

The scope of this paper is to explore the reasons why burlesque has reintroduced itself as neo-burlesque in the American reality in the 1990s and how it influences both the national and the international stage and popular culture since then. My intention is to prove that neo-burlesque is a popular culture spectacle with sociopolitical overtures and to trace which audiences; in terms of gender, race, sexual and sociocultural backgrounds, it now attracts. My objective is to illuminate how both the performers and the spectators view neo-burlesque as a popular culture spectacle; that is, as an individualized expression of the self and the body, a counter-hegemonic means against sociopolitical and financial worries and cultural appropriation, as retro mythology or even as a sexually commercialized spectacle of the twenty-first century. To achieve the aforementioned goal, neo-burlesque performers, such as Roxie D’Lite, Coco Framboise, Michelle L’amour, Legs Malone, Lola the Vamp and La Dandizette will be critically analyzed as they have become influential examples of female artistry both in the U.S. and internationally. In this light, the aim of this dissertation is to ascertain whether neo-burlesque is indeed a popular culture spectacle with sociopolitical concerns when both staged nationally and traverses the borders.

6) *Vinia Dakari*: “Theatre and medicine: a spectrum of possibilities“

This presentation aims to engender discussion among young scholars on the convergence of theatre, health and medicine and its aesthetic, social, and pedagogical aspects. The discussion extends to the role of the arts and humanities currently being downsized and the prospect of reversing this “silent crisis” in Education, according to American philosopher Martha Nussbaum, through the rise of the Medical Humanities and the renewed emphasis on the wellbeing of the human.

7) Eirini Stamouli: “‘The Unwounded Storyteller’: Healthy Authors Writing about Illness and Its Significance on Contemporary Illness Narratives”

The purpose of this paper is to investigate how the dynamic of illness narratives shifts when the “ill” author is substituted by a “healthy” one. Although illness narratives are predominantly written by the suffering author who wishes to narrate his/her experience in order to find solace and understanding, there are many contemporary novelists who have tackled the issue of “illness” without drawing on personal experience. By focusing on John Green’s *The Fault in Our Stars* (2012), Jojo Moyes’ *Me Before You* (2012), and Lisa Genova’s *Still Alice* (2007), as well as on their on-screen adaptations, this paper aims to explore how the genre changes when authors write about illness from a distanced point of view, how this affects the sense of verisimilitude and how this also affects its function and ultimate message.

8) Eleftheria Tsirakoglou: “Murder in Arcadia: Ecology and American Detective Fiction”

Detective fiction is a highly formulaic form of writing, characterized by a recognizable set of tropes and situations and organized around a double plot structure. As a result, the genre is often discussed in terms of narrative authority or the degree to which it leads to the restoration of order. Nevertheless, the detective genre also exhibits anxieties about environmental degradation, thus presenting criminal acts as a symptom of a broader pattern of cultural and environmental decline. This paper presentation focuses on Mary Robert Rinehart’s best-selling novel *The Circular Staircase* (1908). Specifically, it scrutinizes the environmental imperatives of Rinehart’s work, arguing that the damage inflicted upon the environment becomes connected to human greed. Along these lines, Rinehart’s work expresses a tension central to the American pastoral: the longing for an idyllic landscape which is constantly in the process of disappearing.

9) Kiki Chatzopoulou: “The Interactive Narrator in Children’s Literature and Film: A Cognitive Approach to Metafiction”

In recent decades, cognitive theorists have begun to analyze how metaphor and intertextuality in children’s literature and film place the child reader as the ultimate determiner of meaning. This study aims to examine whether metafictional techniques, in particular that of the interactive narrator, might have the same result. The interactive narrator is separated from other metafictional narrative tools in that the characters of the story are aware of the narrator’s role and are even able to interact with him. Examples exist in children classics such as *The Emperor’s New*

Groove (2000), Jostein Gaarder's *Sophie's World* and Lemony Snicket's *A Series of Unfortunate Events*. Focusing on children's media, this study asks specifically: if the interactive narrator calls attention to the medium of storytelling, does the subsequent renegotiation of narrative tropes by the child reader make for a cognitively richer experience? The study conducts a systematic overview of narratological and metafictional theories in order to synthesize a definition of the interactive narrator and its characteristics. It then examines the chosen novels and films through the lens of cognitive theory and demonstrates that the interactive narrator might become a tool to aid the child reader in deciphering the constructions and metaphors of a narrative.

10) *Filio Chasioti*: "And Time Yet for Visions and Revisions: Implementing a Corpus Linguistics Approach in the Study of Margaret Atwood's *The Year of the Flood*"

This paper discusses the implementation of a novel corpus linguistics (CL) methodology in the study of contemporary North American literature. It seeks to explore how Margaret Atwood's MaddAddam trilogy may be examined through the application of a novel interdisciplinary framework of CL analysis. For the purposes of this talk, the second installment of the trilogy, *The Year of the Flood* (2009) will be focused on. What will be addressed is the effect of intertexts and focalizers on the construction of Atwood's dystopian [or, "ustopian", as she calls it (79)] narrative world. Through a genre-oriented and semantically-informed approach, the intertexts of the book will be examined in relation to the different focalizers encountered. Taking into account the form of the book, and its organization into different parts, a 'mapping' of the sense-relations within intertexts and focalizers, as well as across them, is expected to shed light on how part of the author's dystopian/ustopian world is structured. The findings will be discussed taking into account the plot of the trilogy, narrative theory's postulations on focalization, as well as the genre; reference will be made to the ways that Atwood's choices challenge reader expectations and (re)shape the dystopian genre. The results of this interdisciplinary approach which combines CL methodologies and narrative theory appear to pave interesting new paths in the study of dystopian literature.

11) *Anna Gkouva*: "En Route to No-Where: Migration, Displacement, and (Im)Mobile Bodies in Caridad Svich's *Fugitive Pieces* (a play with songs)"

Caridad Svich's play *Fugitive Pieces* charts the violent, yet tender, "fire-walking" of two troubled souls, making their way through the rural and industrial wastelands of America. Having no home, no place to go, and no one to be waiting for them,

Downcast Mary and Troubled John are wandering around the railways—fugitive spaces, spaces of great mobility—and toward multiple destinations. Having no passport, they are filled with a longing to jump on a moving train and go somewhere. Nevertheless, it seems that they are entrapped into an illusion of mobility since they continuously travel back to where they have started. By deliberately placing her play into the railways, Svich contextualizes it into what is commonly recognized as the romance of flow and the freedom of boundary-crossing. Through its poetic structure, the play takes the form of a critique of the American Dream and extensively castigates the cultural politics of identity, reviving in the politics of social as well as geographical borders. The issue of identity construction through the prism of internal diaspora, both physical and spiritual, and migration is woven into the very fabric of the play. Finding themselves at the intersection of identities, Svich's characters survive by becoming "professional" nomads. As liminars and transcultural subjects, they live in an America inhabited by nomads and the dispossessed.

12) *Maria-Virginia Tsikopoulou*: "Once Upon a Global City: Tales of Homogenization and Differentiation"

American cities like New York City and Los Angeles have been identified as global; at the same time, various cities (like London and Japan) from disparate parts of the world bear the same characterization. As a result, it is rational to assume that they might all share a plethora of common characteristics that set the ground for this global aspect as a part of their identity. However, there are plenty of researchers, including Sharon Zukin and David Block, who maintain that this global factor paves the way towards the loss of their unique and even national identity. If such an assumption is valid, then what are the implications of it? Does this mean that global cities are on the verge of bleak homogenization? Hence, this paper sets out to investigate, first of all, the very essence of the concept of global cities both in terms of economy and culture; simultaneously, it aims to explore to what extent they are homogenized and whether they are deprived of their unique identities, especially when taking into consideration the creation and reinforcement of a dominant culture.

13) *Arturo Corujo*: "A Man-of-War in Labor: The Metaphysics of Belonging behind Death, Burial, and Birth at Sea in Herman Melville's *White-Jacket*"

Melville's *White-Jacket* gives account of the life and labor routine aboard the *Neversink*, a frigate that provides a space of thought for the exploration of the troubled relationship between an American self and his *self-made* garment: a well-patched, padded, and porous white jacket. In my reading, the narrator fabricates his garment because he wants to protect himself from an acute state of nostalgia derived

from his former home(land). I dismantle the notion of belonging by looking at the metaphysical problem that death poses at sea: where are our bodies supposed to go once our remains are left to the erratic route of sea waves? I argue that this issue challenges the existential understanding of life, the human dependence upon materiality and the problematic notion of belonging; after all, if the body is not buried, where does it finally belong? At the end of the story, a fall off the ship forces the *jacketed* sailor to mutilate his umbilical garment in a desperate attempt to come out to the surface and survive. In my analysis, I will look at the heterotopia of the cemetery (Foucault), existential disorientation (Ahmed, Halberstam), and the idea of the possibilities of a queer (re)birth at sea.

14) *Anna Fyta*: “Sketches of Greek Lyric Poetry: Statues, Ruins and Idyllic Landscapes. H.D., Euripides and the Myth of Hippolytus”

In *End to Torment*, an autobiographical memoir of an intimate yet ambivalent relationship with Ezra Pound, the American modernist poet H.D. recalls Pound engaging her into a systematic study and assimilation of the “old texts” into the newness of Modernist writing. The early poems and poetic epigrams she composed “after the Greek” may be viewed as poetic studies or works in progress, pieces of a greater project emerging in their “full εἰδώς” at a later point in time. H.D.’s best known Hellenic works continue the tradition bequeathed to her by the ancient Greek poets, especially the Attic dramatist Euripides. Drawn to the dramatis personae of Helen, Hippolytus, Ion and the Atreidae, H.D. produces her fragmentary, avant-garde translations as components of a larger project in progress. Her first major poetic venture, her work on the myth of Hippolytus, begins in 1919 with the translation of the choral odes from *Hippolytus* and continues with a series of lyric-portrait poems such as “Charioteer” and “Hippolytus Temporizes.” In prose, she records her observations in an unpublished essay in *Notes on Euripides, Pausanias and the Greek Lyric Poets*, and completes the project in a full version of the play as *Hippolytus Temporizes* (1927). In this paper I explore how in a seemingly inconsistent conglomeration of imagist tropes, choral prosodic practices and a pastiche of visual representations of Greek art, H.D. reconstructs the lost text of the Euripidean *Hippolytus*. Through these fragments, Euripides, and, after him, H.D., compose a new body of lyric poetry and continue the tradition they have received from their predecessors extending its generic boundaries.

15) *Stavrina Vasilopoulou*: “Exploring Different Kinds of Spectatorship in Postmodern, American Rewritings of Euripides’s and Sophocles’s Tragedies”

Theories on the spectacle and the modern spectator have extensively occupied and affected postmodern thought and art, from Guy Debord's "Society of the Spectacle" (1967) to Jacques Rancière's "Emancipated Spectator" (2008). On the other hand, the rising use of performance and postmodern aesthetics, as well as the recurrent dialogue with the past and ancient tragedy, has largely influenced theatrical practice and production over the last decades. This thesis discusses how postmodern rewritings of Ancient Greek tragedies, such as Euripides's *Bacchae* and Sophocles's *Antigone*, can be examined regarding the different ways in which they enable contemporary spectators to develop their sociopolitical and ontological consciousness, either individually or collectively. By focusing on the dramatic and theatrical features of the modern plays, namely Richard Schechner and The Performance Group's *Dionysus in 69*, produced in 1968, and Mac Wellman's *Antigone*, published in 2001, I will draw on Jacques Rancière's theory on spectatorship, as well as on Schechner's and Wellman's own theoretical works on performance and theatre so as to explore both more active and more passive kinds of reception, and to support the continuity of theatre's educational, and socio-politically significant role, from the ancient to our postmodern times.

16) Konstantinos Karatzas: "American Studies in Europe: Life as a Postgraduate Student and Early Career Researcher"

The roundtable wishes to bring together young americanists to create a network between PG students and ECRs across Europe with the objective of confronting problems, sharing personal experiences and stories, proposing best practices and building a European community of American Studies scholars. The roundtable will continue the conversation and expand the dynamic of the successful panel "American Studies in Europe" organized for EBAAS 2018 by Lorenzo Costaguta (Chair of the AISNA Graduate Forum) and Katerina Webb-Bourne (BAAS PGR Rep) and offer space for ECRs to meet and share ideas. We hope to further build up momentum and share it with HELAAS members in Greece. During the session, panelists will have the opportunity to interact not only with each other but also with the audience in an effort to generate discussion and find common ground for strengthening American studies in Greece. Early Career Scholars from Spain, Italy, Ireland and Greece will share ideas, describe difficulties, explain relevant actions towards strengthening American Studies in their countries and describe their initiatives to promote their discipline within the field of American Studies. With HELAAS taking great steps forward and steadily establishing steadily its role as promoter of American Studies in Greece, we believe that the symposium, and the roundtable in particular, will connect HELAAS members to the broader European community of American Studies scholars, and become an even more active part of this ECR effort, the scope of which is to promote our discipline

among the domestic scholarly community. The panel is organized with the full support of EAAS. In particular, Dr. Philip McGowan will comment through Skype while Dr. Martin Halliwell will travel from the U.K. to join the symposium and share his experiences both as a prominent scholar and as an Ambassador for Postgraduate & Early Career Researchers of EAAS.

17) *Melenia Arouh*: “Toxic Fans”

Over the last decade fandom activity has become more mainstream due to both the ease of online participatory platforms and the positive encouragement by the entertainment industry that sees this type of extratextual engagement as an ancillary part of their promotion strategies. This mainstreaming, however, has also meant that problematic fan behavior has become increasingly visible. As a result, the relevant discourse has shifted from fandom activity that is participatory and creative to activity that is negative and destructive. Specifically the expression “toxic fandom” has emerged to describe fans, by both scholars and journalists, as obsessed, entitled, and potentially dangerous. In my presentation I aim to address two things: first, the different connotations of the word “toxic,” and the types of activities it describes. I will stress both the more general aspects of the use of the word, but also some particular applications. For instance, fans vs. fans, fan vs. producers, fans vs. journalists. Second, I will look more closely at the example of the *Outlander* fandom, which gained notoriety in 2014 when the television adaptation of the book was first broadcasted by the US network *Starz*. This is perceived as quite an intense fandom; an intensity that led *Starz* to rebrand themselves as “Obsessable”—that is, a network that creates content for obsessed fans. *Outlander* constitutes an interesting example due to the troubling involvement of William Shatner, who often uses his twitter account to argue with fans, and seems to have taken a keen (and gendered) interest in this particular fandom; an interest that has led to bullying and harassment.

18) *Despoina Feleki*: “Social Networking Sites as Collaborative Platforms and Spaces for Political Speech/Action”

The technology of the novel, affected by sociopolitical conditions and technological advances, has been employed to express global concerns and perspectives. Fiction writers have been alert to what reality brings, proposing either lifelike worlds, imaginary utopian visions or corresponding dystopian fears. At the age of Walter Ong’s “secondary orality,” characterized by the immediacy of expression, a new democracy of thought and a new communal sense among the participants enabled by electronic media, when perceptions of reality are changing fast, writers still employ fiction writing to inform interested audiences, explain, or alert. Now that the narrative is

relocated, made possible through other writing technologies, it extends to greater audiences than ever, readjusting their roles from passive readers to writers and real life commentators. This presentation undertakes to present and discuss the activist practices of Margaret Atwood and Teju Cole, whose experimental fiction writing practices and collaborative skills have made them turn to digital online platforms and social networking sites. As I look into examples of their activism in a participatory culture where writing is easily assimilated and shared, I am particularly interested in the way narratives outgrow the “space” of the novels and the control of their writers. I also try to shed light on the innumerable metanarratives that spring up and how these are informed by present day politics.

19) ***Emmanue Skoulas*: “Online Gender Based Harassment”**

Forms of intolerance online and its path of dissemination, such as extremist ideas leading to violence or hatred against certain groups is one of the most important aspects of online media and communication nowadays. It is important to note that more and more academics and scholars are interested in the narratives of online hate speech while the development of critical thinking by internet users to combat online hatred against certain groups is also important. The aim of the paper is to focus on online hate speech against women and in particular misogyny and gender-based violence online. Narratives and counter narratives about the manifestations of online hate speech and gender, in particular social media platforms will be the main focus along with the specificities and connection of misogyny, sexism and gender-based violence. In addition, there will be an analysis of best practices against online hate speech in the context of counter narratives in certain social media platforms. Finally, there will be a sociological linkage of the overall media landscape with real manifestations of gender based harassment.

20) ***Vassilis Delioglanis*: “Locative Media and Site-Specific Narratives: Examining Locative Space in Teri Rueb’s *Times Beach* and *Fens*”**

The present paper examines the ways in which the physical (natural) space is digitally augmented in Teri Rueb’s 2017 site-specific sound-walks, *Times Beach* in Buffalo, New York’s Outer Harbor, and *Fens* in Boston, Massachusetts’ Back Bay. Both locative works challenge the ways in which space can be perceived. Following the trails in the areas of the Times Beach Nature Preserve and Back Bay Fens respectively, users of the mobile apps are invited to listen to oral narratives that are attached to particular locations through the use of locative media, a term referring to location-aware and mobile technologies. This superimposition of digital/virtual sound-space on the physical environment leads to the emergence of a locative space, which appears to be

both virtual and physical at the same time. This paper investigates the relationship between virtual and physical spaces as well as the juxtaposition of natural and urban spaces as these are portrayed in *Times Beach* and *Fens*. The multiple narratives in these works function as a means to demonstrate the ways in which locative space is visually, verbally as well as textually and aurally constructed. Ultimately, the physical environment (both natural and urban) with which users interact while walking merges with the site-specific narratives of Times Beach and Back Bay Fens.

21) **George Vasilikaris: “Why Do We Play Videogames?”**

Storytelling has always been of great importance for people and an essential part of human nature even from the ancient times. Throughout the years, technology has provided us with various media in order to satisfy this very need including books, music, cinema and more recently videogames. However, videogames are often neglected by academics, despite their public appeal. My speech will diverge from the beaten track and introduce its audience to this contemporary medium and, hopefully, establish it as a form of art in its consciousness. In an attempt to prove the academic, as well as the philosophical, value of videogames, my speech will compare Harlan Ellison’s award winning short story “I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream” (1967) with its 1995 videogame adaptation in terms of plot, characters, and the ability to convey different feelings. “Can videogames be considered as a form of Digital Literature?” “Can authors use videogames instead of books to convey the same feelings and ideas they want?” and more importantly “Why do we play videogames?”; all of these questions shall be answered in due time.

22) **Eleni Chryssikaki: “Go Digital with Storytelling”**

The aim of this presentation is to investigate on the effectiveness of digital storytelling as a useful, non-formal education tool for enhancing productive skills while promoting socio-cultural awareness. The research will be conducted in a C1 CEFR level class as it is a borderline point in which learners are required to bridge the gap between B2 and C level demands as they are described in the upper-suite levels of the Michigan University Examinations towards which the teenage group is oriented. It explains how a carefully-planned series of classes can entice students into devising and producing primary sources of materials in order to express their feelings, thoughts and/or opinions on issues of Global Citizenship. Through producing an authentic digital story, students develop empathy, become more creative, overcome any inhibitions of puberty that hinder participation, cooperate and build stronger bonds with their peers and the teacher-facilitator who encourages them to voice, express and share their point of view. Finally, the results of this study will be presented along

with the learners' testimonies which reveal how they were induced to creatively produce the subsequent digital story which will be discussed.

23) *Ana Popović*: "Alicia Florrick as the 'Good Wife' of American Politics"

CBS's *The Good Wife* is an award-winning TV series which focuses on the role of women in the American political scene, both as political spouses and independent political agents. The show's portrayal of a sexual scandal followed by the rise of the politician's wife's own political career is modeled after the many real-life "good wives" of corrupt politicians who suffered disgrace due to their husband's scandals. *The Good Wife* provides the full perspective of the American political system, from campaigning to running offices on local, state and national levels, emphasizing the inherent split between men and women in politics, which dictates normative behavior in the public sphere. This paper analyzes the protagonist Alicia Florrick, in her role of the political spouse, by focusing on her inevitable performativity in the complex political culture which also invades the private sphere. The notions of motherhood and wifedom are redefined as Alicia undergoes a transformation from a silenced wife to a deceptive political player willing to manipulate the public. The TV series opens a multi-level dialogue with the actual contemporary political context of the USA, allowing for the examination of the norms of political wifedom as imposed by the contemporary media.

24) *Giorgos Dimitriadis*: "Eye-tracking as a Validation Tool in Cinema Research"

The use of eye tracking in data collection, when accompanied by the proper research questions and methodology, is a powerful tool that may provide invaluable insight into the way viewers perceive and experience movies. Cinema theory can use eye tracking to test and verify research hypotheses not only with unprecedented accuracy and validity, but also with the ability to address theoretical questions with practically limitless combinations of research parameters. Eye tracking is much more than a tool that helps build contemporary research; its real value lies in the fact that it can be used to retrospectively verify past theoretical approaches, thus progressing cinema theory by preserving only what indeed stands. As an example of this, the present paper will discuss the ways in which eye tracking can test and validate what Julian Hochberg and Virginia Brooks called *visual momentum* back in 1978, that is, the viewer's impetus to keep seeking usable visual information on screen via saccades in order to formulate and check the validity of a schema. Eye tracking can test this attentional behavior of viewers, and, most importantly, to produce findings that can create new avenues for relevant research. In this respect, eye trackers may very well prove to be the spearhead of a more robust body of cinema theory in the near future.

25) *Thomas Mantzaris and Katerina Marazi: “A Series of What? Mark Z. Danielewski’s *The Familiar*”*

Approaching Mark Z. Danielewski’s *The Familiar* book series as an instance of an ongoing serial narrative, we will aim to show how this intriguing literary endeavor has been informed by trends and directions in the landscape of tv series. In a time-span of less than two years, Danielewski published five volumes of his magnum project, which is expected to involve twenty-seven volumes in total. The novels feature extensive typographic experimentation, use of diverse colors, as well as unconventional page layout. Is the multimodal nature of the novels an attempt to reinstate slow reading within a transmedia culture dominated by binge watching? Interestingly, the first five volumes, May 2015 to October 2017, have been marketed as “season 1.” How is the particular project therefore branded, and what reading communities does the book serialization foster? The officially announced pause in the publication of the subsequent volumes provides space for us to consider the implications of reader reception, book publishing and the mechanics of an industry that increasingly draws elements/inspiration from that of tv serialization. What is more, it prompts us to consider if the print book and slow reading have a “future” or if that future is shaped through complying with the trends and strategies of visual media. Employing an approach that brings together current practices in two major facets of American Studies, literature and TV, we will explore how *The Familiar* book series is shaped by particular trends as well as shapes a renewed understanding of what a book is, and what its interaction(s) with the tv series industry can be.

Biographical Notes

1) **Michał Kapis** is a Ph.D. student at the Faculty of English at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. His research interests include orality studies and Indigenous literatures. He has a bachelor's degree in South African studies. In his M.A. thesis he analysed a selection of aboriginal Canadian and South African prose to determine what techniques authors use in order to combine their oral tradition with the technology of writing. At present, he continues his research into orality features in aboriginal literatures around the world, focusing on how particular tribal affiliations might affect the oralization strategies and techniques.

2) **Sigrid Thomsen** did one BA in Comparative Literature and one in Philosophy at the University of Vienna, with semesters abroad at the University of Bergen, Norway, and at the University of Chicago. She got her M.A. in Comparative Literature (Africa/Asia) from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University in London. She is currently pursuing a doctorate on Caribbean-American literature as part of the research platform “Mobile Cultures and Societies” at the University of Vienna.

3) **Ourania Zygouri** holds a BA in English Language and Literature and a M.A. in English and American Studies from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. She received a partial academic scholarship from the School of English, Aristotle University, to pursue her M.A. degree (2016-17). Her research interests include gender and sexuality studies along with the examination of various forms of narratives ranging from literature and theatre to films and video games. She works as a freelance English tutor and an administrative assistant at the Resource Center of the School of English, Aristotle University. She has lived and studied in both Greece and Scotland.

4) **Katerina Delikonstantinidou** has studied International Relations, English Language and Literature (BA), American Literature and Culture (M.A.), as well as Adult Education (MEd). She has recently been awarded her Ph.D. on “Latino/a Reception of Greek Tragic Myth: Healing (and) Radical Politics,” by the School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Her articles have been published in numerous volumes and journals, her research work has been presented at national and international conferences, and she is the recipient of several grants and scholarships. She has been working as a research and teaching assistant at the School of English and as the managing editor of *Critical Stages*, the journal of the International Association of Theatre Critics, since 2014. Her research areas include Theatre and Performing Arts, Ethnic Studies, Digital Literacies, and Education.

5) **Mariza Tzouni** is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of American Literature and Culture in the School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. She has presented her research work in both national and international conferences while her poems have been published in anthologies and online blogs. Her paper “De/Mythologizing the Las Vegas Topos: Digesting the Burlesque Lotus” was published in the *National and Transnational Challenges to the American Imaginary* volume by Peter Lang Publications, in 2018. Her fields of interest include Neo-burlesque performance, Performance Art, Theater, Gender Studies, Ethnic Studies, Popular Culture Studies and Audience Studies.

6) **Virginia (Vinia) Dakari** is postdoctoral researcher at the Department of American Literature and Culture, School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Her research and writing encompass current developments in the rising interdisciplinary field of the Medical Humanities and the aesthetic, therapeutic, and pedagogic values of the theatre/medicine encounter. She is the Greek Representative for the Arts Health Early Career Research Network and member of the Greek Cancer Society’s Centre for Support, Education and Research in Psychosocial Oncology Working Group. She has co-edited *MEDICINE AND/IN THEATRE*, special topic issue no.17 of *Critical Stages/Scènes Critiques* (e-journal of the International Association of Theatre Critics).

7) **Eirini Stamouli** is an alumna of the department of English Language and Literature of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She holds an M.A. in English and American Literature studied at the University of Kent (Canterbury, England). Her research interests include the contemporary, illness narratives, disability studies, medical humanities, utopian/ dystopian fiction, literary translation and TEFL in cases of students with multisensory impairment.

8) **Eleftheria Tsirakoglou** earned her Ph.D. from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Her doctoral research explored Edgar Allan Poe’s influence on Modern Greek writers. Her research interests are in nineteenth and twentieth century American literature and culture, transnational approaches to American studies, popular culture and environmental humanities. She is currently a lecturer at the International Faculty of the University of Sheffield, City College.

9) **Kiki Chatzopoulou** earned her Master’s degree in Writing for Children from The New School, NY, where she focused on interpretations of the female body in young adult literature. As a teaching assistant in the same university, she led lectures on popular culture and organized the development of a TV pilot with her students. Under the supervision of Georgios Kalogeras, she conducted her BA diploma thesis on the modernist narrator of Henry Roth’s *Call it Sleep*. She teaches ESL and creative writing

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10) **Filio Chasioti** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and a State Scholarships Foundation (IKY) funding award recipient (2016). Her doctoral dissertation is an interdisciplinary study on Margaret Atwood's dystopian trilogy, *MaddAddam*, implementing a Corpus Linguistics methodology. She holds a BA (Hons) from the School of English (AUn), and an MPhil (Hons) in Applied Linguistics from Trinity College, Dublin. Her research interests lie in the areas of corpus linguistics, contemporary North American fiction and poetry, and narrative theory. She currently teaches Corpus Linguistics as a part-time lecturer at City College (The University of Sheffield, International Faculty).

11) **Anna Gkouva** completed her BA degree in English Language and Literature and her M.A. degree in English and American Studies in the School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. Her M.A. thesis concerned the ways in which contemporary theatre represents the female body as an affective space within the context of the Bosnian war in 1992-1995. Her academic activity so far involves presentations in both national and international conferences and workshops. Her academic and research interests include Performance Arts with a special focus on the body, gender, minorities, violence, and trauma.

12) **Maria-Virginia Tsikopoulou** received her BA in English Language and Literature in 2015 from the School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. In 2018, she successfully completed her M.A. studies in the program of English and American Studies of the same Department. During her M.A. studies, she was awarded with a scholarship of excellence as a class valedictorian for the fall semester of the academic year 2016-2017. Her research interests include postmodern literature, contemporary American fiction and drama as well as spatial theory.

13) **Arturo Corujo** holds a degree in English Studies from the University of La Laguna. He was awarded a distinction by the Faculty of Humanities for having obtained the best academic record. His interests lie in men studies, queer theory and the literature of the American Renaissance, with specific focus on Herman Melville. His BA thesis dealt with homophobia in Melville's *Billy Budd, Sailor* (1924). Corujo has recently completed an M.A. in "Construction and Representation of Cultural Identities" at the University of Barcelona, specializing in Gender and Melville Studies. He is fluent in Spanish and English languages, with excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

14) **Anna Fyta** completed her Ph.D. Dissertation in 2015, at the University of Ioannina, Greece. Her dissertation, titled “H.D.’s Poetics and Euripidean Drama,” investigates the impact of the Euripidean dramaturgy on H.D.’s oeuvre. In September 2015, she presented at Lehigh University “H.D.’s Translation of the Euripidean ‘Sea-Chorus from *Hecuba*’ (1931): The Female War Ode and the Dialectics of Loss.” Since then, Fyta has participated in several international conferences, including “Modernist Fragmentation and after” hosted by Princeton University and “Portals, Gates: The Classics in Modernist Translation,” a conference organized by McGill University in Canada. A version of her paper titled “Translation as Mythopoesis” has been included in a forthcoming volume by Bloomsbury Academic. She has also offered several seminars at the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, and in December 2017 she chaired the panel “Cinematic Topographies of Conflict in the Modern Imagination” for the conference “The Politics of Space and the Humanities,” organized by HELAAS and Aristotle University. In August-September 2017, invited as Visiting Scholar at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation for Hellenic Studies at Simon Fraser University, Canada, she gave a series of lectures on the Classics in travel writing, Modernist translation and receptions of Greek mythology in American women’s poetry. Dr. Fyta is currently teaching English and American Literature and Language at H.A.E.F. Athens College, Greece.

15) **Stavrina Vasilopoulou** was born and raised in Athens, Greece, where she also lives. She graduated from the Department of English Language and Literature of The National and Kapodistrian University of Athens in 2015. In September 2017 she was accepted in the post-graduate program of the same Department which specializes in “The Greek Element in Anglophone Literature.” Her academic and artistic interests revolve around theatre, dance and the relationship between generally art and politics, as well as between art and education. In parallel to her studies, she has been working as a teacher of English.

16) **Konstantinos D. Karatzas** holds a Ph.D. in Modern History from the University of Zaragoza in Spain. He specializes in African-American history with a special interest in political and racial violence. He received the first-ever scholarship for doctoral studies in American History by the Greek State Scholarship Foundation (IKY). Dr. Karatzas, research fellow and member of the board at the London Centre for Interdisciplinary Research and research fellow at the Institute of International Economic Relations has organized numerous conferences and workshops in Greece and the UK. He has published articles and book chapters in Europe and the United States. In 2019, he is invited to lecture at the Universities of Ohio, Kentucky, Kennesaw, Morehouse, Valdosta, South Florida, and Flagler College. He will present his work at the 2019 AHA Conference in Chicago. His first book with the title “Violence and

Memory in the United States: The Case of the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot” will be published by Routledge-Taylor and Francis in 2019.

17) **Melenia Arouh** holds a Ph.D. from the University of Southampton in film studies and philosophy. Dr. Arouh is Assistant Professor in the Communication and Philosophy departments of the American College of Greece, Deree College. She is also the Assistant Head of the Communication department. Her current teaching includes such courses as Introduction to Film, Film Analysis, Screenwriting, Aesthetics, Philosophy and Cinema. She is also the advisor to the Film Club, which organizes the annual Deree student film festival. Her publication and research interests are in the areas of aesthetics, film and television study, digital media and the philosophical study of film.

18) **Despoina N. Feleki** holds a Ph.D. in Contemporary American Studies and an M.A. in Studies in European Literature and Culture. She is an independent researcher and appointed English Educator in Greece. She lectures and organizes workshops on fiction and pedagogy, focusing on the intersections between textuality and digitality, and how these affect literary and educational practices. Feleki has presented findings of her research in National and International conferences. She is a regular review contributor (*European Journal of American Studies*, *eJournal Materialities of Literature*, the *49th Parallel American Studies Today*). Her published articles appear in *GRAMMA: Journal of Theory and Criticism: Digital Literary Production and the Humanities* (AUn), in *Writing Technologies* by Nottingham Trent University, in *Authorship*, the *Journal of the University of Gent* and in the conference proceedings of the 5th ICT Conference in Florence. Her monograph, entitled *Stephen King in the New Millennium: Gothic Mediations on New Writing Materialities*, was out by Cambridge Scholars Publishing in 2018.

19) **Emmanuel Skoulas** is Associate Faculty in The American College of Greece (Deree). He holds a BA in Philosophy Pedagogy Psychology from the University of Athens; an M.A. in Mass Media & Communication Arts from New York University -USA; an M.Phil. in History & Communication from New York University-USA; and a Ph.D. from Panteion University of Political & Social Sciences (2014). Skoulas has been a member of the Deree faculty since 2017. He has taught courses at major public and private educational institutions. He has also undertaken many projects in the context of EU policies and regulations on social issues such as migrant’s integration, human trafficking, and gender. In addition, he has conducted training to many corporations in Greece and abroad. His research interests include crisis communication, public affairs, public communication campaigns, corporate communication, radicalization, crime, and gender.

20) **Vassilis Delioglanis** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of American Literature and Culture, School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. His Ph.D. project concentrates on the relationship between locative media technologies and narrative in North American Literature and Culture. For his Ph.D. he is funded by the Board of Greek State Scholarships Foundation (I.K.Y). He has recently received a postgraduate travel grant by the European Association for American Studies (EAAS) to conduct research on locative media technologies in the Department of Media Study at the State University of New York, University in Buffalo. He also holds an M.A. (2012) in American Literature and Culture and a BA (2008) in English from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He teaches English as a foreign language at the American Farm School of Thessaloniki. His research interests include locative media, contemporary fiction, Cyberpunk and Cyberculture, hypertext and multimedia fiction and the fusion of literary practice with new media technologies.

21) **George Vasilikaris** has graduated from the School of English Language and Literature of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki where he currently continues his postgraduate studies on Translation and Interpreting. Fascinated by intricate storytelling, George always wanted to analyse the way stories are told not only in print but also on film. A literature enthusiast, an amateur film critic, and an avid gamer, George wants to find a way to combine all of his interests with personal knowledge and experience to bring games to the forefront of academic studies.

22) **Eleni Chrysikaki** holds a BA in English Language and Literature from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and attends the Hellenic Open University M.A. TESOL program, with a scholarship of academic excellence, and the Diploma in Negotiations in the Athens University of Economics and Business. A Cambridge Assessment English examiner, she is experienced in approaching EFL classes using her background in Theater and Rhetoric. In order to teach learners of all age groups, she uses a mixture of traditional, innovative even experimental methods and strategies. Her classes resemble a rehearsal studio where the students, being the protagonists, use the English language as a vehicle for expressing their thoughts and feelings.

23) **Ana Popović** is a doctoral candidate at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. She holds a Master's Degree in English Language and Literature, with the focus on American Studies. She also holds Bachelor's Degrees in Italian Language and Literature and Marketing Communications, as well as an MBA in Management. Her research interests are focused on the contemporary American literature and film, with an emphasis on masculinity studies.

24) **Giorgos Dimitriadis** holds a Ph.D. in Cinema Studies, which focuses on visual perception and cognitive theory applied to digital cinema. His research involves aspects of cinematic world-building, with special interest in the ways in which visual mechanics affect the cognitive functions of the human mind and viewers' comprehension of fictional cinematic worlds. His work revolves around various aspects of new technologies in cinema, narrative comprehension, worldmaking theory, and visual culture, and his teaching experience includes courses on the history and theory of cinema, literature, culture, as well as research and academic writing. He has also been involved in training seminars on the application of cinema and visual media to education. He is currently on a research scholarship at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, using eye tracking to research viewers' response to interactive forms of cinema for purposes of audiovisual literacy and education.

25) **Thomas Mantzaris** is a Ph.D. candidate in the department of American Literature and Culture, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He received his BA from the same department and obtained his Master of Arts at Uppsala University in Sweden, focusing on American Literature and Culture. His Ph.D. project is centered on the notion of visuality and materiality in contemporary multimodal fiction. His research interests include contemporary American fiction, narrative experimentation, literary theory, and photography. He is currently a lecturer at the department of English Studies at the International Faculty of the University of Sheffield, and a Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy.

26) **Katerina Marazi** is a lecturer at the International Faculty of the University of Sheffield, City College. She holds a BA in English Language and Literature, an M.A. in American Literature and Culture, a Ph.D. in Intercultural Studies and American Pop Culture, and a Post-graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education from the University of Sheffield. Her research interests include adaptation and brand identity theory, transmedia storytelling and media franchise culture. She is particularly interested in the context of the entertainment industry, media studies and reception studies.