

Fall/Winter 2014-2015



**The Newsletter
of the
Hellenic Association for American Studies
(HELAAS)**

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NEW HELAAS Board 2014-2018 – Elections 2014

PRESIDENT:

Tatiani Rapatzikou, Department of American Literature and Culture, School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, University Campus, 541 24 Thessaloniki, Greece,
e-mail: trapatz@enl.auth.gr

VICE-PRESIDENT:

Helena Maragou, The American College of Greece, Deree College, School of Arts and Sciences, Department of English and Languages, 6 Gravias Street, 15342 Aghia Paraskevi, Athens, Greece,
e-mail: maragou@acg.edu>

SECRETARY:

Zoe Detsi, Department of American Literature and Culture, School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, University Campus, 541 24 Thessaloniki, Greece,
e-mail: detsi@enl.auth.gr

TREASURER:

Konstantinos Blatanis, University of Athens, Faculty of English Studies, School of Philosophy, University Campus Zografou, 157 84, Athens, Greece,
e-mail: kblatanis@enl.uoa.gr

MEMBER:

Theodora Tsimpouki, University of Athens, Faculty of English Studies, School of Philosophy, University Campus Zografou, 157 84, Athens, Greece,
e-mail: tsimpouki@enl.uoa.gr

EDITORIAL

Dear HELAAS members,

On behalf of the newly elected board, I'd like to wish you a very Happy New Year with Health and Happiness! May 2015, be a year of new visions and aspirations for all!

A big thank-you goes to all of you who have supported us the last couple of years and have entrusted us once again to continue our endeavors in fulfilling the already planned HELAAS initiatives and projects.

We would also like to warmly thank Ms Paschalia Patsala for her dedication and great effort as HELAAS List-Serv administrator for a number of years. A new call for the post of the List-serv administrator will be announced soon.

The tenure of the new board, on the basis of our new constitution, spans between 2014-2018. The members of the Board had their first meeting on Dec. 28th, 2014, so as to decide on their roles. Everyone unanimously agreed to retain the posts held during the previous tenure (2012-2014). On the basis of the election results, we'd like to welcome and congratulate the elected three members of the Auditors committee, Youli Theodosiadou, Despoina Feleki and Cathy Marazi.

One of our first projects will be to move on with the election of the representative of our Young Scholars (postgraduate students and junior researchers) as well as with the organization of our first Summer Institute. You'll receive information about both initiatives in due course.

We're also hoping to launch the first issue of our HELAAS International Journal possibly at the end of 2015 with papers from the international conference "The War on the Human" (27-29 November, 2014). Our warmest thanks and congratulations go to the two members of our Board, Dora Tsimpouki and Konstantinos Blatanis, plus Asimina Karavanta on having successfully organized such a compelling event, featuring presentations from domestic and international scholars and postgraduate students on an array of disciplines and fields such as medicine, pedagogy, law, performance, new media, philosophy, ethnic identity and so on. We are also indebted to the Faculty of English Language and Literature of National and Kapodistrian University of Athens for making the organization of such an international endeavor possible.

We're delighted to feature in the current issue news from a number of our members. Please don't forget to forward us information about your publications or participations in various projects and initiatives.

We're hoping that with our Summer Institute and International Journal we'll have the opportunity to actively collaborate and exchange ideas with all or most of you.

We'd like to thank you once again for your support and trust. We look forward to continuing the creative dialogue with all of you in the New Year!

Tatiani Rapatzikou, President of the HELAAS Board



MEMBERS' CORNER

In this section please find information about our HELAAS members' academic activities, publications, participations in conference and symposia as well as research projects.

Fulbright Grants

Dr. Despina-Alexandra Constantinides was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to attend the SUSI 2014 program (The Study of the United States Institutes) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The overall title of the program hosted by the "Global Institute for Secondary Educators" was "The American Dream: The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy of a Cultural Heritage," and it drove at the heart of the multifarious ways in which the notion of the "American Dream" has shaped the institutes of the U.S. The program offers professional development opportunities for secondary educators familiarizing them with up-to-date teaching methods and material.

Lizzy Pournara, having been the recipient of a Fulbright scholarship, participated in the 2014 Salzburg Global Seminar with the title "Defining America: New Writing, New Voices, New Directions." The presentations and round table discussions revolved around the future of contemporary American literature, the factors that shape the canon as well as the convergence of digital and print technologies.



Conference participation and Publications

Katerina Delikonstantinidou presented papers in a number of conferences:

"Questing for 21st Century *Mestizaje* in the Realm of the Greek Tragic Myth: Dramatic Mythic(al) Revisions by Cherríe Moraga, Luis Alfaro, and Caridad Svich" at the Literature and Cultural Studies Conference "Mythmaking across Boundaries," 22 – 24 October 2014, Ege University – ADIKAM, Izmir, Turkey.

"Humans Remembered/Cyborgs Performed: Subject(ions), Abject(ions), Object(ions) in Cyborgean Theatrical Experiments" at the Helaas Biennial Conference "The War on the Human: Human as Right, Human as Limit, and the Task of the Humanities," November 27-29, 2014, at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece.

Furthermore, Katerina's paper "Catherine's Breillat's Cine-erotic *Anti-Romance*: Visualizing the Extremities of Desire" was accepted for publication by the academic journal *Studies in Visual Arts and Communication – an International Journal* (forthcoming).

Vinia Dakari presented a paper titled “The TEDtalk Cure: Politics and Aesthetics of Cancer Narratives on a Global Stage” at the International Conference “The War on the Human: Human as Right, Human as Limit, and the Task of the Humanities,” November 27-29, 2014, at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece. The panel whose thematic emphasis was on narrative medicine was organized by Catherine Rogers, Fulbright Senior Scholar.

Adrianne Kalfopoulou’s collection, *Ruin, Essays in Exilic Living* (Red Hen Press, 2014) has been reviewed by *Foreword*. You can access the review at www.forewordreviews.com/reviews/ruin-essays-in-exile-living

Don Schofield retired on November 1st, 2014, from his position as Dean of Special Programs at Perrotis College, the higher education division of the American Farm School in Thessaloniki. In the same month, his latest poetry collection, *In Lands Imagination Favors*, appeared (Loveland, Ohio: Dos Madres Press, 2014).

Tryfon Tolides in the “Foreward” mentions that through the poems in this collection, poet and reader come to sense—and recognize—the heart’s longing for life and the existence of beauty—through worlds and words—as vital in staving off utter darkness.

For more information, see:

www.dosmadres.com/shop/lands-imagination-favors-don-schofield



New HELAAS Members

We would like to welcome Georgia Axiotou, Evangelia Kyriakidou, Christina Panou, Mariza Tzouni, and Artemis Zenetou, as our new HELAAS members:

Georgia Axiotou is affiliated with the College of Social Sciences and Humanities at Koç University, İstanbul. Her research interests focus on Postcolonial Studies, Critical Theory, Violence & Resistance.

Evangelia Kyriakidou is an Academic Writing and Research Faculty at Deree and a Ph.D Candidate at Faculty of English Language and Literature at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. Her research concentrates on spatial theory, the city, campus novels and American literature.

Christina Panou is teacher of English and her research interests relate to music and the arts, Native Americans, and urban legends.

Mariza Tzouni is an M.A. student at the Department of American Literature, School of English, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She has been researching in the fields of performance art, ethnic studies, theater, and feminism.

Artemis Zenetou is Executive Director of the Fulbright Foundation in Greece.



HELAAS' MEMBERS CONFERENCE COLLABORATIONS

rethinking *democracy* in literature, language & culture

15-17 May 2015

School of English

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

Call for papers

Extended Abstract Submission Deadline: **20 December 2014.**

Theories of democracy seem to be as varied as the wide-ranging debates over the viability of a democratic system. Since the time of Aristotle and Plato a significant number of philosophers and social theorists have investigated notions of autonomy and selfhood, the role of the state, the degree of egalitarianism and individual power, as well as the issue of liberal acquiescence to undemocratic political practices. This last issue has gained momentum in the present day when the humanistic values that democracy has always claimed as a priority are challenged by neoliberal politics and interventionist economic policies.

It is the aim of this conference to contribute to the existing – and growing – body of thought on the theory and workings of democracy from the perspective of the humanities, approaching democracy not only as a political system but as a malleable ideological construct open to interpretation and renegotiation. We are especially interested in exploring the role of literature, art, culture (from paintings and films to television ads, computer games and the social media), philosophy and language in producing, disseminating, resisting and even rethinking democratic ethics, ideologies and narratives across different historical periods, genres of representation and cultural (Anglophone) spaces. Finding ourselves caught up in the midst of a political and economic upheaval that has witnessed a surge in “undemocratic” legislative, cultural or affective responses to difference in traditionally “democratic” societies in the West, we seek to probe into and highlight the representational politics of democracy, the processes through which democratic ideas of equality, freedom and justice have become narrativised, (mis)interpreted and inscribed into signifying systems, cultural practices and meaning-making processes. It is in this context that this conference will seek to examine not only how literature and art have responded to democratic institutions but equally how different modes of representation have contributed to the fashioning of different historically-situated and culturally-bound models of democratic conduct and sensibility. Have, for example, digitalization and the unlimited access to information via the internet contributed to the creation of more tolerant contemporary “cyber-democracies” which identify the democratic with the visible and the known? Or, is surprise and risk-taking still an integral aspect of democratic ethics in fictional and artistic representation as much as in cultural patterns of behavior—to follow Jacques Rancière’s thinking?

We invite papers that focus on the relationship between democratic processes and representation, social life, political thought, and cultural values. Democracy may be thought in relation to the following:

- Literature, language, culture and art
- the “social imaginary”
- nation-building; citizenship; sovereignty
- Human rights; equality; freedom
- Ideas of friendship, hospitality, tolerance, comfort, security
- Emotion; affect; desire (e.g. propaganda, patriotism)
- Identities (ethnicity, race, gender, class, age, disability)
- Bodies (human & animal)
- Globalization; cosmopolitanism
- Neoliberal or free market views of democracy
- Neo-fascism and the rise of the far-right
- Non-institutional activism
- Education; pedagogy; the classroom situation
- Ecology; the environment
- Print culture; older and new technologies; images; digitalization; the social media;
- The popular (literature, culture, art)
- Narrative; storytelling

Proposals (400 words) and a short biographical note should be sent to Effie Yiannopoulou (yiannopo@enl.auth.gr) and Zoe Detsi (detsi@enl.auth.gr) by **20 December 2014**.



CALL FOR PAPERS



FIREARMS AND FREEDOM: THE RELEVANCE OF THE SECOND AMENDMENT IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Location: London, England

Date: **June 11 2015**

Deadline: **February 16 2015.**

The Second Amendment is arguably the most controversial part of the American Constitution. Europeans discuss the issue often but the unique place of firearms to US history and culture is widely misunderstood. We hope to go beyond the usual presentation of the issue, exploring the roots of the modern discussion and placing it in the broader contexts of American history, politics and culture. We attempt to answer questions in relation to the Second Amendment. Why was it considered important enough to include in the Constitution? How was it interpreted in the nineteenth and early 20th centuries? How does it affect women and minority groups historically and today? Why do so many Americans sustain faith in the freedom to bear arms? Why does the discussion now appear as an un-bridgeable cultural divide?

Hosted at the British Library conference centre by the Eccles Centre and UCL Institute of the Americas, this one-day conference will be an interdisciplinary examination of the Amendment and its relationship with the concept of American freedom. We invite submissions of paper proposals, which should include a 300-word abstract and a brief CV. Possible topics might include the National Rifle Association, the Black Panther Party, “gun culture”, the relationship of guns with American minorities, the role of women in relation to firearms, and the history of the Second Amendment, but we will consider papers on other related issues. We seek to explore the issue in as balanced a way as possible. All participants will be expected to make their conference contributions available to be considered for publication.

Please direct your paper proposals, confirmations of attendance, and any questions about the one-day conference to either:

Kevin.yuill@sunderland.ac.uk

joe.street@northumbria.ac.uk



Violence and the American Imagination Two-day interdisciplinary conference (22-23 July 2015)

“Violence is as American as cherry pie,” as Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin (H. Rap Brown), the Black Panther activist, famously stated in the 1960s. If ubiquitous in America,

however, violence has also proved polysemic, highly mutable in its occurrences, meanings, and effects from the colonial era to the present. The aim of this interdisciplinary conference will be to explore and evaluate violence in the American imagination, considering its multiple, contested significances in a very wide range of discourses and practices that include literature, drama, film, the visual arts, music, philosophical and religious writings, and historical, political and military representations.

Plenary speakers:

Prof. Richard Gray, Department of Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies, University of Essex

Prof. Amy Wood, Department of History, Illinois State University

The conference organizers welcome proposals for papers, panels and workshops on any aspect of violence and the American imagination. Possible topics may include but are not limited to the following subject areas and keywords:

- Domestic
- Drama
- The ‘everyday/ordinary’
- Frontier
- Gender
- Guns
- History
- Literature
- Media
- Military discourses
- Music
- Philosophy
- Political discourses
- Prison
- Race
- Religious representations
- Sexuality
- Slavery
- Space
- Spectacle
- Sport
- Structural violence
- Terrorism
- Visual arts

Proposals for 20-minute presentations should be no longer than 250 words and indicate a provisional title. Suggestions by two or more people for panels and workshops around a common theme or for roundtable discussions will be welcomed.

All proposals should be sent to:

Dr. Catherine Armstrong (C.M.Armstrong@lboro.ac.uk)

Dr. Mary F. Brewer (M.F.Brewer@lboro.ac.uk)

Deadline for Submissions: 27 February 2015



HELAAS List serv

The HELAAS List-serv consists of an electronic mail discussion list and a related network site on the World Wide Web.

The new elected Young Scholar representative will also undertake the coordination of the HELAAS List-serv.

Please use this list for the discussion of virtually anything pertaining to the broad range of American Studies.

Messages to be circulating in this List-serv will concern news about: teaching and research projects, works in process, announcements of conferences, jobs, grants, fellowships, internet resources, book reviews, syllabi exchanges etc.

Also, you are invited to use this List-serv as an e-forum where you could post questions/queries or host debates over academic issues relating to American Studies.

An archive of all previously posted messages on the List-serv will be kept. All messages will be sorted by date or subject (eg. Women studies, cultural studies, teaching of American literature, etc).

Given that the HELAAS List-serv will be a semi-public e-forum, the list's editors, managers, advisory board and the association itself bear no responsibility for messages forwarded to people outside the list without the initial contributor's prior consent.

We hope that you find this List-serv service useful and constructive.

For any comments or suggestions, please contact:

<trapatz@enl.auth.gr>



HELAAS SUBSCRIPTIONS

You are kindly requested to update your **HELAAS Membership Fee** for **2015**.

Please do get in touch with the HELAAS Treasurer for any further inquiries:

The fee amounts to **15 Euros** per annum for students or **20 Euros** per annum for regular members. If you are a student, please verify your status by sending us a photocopy of your Student ID (Fax: 2310-997432).

Your HELAAS membership fee entitles you to:

- renew your subscription to EAAS
- apply for the EAAS grants (as advertised at **www.eaas.eu**)
- participate in all EAAS conferences
- advertise your American Studies publications at the EAAS Book Reviews section

Your membership fee also:

- helps HELAAS cover its organizational expenses (Newsletter, webpage support)
- enables HELAAS to organize events (symposia and conferences)
- supports HELAAS publications
- enables you to participate in HELAAS elections
- enables you to participate in all HELAAS conferences with a reduced fee

Please note our new bank account details for the **HELAAS 2014 & 2015** subscription fee:

PIRAEUS BANK, Account Number: 5272-056406-113

BIC: PIRBGRAA

IBAN: GR28 0172 2720 0052 7205 6406 113

PLEASE NOTE YOUR NAME WHEN YOU MAKE YOUR BANK DEPOSIT OR DO EMAIL/FAX YOUR DEPOSIT SLIP TO THE TREASURER.

We would also like to inform you that it is possible to download the membership form posted on the HELAAS web site

<http://www.enl.auth.gr/HELAAS/registration_form_HELAAS.doc>





Luiza Vizoli "Olive Tree" (Minnesota, U.S.) <<http://www.ebsqart.com>>

****Happy and Peaceful 2015****