



Annual Conference of the German Association for the Study of English
Anglistentag 2017, Universität Regensburg
20-23 September 2017

Call for Papers

The Value of Economic Criticism Reconsidered: Approaching Literature and Culture through the Lens of Economics

Investigating literature and culture through the lens of economics has a long tradition – especially in cultural studies and cultural materialism – because “cultural politics does not remain entirely within culture but is ultimately connected with questions of economics, institutions, governments, the distribution of resources, values and power” (Grossberg).¹ The 1990s saw the rise of the so-called New Economic Criticism, an interdisciplinary approach that investigates the intersections of economics and literary and cultural studies. Drawing attention to both benefits and challenges, the approach considers each discipline “a monitor or counterpractice that will expose the weakness, blind spots, and biases of the other” (Osteen and Woodmansee).² Going beyond a mere juxtaposition of scholarly pursuits, the combination of economics with literary and cultural studies promises to produce new forms of insight and knowledge. Questions of participation, of inclusion and exclusion, of the (literary) marketplace, of (global) imbalances in the distribution of wealth and power are relevant to both disciplines as major routes into the economically informed analysis of language, literature and culture. Given the increasing impact of neoliberal economics on our daily lives inside and outside of academia, the ‘value’ and topicality of economic criticism has arguably grown.

To explore the mutually enriching relationship between economics, literary and cultural studies, we invite papers on a range of issues within three major strands of enquiry:

- Historical and contemporary case studies
 - Representations of economic phenomena and activities (labour, class, trade, money, finance, consumption etc.) in novels, plays, films, etc.
 - Literary qualities of selected economic texts
 - Producing, distributing and consuming literary and cultural products in the (global) marketplace
 - ...

- Methodological and theoretical concerns
 - Reflecting on the historical and contemporary relevance of economic criticism
 - Discussing selected approaches (Marxism, cultural materialism, feminist economics, etc.) in terms of their 'value' for an analysis of literature and culture
 - Intersections of economic concerns with gender and race
 - ...

- Economic dimensions of literary and cultural studies
 - The influence of economic factors on teaching and research in literary and cultural studies
 - The economisation or the economy of academic practice: past – present – future
 - ...

If you would like to contribute to the panel, please send an abstract of 300-400 words and a short bio note by **31 August 2016** to one of the three organisers:

- Dr. Ellen Grünkemeier (Hannover): ellen.gruenkemeier@engsem.uni-hannover.de
- Dr. Nora Pleßke (Braunschweig): n.plesske@tu-bs.de
- JProf. Dr. Joanna Rostek (Gießen): joanna.rostek@anglistik.uni-giessen.de

¹ Wright, Handel Kashope. "What's Going On? Larry Grossberg on the Status Quo of Cultural Studies. An Interview." *Cultural Values* 5.2 (2001): 133-62.

² Osteen, Mark and Martha Woodmansee. "Taking Account of the New Economic Criticism: An Historical Introduction." *The New Economic Criticism. Studies at the Intersection of Literature and Economics*. Eds. Mark Osteen and Martha Woodmansee. Abingdon – New York: Routledge, 1999. 3-50.