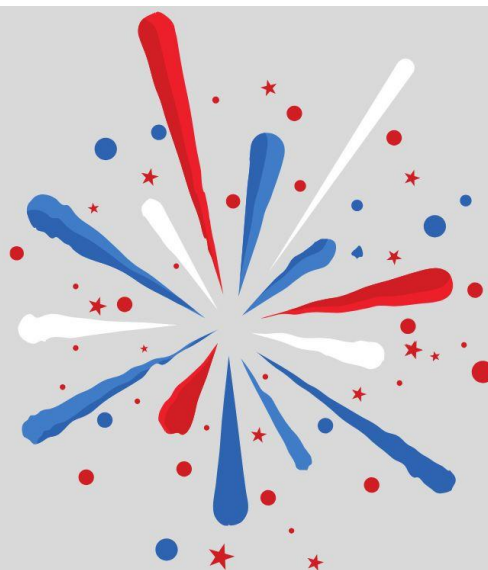


Voices of America

SEMINAR



Gender, Language and Identity in the Americas



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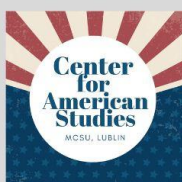
Prof. Agnieszka Gondor-
Wiercioch, Dr. Anna
Kaganiec-Kamieńska, and
Dr. Rafał Kuś,
Jagiellonian University



December 10, 2024, 2-3.30pm



Room 501



VOICES OF AMERICA Lecture Series

Gender, Language and Identity in the Americas

10.12.2024

Prof. Agnieszka Gondor-Wiercioch **Herstory in *Eyes of Zapata: Between Reconstruction and Myth***

Dr Anna Kaganiec-Kamińska **Cultural and Linguistic Trauma in Puerto Rico**

Dr Rafał Kuś **Ethnic Broadcasting in the United States: the Case of Native American Radio?**

Instytut Amerykanistyki i Studiów Polonijnych UJ

Agnieszka Gondor-Wiercioch **Herstory in *Eyes of Zapata: Between Reconstruction and Myth***

Abstract: In her short story published in 1991 collection *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories* Chicana writer Sandra Cisneros addresses the issue of reconstructing ethnic counter-history through feminist perspective of the main protagonist and narrator Inés Alfaro. This female character gradually moves from the margins of history into its center when it takes control of the powerful figure of her husband, historical Emiliano Zapata, who in Cisneros's re-writing of history is not a powerful leader of the well-known revolution, but a merciless macho with many lovers and children he pays no attention to. The story is a first-person account of Inés who becomes a powerful witch (*la bruja*) in order to avenge the injustice of the patriarchal culture. I want to prove that Cisneros wisely complicates the ethnic story of looking for one's history and identity elaborating on the theme of Chicana herstory, a feminist quest for the autonomy, not only visible on the level of content, but the form as well, which to some extent is a homage to oral tradition and a rebellion against the masculine perspective of the Chicano movement. Last, but not least, I will focus on the polyphonic narrative on the Mexican revolution that has always moved between the reconstruction and myth.

Bio: Agnieszka Gondor-Wiercioch (Associate Professor, PhD/Dr hab.) graduated from the Jagiellonian University with M.A. degree in English Philology and PhD in Comparative Literature. She teaches American, Latin American and Canadian literature at the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, published two monographs; one on multicultural models in Louise Erdrich and José María Arguedas (2009) and the other on the roles of history in contemporary Native American and Latino/a fiction (2016). She is a recipient of JFK research grant (Freie University, Berlin) and Jagiellonian University research grants (Freie University and University of Minnesota). She also publishes articles related to the themes of Contemporary Native American and Latino/a Fiction, transculturation and history reconstruction, identity search in ethnic literature, hybrid and heterogenous literature, dialogic identity, ethnic and post-ethnic dilemmas, comparative literature, transnational problems and the clash and convergence of contrasting cultural models.

Anna Kaganiec-Kamieńska **Cultural and Linguistic Trauma in Puerto Rico**

Abstract:

This presentation interprets the impact of U.S. colonization of Puerto Rico, beginning in 1898, in terms of collective cultural and linguistic trauma. Cultural trauma, as defined by Smelser (2004), refers to “an invasive and overwhelming event that is believed to undermine or overwhelm one or several essential ingredients of a culture or the culture as a whole”.

The Americanization efforts have deeply affected the collective identity of the Island, and its memory has been passed down through generations. The Americanization policies positioned English as superior in status, prestige, and value, while Spanish was deemed inferior and perceived as an obstacle to the integration of Puerto Ricans into the larger U.S. society (Torres González, 2002). This dynamic has resulted in a complex interplay of linguistic insecurities among Islanders.

This presentation is structured around the components of trauma outlined by Alexander, et. al (2004), including triggering experiences, the role of “carrier groups” in constructing the “trauma narrative”, and the coping mechanisms and pathways to healing. It explores how this trauma has shaped language ideologies on the Island, and how these ideologies have served the social, economic, and political interests of those in power.

Finally, the presentation highlights how various sectors of Puerto Rican society have exercised agency by actively challenging and negotiating colonial ideologies and policies through their language practices.

Bio:

Anna Kaganiec-Kamieńska holds a Ph.D. in Sociology (Jagiellonian University, 2006) as well as M.A. degrees in English language and culture, and the Spanish language (Silesian University).

She has been a visiting researcher at the Universidad de Puerto Rico-Río Piedras, San Juan and the Cuban Research Institute (Florida International University), Miami, among others. *She was awarded a Fulbright scholarship (2018, Florida International University).*

She is a member of the Latin American Association for Linguistics and Philology (Asociación de Lingüística y Filología de América Latina, ALFAL), the Polish Latin American Studies Association, and the Polish Association of Hispanists, among others.

Her academic interests include language and identity, language policies in Latin America and the United States. Recently, she has focused on language ideologies, policies and attitudes in Puerto Rico. In 2023, she collaborated with a team of researchers to develop a survey on language in Puerto Rico, “Encuesta el estado actual de la lengua en Puerto Rico”, conducted by the Puerto Rican Academy of Spanish Language (ACAPLE).

Rafał Kuś **Ethnic Broadcasting in the United States: the Case of Native American Radio?**

Abstract:

Ethnic Broadcasting in the United States: the Case of Native American Radio

From its very beginning in the early decades of the 20th century, the American broadcasting landscape has been dominated by commercial media outlets. The for-profit nature of the system, while allowing for the creation of a vibrant and economically viable media industry, led in many cases to uniformization of content – as broadcasters attempted to reach mass audiences in order to maximize their gains. Broadcasts (and broadcasters) targeting specific groups of listeners and viewers, including ethnic communities, could not fit this programming environment.

Therefore, media outlets pandering to individual group tastes and needs were relegated to the margins of the radio and television landscape and attempts to introduce some of such content to commercial behemoths' schedules – by, for instance, educational institutions or ethnic organizations – usually did not last long.

In case of the Native American communities, electronic broadcasting might be regarded as a natural continuation or extension of their spoken-language cultural traditions. The Indigenous identity “has always been conveyed through language” and so “long before there was radio, television, or books, storytelling was used to teach Native children and adults about life and the past”. Still, Native audiences have not benefited much from the rising prominence of radio as a medium in the early decades of the 20th century. It was only in the second half of the century that the plight of Indigenous broadcasting started to change in several aspects.

Even with these positive developments, made possible by both institutional transformations of the U.S. media market and new broadcasting technologies, the current situation of Native electronic media has been assessed with concern by many. This presentation is an attempt to shed some new light on this topic, using examples of some of the contemporary media initiatives of the Native community in the state of Minnesota.

Bio:

Dr. Kuś graduated from the Jagiellonian University with degrees in Law as well as Journalism and Social Communication (2005). He completed Postgraduate Studies for the Translators of Specialist Texts – English Language Section (UNESCO Chair of the Jagiellonian University, 2006); Postgraduate Studies in Press, Publishing, and Copyright Law (Faculty of Management and Social Communication of the Jagiellonian University, 2008); and Postgraduate Studies in Rhetoric (Faculty of Polish Studies of the Jagiellonian University, cum laude, 2011). He also graduated from the American Law School (Catholic University of America and Faculty of Law and Administration of the Jagiellonian University, 2007). In 2015, Dr. Kuś completed the ICPSR (Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research) Summer Program in the Quantitative Methods of Social Research at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor. He graduated from the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in American Studies (Faculty of International and Political Studies of the Jagiellonian University, 2011).

Dr. Kuś's doctoral dissertation *Public Broadcasting Service: The Place of Public Television in the United States' Media System* (supervisor: Professor Andrzej Mania) was successfully defended cum laude in 2011. He received the Dr. Paweł Stępką Award for the Best Doctoral Dissertation in the Field of Electronic Media (funded by the National Broadcasting Council and the Faculty of Journalism and Political Science of the University of Warsaw) in 2012.