

CFP 2027 Nordic Association for American Studies (NAAS)
May 19-21
Aalborg University, Denmark

Conference theme:
Trans-America: Development, Environment, Institutions

In recent decades the *trans*- prefix has been subject to much debate both inside and outside the academy. The prefix's meaning of 'across' or 'beyond' has often been lost in polarizing discourses about gender and wokeness. Thus, misunderstood by some to be emblematic of wokeness culture, the prefix needs to be critically examined for what it signifies and in which ways it marks a useful, broader frame for understanding the United States' history, culture, and literature. The prefix is understandably useful for exploring certain gender dynamics and constructions, but its usefulness reaches beyond gender studies. The organizers of the 2027 NAAS conference seek to engage both with this aspect of *trans*- and with how the prefix attaches to other terms to signal change or movement. The theme is deliberately broad in order to invite an exploration of a variety of topics centered on US (hi)stories of transition, transgression, and transformation.

One such transformation in American Studies is the 'transnational turn' coined by Shelley Fisher Fishkin. In her 2004 presidential address to the American Studies Association, Fishkin made a case for the importance of examining historical developments in ways that were not restricted by the nation state. Looking at the United States in this perspective is to view it in relation to historical currents and crosscurrents and link the country to the broader world.

The *trans* prefix is also important to note in relation to discussions of what American Studies is. As a meeting ground for literary scholars, historians, political scientists, media scholars, and many more, American Studies is both an institutional frame and a scholarly approach that often, though not always consistently, embraces several scholarly approaches. What is the status of the transdisciplinarity or interdisciplinarity of American Studies in the 2020s?

This conference seeks to both revisit and rethink the transnational turn in American studies and to explore a plethora of other *trans*-American themes. Some of the questions we are interested in exploring are: What does *trans*- mean in contemporary cultural, political, and social contexts? Which new perspectives and knowledge about the US emerge in the spaces between categories, borders, traditions, and disciplines? How do movements/developments of ideas, narratives, technologies, and people reshape our understanding of the US? How has transformation and transgression been significant in US history, culture, and literature? What contemporary developments make transnational and transcultural perspectives on US history, literature, and culture particularly urgent today? What are the implications of thinking about the US as *trans*- in the sense of 'beyond' or 'on the other side of'? And many others.

The organizers welcome scholars, students, and others in the fields of history, literature, cultural studies, media studies, linguistics, economics, medicine, sciences, and fields with American

Studies intersections to contribute. We are open to fully formed panels, individual papers, posters, and creative/artistic proposals.

Possible topics we wish to explore include but are not limited to the following:

- Social, cultural, and political transformation(s)
- Transnational relations, foreign policy, and international trends
- The history and/or representations of transportation (technology)
- Social, cultural, and political transgression
- Cultural, historical, and political transitions
- Transatlantic cultural trends and influences
- Transparency in politics
- Translating the US (literature, teaching, dissemination)
- Transaction, economics, and financial history
- Transcendentalism in US literature and culture
- Transmedia (storytelling, convergence, transfer)
- Cultural transmission and/or communication technologies
- Theorizing the *trans* prefix
- All topics within gender and trans* studies
- Border-crossing
- Transnational and -cultural landscapes
- Transnational environmental studies
- Transnational Indigenous studies
- Transmotion and Indigenous studies (literature, culture, etc)
- Transcultural encounters
- Transatlantic movement(s), histories, and connections
- Transcending crises
- Transgressive humor
- Trans-truth, alternative facts, fake news
- Transdisciplinary/interdisciplinary American studies
- Translanguaging, multilingualism, and code-switching in the US
- Etc.

To support emerging scholars and students, we will include a poster session as a more informal and accessible mode of participation. The session will also create space for artists to exhibit their work and for arts-based researchers to present their work outside the conventional panel format.

Please send proposals for panels, papers, and posters/artwork of max 300 words and a 100-word bio to Marianne Kongerslev and Mikkel Jensen at danishamericanstudies@gmail.com no later than November 30, 2026. Full panel proposals should also include a brief description of the panel as a whole.