

## Abstracts

THOMAS BENDER, *The United States in World History: Transnationalism v. Exceptionalism.*

American “exceptionalism” is a myth, not history. Classic works cited as the foundation of exceptionalist America do not make such a claim. John Winthrop and Alexis de Tocqueville are treated as the “originalists” of “exceptionalism,” but in fact they placed American history within a larger framework – the progress of Christianity or that of equality. Before the 1940s, classic American historians did not make reference to “exceptionalism”: not Parkman nor Adams, Turner nor Beard. “Exceptionalism” was a product of the early Cold War. With the end of the Cold War and the emergence of “globalization,” historians, and social scientists in general, began to see that many of the key events or movements in the United States were part of transnational developments: the discovery, the revolution, the Civil War, social politics – and more.

COLLEEN GLENNEY BOGGS, *The Transnational and Global Perspectives of American Studies in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries.*

Recent developments worldwide seem to signal, as some journalists proclaim, the “End of an Era of Transnational Optimism.” Situating the term in its neo-liberal contexts, as one closely allied with global trade, such headlines reflect its current popular usage. But “transnational” has a rich cultural provenance that extends beyond frames of capitalism and state power, and it can offer alternative perspectives on their discontents. Assessing the term’s development in American Studies during and after the “transnational turn” of the 1990s, this article provides an overview of its many facets, and argues that transnationalisms, in the plural, continue to offer critiques of existing paradigms as well as alternatives to prevalent discourse formations.

FERDINANDO FASCE, *Americanizing the World? U.S. Advertising Abroad in the American Century, the View from Italy*

Largely based on unpublished company records, the article chronicles the evolution of J. Walter Thompson Italia, the Italian branch of the leading American advertising agency in the twentieth century, between Reconstruction and the “Hot Autumn.” First, it intends to offer additional material and insight on the actual, controversial impact of U.S. advertising in the country in the post-WWII era. Second, it suggests ways to further pursue Mary Nolan’s recent ambitious project of looking at transatlantic American-European relations as truly “hybridized,” that is, bidirectional and mutually influential – this especially as far as consumer culture is concerned. At the same time, it retains a more cautious and restrained notion of “Americanization.”

FRED GARDAPHÉ, *Beyond the Immigrant Paradigm: New Italian American Identities and Communities*

Until recently, Italian American identity seemed to be constructed with basic elements considered characteristic of two nations. But just how Italian were the immigrants, especially those who arrived in the U.S. before there was a unified Italian nation? What types of Italian were those who arrived after the establishment of an Italian geo-political nation? And how “American” have they become? These are questions that must be raised whenever we attempt to categorize Italian immigrant identities. The realities of regionalism as it affected everything from language use to behavior, along with the timing of U.S. immigration in relation to the establishment of geo-political Italy, all work to challenge any attempt to create a single, stable notion of Italian immigrant identity. This essay surveys the evolution of Italian American identity to show how this ethnic group has continually revised its notions of what we refer to when we speak of things Italian American, to point to some ideas that might help us imagine what these identities might look like in the future and to examine how those identities will form and be formed by new communities that have emerged since the earlier major waves of immigration. This essay proposes that new approaches to studying or understanding Italian American identity need to take into consideration areas beyond simple notions of ethnic identity by including explorations of how race, lifestyles, and social class affect the creation and maintenance of contemporary Italian American identities.

AGNESE MARINO, Postethnicity and Ethnic Performance in Rebecca Walker's *Black White and Jewish: Autobiography of a Shifting Self*

Mixed-race autobiographies often focus on the stories of individuals who feel at odds with the multicultural framework of racial representation based on color and cultural purity, and rather advocate hybridity as a cultural choice, thus undermining any notion of alleged racial authenticity. Drawing on Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, this article investigates Rebecca Walker's *Black, White and Jewish: Autobiography of a Shifting Self*, bringing together the concept of performative ethnicity, mixed-race claims, and the novel approach suggested by new cosmopolitanism. In particular, Walker's memoir is analyzed for the insights it offers into a cosmopolitan rethinking of identity as based on performativity and hybridity, which provide an effective alternative to multicultural categories. Such a shift rethinks notions of identity that fully abandon essentialism and encourage misrepresented subjects to seek support beyond national (and cultural) boundaries. Finally, it tries to establish to what extent the author succeeds in conveying her post-identity message in the memoir.

MELANI MCALISTER, "Your Hands, Your Feet": Evangelical Youth Culture and the Rise of Short-Term Missions

This essay explores the rise of short-term missions among US Christian evangelicals. It traces the dramatic expansion of missionary trips among young evangelicals since the 1990s, and examines the ways in which these trips contribute to particular globalized imaginaries. A major argument is that these trips constitute a form of transnationalism that is too often ignored in recent explorations of transnational history – the religious practice and community formation of evangelicals, who are frequently presumed to be merely domestic in their orientation. This essay explores the intersection between evangelical global visions and the politics of affect, looking particularly at a form of affective politics here defined as "enchanted internationalism."