

# Editor's Note

Plans were that this issue, the fall issue of 2009, in its entirety should have been devoted to a special topic called "American Space." The proposal and collection of texts, the retrieval of peer reviewers and the subsequent peer-reviewing process took, however, longer time than expected, which explains the shift that has taken place. Instead of "American Space," which of necessity therefore has been postponed to the position of spring issue, 2010, the present issue opens its pages to a number of texts, of which some, to make a virtue out of necessity, were presented at recent Scandinavian conferences of American Studies. They have, since then, been elaborated to contributions to the journal, and now they find their place in the present issue.

This is true of Rune Reimer Christensen's text, "Stainless Bodies, Tarnished Minds: The Chinese Immigrant Body, 1868-1904," which he presented at one of the workshops constituting the NAAS conference in Copenhagen this year, 2009. Furthermore, it was this essay which was the first to gain the Orm Øverland prize for best doctoral student essay, a prize initiated by the NAAS board at the conference in Tampere, 2007. In his text, Rune Reimer Christensen discusses a nineteenth-century newspaper discourse which understood Chinese immigration in relation to slavery, bodies, and race, and he argues that the construal of the Chinese reflected the limits of cosmopolitanism at the dawn of the twentieth century.

The second text, "Transatlantic Relations in a Post-Bush Era: Conflict or Consensus" takes us back to the present time. Its author, Daniel Silander, identifies five contemporary challenges for the transatlantic alliance, and Silander discusses if it is the Bush administration which is to be blamed for the erosion of the alliance or if Europe and the U. S. have outgrown each other. What he suggests as a possible outcome is, however, cooperation rather than conflict

Film studies have not often appeared in *American Studies in Scandina-*

via. It is therefore a pleasure to announce that the present issue contains two texts on film. In the first, "American Critic: Satire and Political Discourse in Warren Beatty's *Bulworth*," Johan Nilsson explores the reception of Beatty's film and considers the conceptualization of satire in contemporary reviews. He finds that satire is understood as a determinant for the political discourse and at the same time provides a tone to it.

Under the heading of "Thinking and Re-Thinking Todd Haynes' *Safe*," the second film text investigates whiteness, queerness, and subjectivity in Haynes' film. In her analysis, Rebecca Scherr argues that *Safe* renders whiteness, usually represented as non-racial, as an embodied racial identity. The film thus opens new avenues, she argues, for thinking and re-thinking the concept of whiteness.

Texts about literature conclude the articles in this issue. The first is a reflection on history as narrative. Robert Coover's novel *The Public Burning* balances history and fiction, or fact and fancy, as Lovorka Grmusa phrases it in her text "*The Public Burning*: 'Play[ing] games with the evidence, manipul[at]ing language itself, mak[ing] History a partisan ally?'" Coover experiments, fabricates, and falsifies, Grmusa demonstrates, and in so doing makes a bitter portrayal of the U.S.A. during the early 1950s, the Eisenhower years, and the days preceding the Rosenberg execution. She finds that Coover's ways of mixing fictionalized material and hard facts explore epistemological questions in a perfect blend.

Thomas Pynchon is the author considered in the last text of this issue. It is his novel *The Crying of Lot 49* which Tijana Stajic describes as instancing the genre of profanated romance. In her essay, "Maiden in the Tower: *Bordando el Manto Terrestre*, Rapunzel, and Oedipia in *The Crying of Lot 49*," Stajic explores how the novel's protagonist, Oedipia Maas, finally accepts death as an integral part of life after her encounter with Remedios Varo's painting *Bordando el Manto Terrestre*. She pursues the protagonist's romantic quest to death and understanding, the suffering in romance.

Before the reviews section, this issue of *American Studies in Scandinavia* commemorates the loss suffered to the discipline by the surmise of Bob Baehr, the untiring supporter of ASANOR, NAAS, and American Studies in Scandinavia.