

Editor's Note

Happy Birthday! *American Studies in Scandinavia* reaches the half-century mark in energetic condition and in optimistic spirits. We are thankful that this journal remains relevant among our readership in the Nordic countries and elsewhere. And we are certainly proud of its considerable resilience: what we got is among the oldest journals in its field in the world. While the journal evolves as America and the way we study it changes, we should also humbly acknowledge our decades of heritage as a vigilant mouthpiece for scholarly knowledge and argumentation. Our track record demonstrates that there is both room and need for intellectual discussion on America, for exposing and deliberating on its varied voices and realities, past and present. This all seems all the more relevant now when the United States appears to be charting toward uncertain waters. Perhaps somewhat paradoxically the US is on the verge of turning a new chapter in its history as a “minority-majority” nation, as an increasingly diverse and multicultural meeting place for people across the world, while at the same time it also comes out as more and more divisive, intolerant, insular, and disruptive. It is especially in times like these when scholars need to stay alert, keep a critical eye, voice their findings, and remain committed to multivocal and inclusive research and knowledge. This is also what the writings in this issue offer.

The eight essays by authors from North America and Europe are revised from papers originally presented at the Maple Leaf and Eagle Conference, held at the University of Helsinki in May 2016. The key themes of the international meeting in Helsinki two years ago were identities, agency, and belonging. Tackling these intellectual vistas from different perspectives, these articles examine honor, citizenship, land ownership, borders, race and racism, indigenesness, feminism, and religion in their American contexts. In the process they give space to multiple voices, demonstrate the fruitfulness of diverse approaches, and prove the value and necessity of lively

discussions. I trust that these writings delight the knowledgeable readers of this journal with their perceptive analysis and engaging prose.

I wish to offer my warmest thanks to our Finnish guest editors, Rani-Henrik Andersson, Saara Kekki, Janne Salminen, and Juho Turpeinen. They did a great job and proved amicable to work with as we put this issue together. They also penned a fitting introduction, illuminating the special “journey” involved with this publication. This also seems like an opportune moment to thank our outside readers, a cadre of international scholars who graciously take time from their busy schedules to carefully scrutinize and comment on the manuscripts we receive from across the world. It is in great part their hard and unselfish work that ensures the quality of our output. Kimmo Ahonen, Chloe Avril, Dag Blanck, Martyn Bone, Jenny Bonnevier, Jørn Brøndal, Zuzanna Buchowska, Derais Carter, Laura Castor, Jennifer Chernega, Sue Fawn Chung, Johannes Fehrle, Gunlög Fur, Sarah Gardner, Aaron Goings, William Gow, Himanee Gupta-Carlson, Jena Lee Habegger-Conti, Outi Hakola, Markus Heide, Benita Heiskanen, Sara Howdle, Larry Howe, Vilja Hulden, Riku Hämäläinen, Margaret Jacobs, Ling Jian-e, Pekka Kilpeläinen, Martina Koegeler-Abdi, Anna Kronlund, Joel Kuortti, Lotta Kähkönen, Sami Lakomäki, Johanna Leinonen, Elise Lemire, Markus Lindner, Sheila McManus, Mark Miller, Ole Moen, Jopi Nyman, Tina Parke-Sutherland, Justin Parks, Bo Pettersson, Anders Bo Rasmussen, Mark Shackleton, Hans Skei, Birgit Spengler, Frida Stranne, Alf Tønnesen, Elliott Young, Vesa Vares, Johanna Wagner, Mimi White, and Allan Winkler have served as readers submitting their reports during my editorship. My humblest appreciation extends to all of them.

Happy Readings!

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Dr. Janne Lahti teaches history at the University of Helsinki, Finland, as an adjunct professor. He has held a Fulbright fellowship at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, taught at the University of Arizona, and been awarded the Huntington Library’s Mayers Fellowship. His research focuses on global and transnational histories of settler colonialism, borderlands, and the American West. His books include *Wars for Empire: Apaches, the United States, and the Southwest Borderlands*

(University of Oklahoma Press, 2017) and *Cultural Construction of Empire: The U.S. Army in Arizona and New Mexico* (University of Nebraska Press, 2012). His articles have appeared, for example, in the *Western Historical Quarterly*, *Journal of the West*, and *New Mexico Historical Review*. His next book *The American West and the World: Transnational and Comparative Perspectives* is forthcoming from Routledge. He can be reached at janne.lahti@helsinki.fi.