

## Conference Program

4 – 6 June 2015

Uni Bastions, University of Geneva

## THURSDAY, 4 JUNE 2015

8:30 – 9:30	Registration and Welcome
-------------	--------------------------

9:30 – 10:30      **Keynote Speech (106): Jeffrey Jerome Cohen**  
**“Posthuman Environs”**

(Chair: Deborah Madsen, University of Geneva)

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break (Grand Hall)

11:00 – 12:30      **Panels 1 + 2 + 3**

***Panel 1 (101): The Medieval Posthuman***

(Chair: Sarah Brazil, University of Geneva)

## “Jordanus Rufus and the Emotional Posthumanism of Medieval Equestrians”

- Elizabeth Leet, University of Virginia

“Caverns of the Inhuman: Porous Bodies and Posthuman Subjects in Pre-Modern Literary Representations of Caves”

- Alan S. Montroso, The George Washington University

***Panel 2 (106): Rewriting the (Post)human Monster***

(Chair: Elizabeth Kukorelly, University of Geneva)

## “Cannibalising History and Reanimating the Monster in Contemporary Remix Culture”

- Megen de Bruin-Molé, Cardiff University

## “After the Frankenstein ‘Monster’: The Post-Human Avatars of the Frankenstein Creature in Contemporary Science-Fiction”

- Thibaud P. Danel, University of Nice Sophia-Antipolis

## “Reading and Writing Race and the Vampire”

- Kimberly Frohreich, University of Geneva

*Panel 3 (112): The Posthuman Animal in Theory, Literature, and Performance*

(Chair: Nicholas Weeks, University of Geneva)

## “Posthumane Ethics”

- Luther Cobbey, University of Texas at Arlington

“Two Writers, a Cat, and an Ape: An Inscription of Derrida in the ‘Vast Zoopoetics’ of Kafka”

- Calvin Keogh, Central European University

## “Between Human and Animal”

- Lenore Malen, The New School University

12:30 – 14:00              Lunch (Grand Hall)

14:00 – 15:30              **Panels 4 + 5 + 6**

***Panel 4 (101): The Limits of the Body***

(Chair: Christina Ljungberg, University of Zurich)

“Fissures, Sutures, Grooves”

- Erin Edwards, Miami University

“Medical Preservation and Art: The Mummified Bound Foot of the Mutter Museum”

- Roxane Hughes, University of Lausanne

“On Being/Becoming in Cancer Services: Posthumanist Identities in Prostate Cancer Care”

- Karolina Kazimierczak, University of Aberdeen

***Panel 5 (106): The Posthuman in the Medieval and Early Modern Arts***

(Chair: Aleida Auld-Demartin, University of Geneva)

“The Posthuman (Music) Manuscript”

- Kate Maxwell, University of Agder and University of Tromsø

“Visualizing the Renaissance (Post)Human”

- Karen Raber, University of Mississippi

***Panel 6 (112): Posthuman Families***

(Chair: Anas Sareen, University of Lausanne)

“‘Frankenpeople’ – (Post)human(ist) Textuality in Margaret Atwood’s *MaddAddam* Trilogy”

- Anya Heise-von der Lippe, University of Tübingen and Free University of Berlin

“Mum and Dad Can Be Posthuman Too: *Remembering Babylon*, Social Dawkinsism, and the Politics of the Family Tree”

- Mica Hilson, Francis Marion University

“Hybrids, Companions, and Siblings: The Posthuman Family of *Oryx and Crake*”

- Bryn Skibo-Birney, University of Geneva

15:30 – 16:00              Coffee break – Grand Hall

16:00 – 17:30              **Panels 7 + 8 + 9**

***Panel 7 (101): Interspecies Ethics and Violence***

(Chair: Bryn Skibo-Birney, University of Geneva)

“Uexküll, *Umwelt* and the Problem of Anthropomorphism”

- Florence Chiew, Macquarie University

“Animal ‘Nature’: Reconsidering Cruelty”

- Jacqueline Dalziell, University of New South Wales  
“Taxonomic Violence, Finite Bodies: The Species Problem and the Ethics of Killing in Conservationist Biopolitics”
- Seán McCorry, University of Sheffield

***Panel 8 (106): The Posthuman Dead***

(Chair: Kimberly Frohreich, University of Geneva)

“The Posthumous and the Posthuman: Living With The Dead Who Do Not Know They Are Dead”

- Richard Hardack, University of Berkeley  
“Is the Post- in Posthuman the Post- in Postracial? Zombies and the Remnants of Race in Posthuman Times”
- Jessica Hurley, University of Pennsylvania

***Panel 9 (112): The Posthuman Mind and Body***

(Chair: Manuela Rossini, University of Basel)

“We Have Never Been ‘Human’: Imaginaries of Cognitive Enhancement and ‘Posthuman’ Embodiment”

- Brian Bloomfield and Karen Dale, Lancaster University  
“We Have Always Been Posthuman: On the Prosthetic Devices of the Mind”
- Sâmi Ludwig, University of Haute-Alsace  
“The Body on Edge – Technology, Environment, and Post-human Nature”
- Christina Ljungberg, University of Zurich

17:30                      Apéritif – Grand Hall

**FRIDAY, 5 JUNE 2015**

9:30 – 10:30              **Keynote Speech (106): Stefan Herbrechter**  
                                  **“Posthumanist Literature?”**  
                                  (Chair: Manuela Rossini, University of Basel)

10:30 – 11:00              Coffee break – Grand Hall

11:00 – 12:30              **Panels 10 + 11 + 12**

***Panel 10 (101): Clones in Literature***

(Chair: Deborah Madsen, University of Geneva)

“Towards an Understanding of the Literary Posthuman: The Figure of the Clone in Contemporary Fiction”

- Carole Guesse, University of Liège

“*Never Let Me Go: A Posthumanist Dystopia?*”

- Christina Schneider, Graduate School of Humanities of the Julius-Maximilians University of Würzburg

“Posthumanism and the Disappearance of Desire in Michel Houellebecq”

- Carole Sweeney, University of London

***Panel 11 (106): Posthuman Economies***

(Chair: Martin Leer, University of Geneva)

“Posthuman Economics: Systems of Exchange in Christian Bök’s Recent Sequences”

- Ann Keniston, University of Nevada

“Posthumanism and the Marketplace”

- Thomas D. Philbeck, World Economic Forum

“Post/Individuality, Post/Humanism, and De/Formations of the Self within Organizations: Herman Melville’s ‘Bartleby, the Scrivener’ and David Foster Wallace’s *The Pale King*”

- Ulfried Reichardt, University of Mannheim

***Panel 12 (112): Environmental (Post)humanities***

(Chair: Arnaud Barras, University of Geneva)

“A Contemporary Imaginary of Ecology: The Case of *Avatar*”

- Fani Cettl, Central European University, Budapest

“Caught Between Gaia and the Anthropocene – Reflecting Religiosity and the Posthuman in Climate Change Discourse”

- Seline Reinhardt, University of Bern

“New Materialist and Posthumanist Ethics: Our Naturalcultural Future as Envisaged by Monique Roffey”

- Maris Sõrmus, Talinn University

12:30 - 14:00                  Lunch – Grand Hall

14:00 – 15:30                  **Panels 13 + 14 + 15**

***Panel 13 (101): Posthumanist Philosophy and Theory***

(Chair: Thomas Claviez, University of Bern)

“Why Another Post-\_\_\_? Posthumanism, Panpsychism, and Object-Oriented Ontology”

- Ryan Kopaitich, University of Bern

“Impersonal Existence: Rethinking Agency and Responsibility Beyond the Person”

- Viola Marchi, University of Bern

“Expressing the World: Phenomenology and Posthumanism”

- Angus McBlane, Indian Institute of Technology – Gandhinagar

***Panel 14 (106): The Modern Posthuman***

(Chair: Valerie Fehlbauer, University of Geneva)

“Back to the Future: American Naturalism and Posthuman Autonomy”

- Stefan Danter, University of Mannheim

“Unfeeling Love: Inventing New Relations in D.H. Lawrence”

- Ben Tam, Cornell University

“Woolf with Deleuze: Metonymical Bodies in *Mrs Dalloway*”

- Gabriel Renggli, University of York

***Panel 15 (112): Posthuman Borders***

(Chair: Kangqin Li, University of Leicester)

“Towards a Postcolonial Ecopoetics of Relationality: Journeying Through the Borders of Self in Alexis Wright’s *The Swan Book*”

- Arnaud Barras, University of Geneva

“Crossing Borders in Alex Rivera’s *Sleep Dealer*”

- David E. Isaacs, California Baptist University

“Cyborg Cere: Performing the Posthuman Body in Cherrie Moraga’s *Heroes and Saints*”

- Sofia Varino, Stony Brook University

15:30 – 16:00            Coffee break – Grand Hall

16:00 – 17:00            **Keynote Speech (B106): Cary Wolfe**  
                                  **“The Poetics of Extinction”**  
(Chair: Bryn Skibo-Birney, University of Geneva)

17:10 – 19:00            Guided tour of Geneva’s archaeological site and museum  
(Meet outside Uni Bastions, in the park)

19:30                      Conference dinner – Café Papon  
(Rue Henri-Fazy 1, Geneva Old Town)

SATURDAY, 6 JUNE 2015

9:00 – 10:00            Workshop 1 (112):  
**Jeffrey Jerome Cohen – “Elemental Ecology”**

Description: The world was once thought to have been formed from earth, air, fire and water in varying combinations, held together by complex chains of love and pulled apart by entropic strife. Outgrown as a science and replaced by atomism and particle physics, elemental theory has been left behind, but with more knowledge has come an estrangement from materiality

rather than greater worldly intimacy. We continue to speak of the elements, but as something to protect ourselves against. In the wake of tsunamis, earthquakes, and superstorms, we know well elemental strife. Yet what about nonhuman love? What invitations to the posthuman do the elements and their admixtures continue to offer? Is there a promise in the impossible, in the purely imaginary, in the abandoned and the unreal?

Reading for discussion: “The Eleven Principles of the Elements” (Cohen and Duckert)

10:00 – 10:30            Coffee Break – Grand Hall

10:30 – 12:00            **Panels 16 + 17 + 18**

***Panel 16 (101): The Posthuman in Science Fiction and Fantasy***

(Chair: Rachel Nisbet, University of Lausanne)

“Hyper-embodied Science Fiction”

- Curtis Carbonell, Khalifa University

“...it’s still a cloud an’ so is a soul’: Posthumanism, Neohumanism and the Human in David Mitchell’s *Cloud Atlas*”

- Luke Hortle, University of Tasmania

***Panel 17 (106): Posthuman Bodies: Gender, Sex, and Race***

(Chair: Amy Brown, University of Geneva)

“(Inter)sexing the Post-human Body”

- Charlotte Jones, University of Sheffield

“The Untranslatable and the Sovereign: Terror, and the Species Divide”

- Anas Sareen, University of Lausanne

***Panel 18 (112): The Posthuman in Cinema***

(Chair: Azamat Rakhimov, University of Geneva)

“Animal Holocaust; Human, After All: Representations of Animal Exploitation in Shock and Horror Cinema”

- Norberto Gomez, Independent Artist and Scholar

“Remote Andros: Masculinity and the Cinematic Male Body as Liminal Space”

- Scott Loren, University of St. Gallen

“Neohumanism in the Anthropocene: Jim Jarmusch’s *Only Lovers Left Alive*”

- Hannah Stark, University of Tasmania

12:00 – 13:00            Lunch – Grand Hall

13:00 – 14:00            **Keynote Speech (106): Margrit Shildrick**

**“Immuno-politics and Chimerism: Decentering Human Singularity”**

(Chair: Kimberly Frohreich, University of Geneva)

14:00 – 14:15            Closing Remarks

14:15 – 15:15            Workshop 2 (112)

**Stefan Herbrechter – “Posthumanist Literature?”**

Description: How does one read as a posthumanist? This involves a number of difficulties: if posthumanism is to develop its own aesthetics it needs to distinguish itself from previous styles and reappropriate its own traditions and counter-traditions. It also needs to reflect on past, contemporary and future realities as well as on current cultural, social, technological etc. change. However, if posthumanism is also - as a philosophical/theoretical discourse - an attempt to take the notion of postanthropocentrism seriously, then reading (and writing) as such, as fundamentally humanist activities, become problematic. How can one read (or write) outside the human? Following on from our article 'What is a posthumanist reading?' (provided) we will discuss the shift towards postanthropocentrism in recent literature, media and theory.

Reading for discussion: “What is a Posthumanist Reading?” (Herbrechter and Callus)

15:15 – 15:30            Coffee break – Grand Hall

15:30 – 16:30            Workshop 3 (112)

**Cary Wolfe – “(Auto)Immunity and Posthumanist Social Theory”**

Description: We will begin by taking as axiomatic Roberto Esposito’s contention that the immunitary paradigm is at the center of biopolitics—a fact that, he asserts, Michel Foucault’s work on biopolitics never fully developed. When we delve more deeply into the theoretical structure of the immunitary mechanism, however (chiefly by returning to its rearticulation in terms of second order systems theory), what we find is that the “political” under this description has a paradoxical character. Insofar as we have a “strong” or “proper” concept of the political (that is to say, a concept of the political that is “properly” autopoietic and self-referential), we will, paradoxically, end up with a concept of the political that is also weak—not just in logical terms, but also in terms of its ability to “steer” or overdetermine the autopoiesis of other social systems. What is needed, then, is a more robust theory of social complexity and how the political is related to it than what has heretofore been available in biopolitical thought. We will conclude by exploring how this new understanding of where the immunitary paradigm leads us is related to Deleuze’s late ruminations on “control society” and Kenneth Burke’s notion of “comic frames of acceptance” in his writings on democracy in the 1940s.

Reading for discussion: “(Auto)immunity and Posthumanist Social Theory” (Wolfe)

16:30 – 17:30            Workshop 4 (112)

**Margrit Shildrick – “Posthumanist Knowledge Production at the Site of Encounter”**

Description: The workshop will reflect on the encounter with otherness as the basis of postmodernist ethics. Taking off from a close critique of Melvina Young's chapter 'Exploring the WPA Narratives' in S. James and A. Busia *Theorizing Black Feminisms* (1994 Routledge, pp: 55-75), we will explore response and responsibility, and the production of 'knowledge' in the face of the unknown. If the task is so uncertain in the context of human to human encounters, what kinds of knowledge production might be possible in the realm of the posthuman? The workshop relies on all participants having read the set text in advance and having asked themselves what grounds and limits any future ethics.

Reading for discussion: "Exploring the WPA Narratives: Finding the Voices of Black women and men" (Young)