

EDITOR'S NOTE



10.2478/abcsj-2024-0015

As we mark the 25th anniversary of our journal, we find ourselves at a poignant crossroads – celebrating the remarkable legacy of two and a half decades of scholarship in Anglophone Studies, while mourning the profound and as yet irreconcilable loss of our Editor-in-Chief, Ana-Karina Schneider. Her untimely passing has left an indelible void in our hearts, one that words cannot fully express, yet her outstanding contributions continue to inspire and guide us.

As well as a brilliant scholar, Ana-Karina Schneider was a visionary mentor acting by example, a compassionate soul, an effervescent mind, and an unwavering advocate for the redeeming, inexhaustible power of literature. Her scintillating intellect was matched only by her gentleness and generosity of spirit. Under her editorship, this journal flourished as a dynamic platform for rigorous inquiry and genuine intellectual exchange, welcoming voices from academics across the globe and fostering dialogue that transcends cultural borders. In this spirit, we sought to forge new paths in literary and critical theory, narratology and cultural studies, and leave an enduring imprint on the field.

In this special anniversary issue, we celebrate the past 25 years with a selection of articles that reflect the journal's evolution and its commitment to academic excellence. At the same time, we honor Ana-Karina's memorable legacy by including a tribute section, featuring reflections from colleagues, students, and friends who had the special privilege of knowing her and learning from her sparkling insights. These pages are both a testament to her extraordinary contribution to scholarship and a reminder of the profound impact she had on those around her.

This duality of celebration and commemoration is not without its challenges. Yet, as Ana-Karina herself often reminded her students, literature teaches us to embrace complexity – to hold joy and sorrow in the same breath, to find meaning in moments of transition. It is in this spirit that we dedicate this issue to her memory, drawing strength from her example as we look to the future.

As we move forward, we carry with us the values she championed for the ABC journal, generously evoked by all those who paid tribute to her memory: intellectual thirst, dialogic spirit, and an unyielding dedication to the pursuit of the subject of English in the Academia. We invite you, our distinguished collaborators and congenial readers, to join us in celebrating 25 years of scholarly dialogue and in remembering the extraordinary footprint of Ana-Karina Schneider. May her legacy continue to inspire us.

Charting New Frontiers in Anglophone Studies

In the ever-evolving landscape of Anglophone Studies, the past decades have witnessed both mesmerizing and disturbing developments that demand deep and wide thinking, and an ever so scrupulous critical engagement. As scholars in the human sciences, we thus find ourselves at the nexus of charted and uncharted territory, grappling with new methodologies, emerging themes, and the persistent questions that anchor our disciplines while painfully aware of embodying the exceptional quality of exploring what at times is beginning to feel as the endangered nature of being human. This editorial seeks to outline some of the most dynamic trends and pressing debates shaping the field today.

Digital Humanities and the Transformation of Literary Studies

As the digital revolution continues to make its mark on English and American Studies, digital humanities (DH) projects are unlocking new ways to analyze texts, archive materials, and visualize literary histories. From computational stylistics to mapping literary geographies, these technologies are not merely tools but catalysts for reimagining the contours of our discipline. At the same time, critical voices urge us to examine the ethical implications of DH, particularly those concerning access, intellectual integrity, and the potential for technological determinism.

Decolonizing the Canon: Beyond Inclusion

The movement to decolonize English and American literary studies has gained unprecedented momentum, coming full swing. It has gone beyond diversifying syllabi

or including marginalized voices, interrogating the very epistemological foundations of the field. Scholars are now questioning the Eurocentric frameworks that have long dominated literary studies and advocating for more equitable and inclusive modes of knowledge production. The challenge lies in translating these theoretical commitments into sustainable pedagogical practices and institutional reforms.

Climate Change and Environmental Humanities

As the climate crisis intensifies, so does its imprint on literature and culture. Eco-criticism and environmental humanities have thus shifted from niche subfields to central concerns in English and American Studies. Authors and scholars alike are exploring how literature envisions and comes to grips with ecological collapse, sustainability, and the Anthropocene. This expanding corpus of works raises radical questions about the role of narrative in fostering environmental consciousness and action.

Interdisciplinary and Transnational Perspectives

The boundaries between disciplines are becoming increasingly porous. Scholars are embracing interdisciplinary approaches that bring the various humanities disciplines in conversation with one another, drawing from philosophy, sociology, cultural studies, and beyond. Similarly, transnational frameworks are reshaping the field, encouraging us to consider literary and cultural production as part of a global, interconnected system. These perspectives are particularly vital in understanding the flows of migration, diaspora, and globalization that define our contemporary moment.

Emerging Topics: AI, Gender, and Public Humanities

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as an enabling, yet double-edged sword in literary studies, offering new analytical possibilities while challenging traditional notions of authorship and creativity. Gender studies, too, remain a vibrant and evolving area, with scholars addressing intersectionality, queer theory, and the politics of identity in literature and media. Finally, the rise of public humanities

underscores the importance of making scholarship accessible and relevant to broader audiences, bridging the gap between academia and the public sphere.

Looking Ahead

As we navigate these developments, we are reminded of the unparalleled potential of literature to provoke thought, challenge norms, and induce change. The work of English and American Studies scholars remains vital, not only in interpreting the past but also in engendering and shaping the future. It is our hope that this issue provides a forum for the vibrant debates and innovative research that define our field today.

We invite readers to engage critically with the contributions in this volume and to join us in charting new frontiers for English and American Studies. We are confident that the questions we ask, the methods we employ, and the narratives we amplify will continue to shape the discipline for years to come.

With gratitude, hopefulness and reverence,

ADRIANA NEAGU
Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania