

[Beyond Narrative: Literature, Culture, and the Borderlands of Narrativity](#)

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Call for Papers

Date:

May 1, 2019

Location:

Germany

Subject Fields:

American History / Studies, Cultural History / Studies, Literature, Popular Culture Studies, Research and Methodology

Conference in Leipzig, Germany

10-12 October, 2019

Organizers: Sebastian M. Herrmann, Katja Kanzler, Stefan Schubert

Scholarship in the wake of the 'narrative turn' has often tended to either expand the conceptual breadth of 'narrative' to encompass almost any form of cultural expression or to diagnose a binary opposition between narrative and non-narrative symbolic forms. The former tendency, a willingness to assume an a priori narrative quality in nearly everything, has diminished the value of narrative as an analytic category, while the latter, a tendency to dichotomize narrative and non-narrative forms, has obscured the extent to which the two mix, overlap, and interact in cultural materials and practices.

This conference aims to instead focus on the areas of overlap, the borderlands between narrative and other symbolic logics, with a particular interest in the cultural work that is done there. More specifically, it asks how the narrative and the non-narrative—tied to symbolic forms such as database, play, spectacle, ritual, network, or the lyric—work together in instances of cultural expression.

We are interested in contributions, both case studies of individual, non-narrative practices as well as more theory-driven investigations, that address questions like: How can the narrative potentiality shared by presumably non-narrative forms such as databases and rituals be described? Where and how do narrative 'residues' and the extra-narrative qualities of spectacle and play overlap? What insights become available when such symbolic forms are approached comparatively? In what social, medial, and topical contexts does narrative liminality tend to get activated? What particular meaning-making and cultural work does it enable? How does 'latent' narrativity structure the knowledges, communities, or senses of self produced by such cultural expressions?

We are pleased to announce the following keynote speakers:

- Maurice S. Lee (Boston University)
- Caroline Levine (Cornell University, remotely via Zoom)
- Robyn Warhol (Ohio State University)

Please send proposals (max. 300 words) along with a short biographical statement to narrativeliminality@uni-leipzig.de by **May 1, 2019**.

The conference will take place as part of a DFG-funded research network on "Narrative Liminality." For more information, please visit the webpage at: www.narrative-liminality.de/conference.

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