

At the Fringes of Humanity: the Cyborg and the Undead

2017 Germanic Graduate Student Association Conference at The Ohio State University

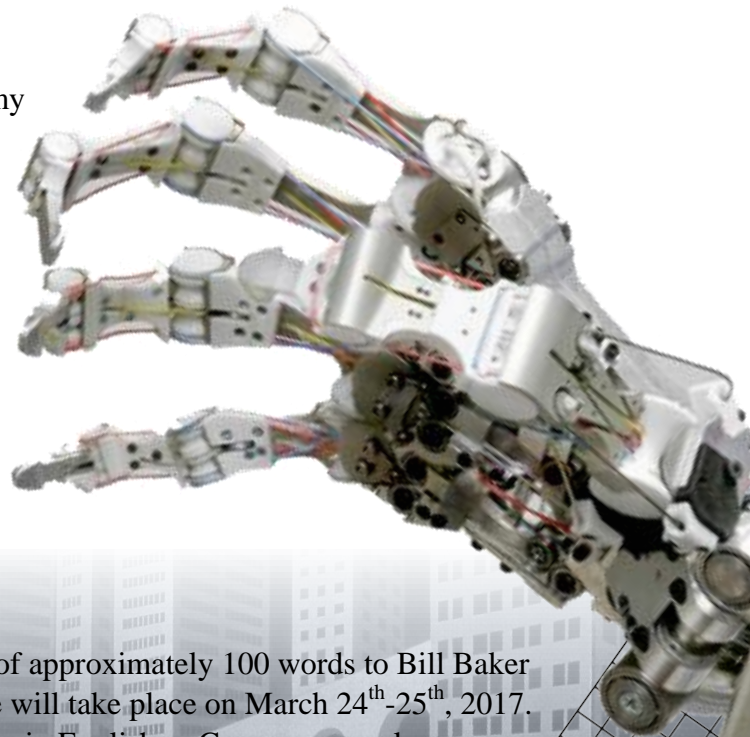
March 24th – March 25th

As technological advancements continue to globalize the world, we must reconsider our definitions of what it means to be human. As we progress technologically and integrate ourselves further with our creations and with each other, how much of our self is lost in the process and how is our human identity transformed?

This conference intends to better understand and provide insight into these challenges, particularly with regard to the German-speaking world. Has the collective experiences of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland somehow uniquely prepared them to respond to these inquiries? Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge shed some light on this discussion in *History & Obstinacy* (1981): “[T]he German cultural imaginary, forged under geographical conditions of immobility, has focused on the problem of distinguishing the boundary between inside and outside.” Can this “cultural imaginary” somehow parlay these germanophone countries’ distinctive situations into a global context?

The list of topics below is by no means an exhaustive one, so we welcome any and all abstracts that address the overarching theme of this conference. Potential topics include:

- Technology
- The historical impact of technology
- Mechanization/automation in industry and the economy
- Science fiction
- Bioethics, Biopolitics, and Biotechnology
- Artificial intelligence
- Jameson’s *Archaeologists of the Future*
- Digital life
- Life extension
- Prosthetics, Augmentation, and Implants
- Giorgio Agamben’s *bare life*
- Filmic and visual representations of life
- Technology and language/language pedagogy
- Anthropocentrism
- Anthropocene



Please submit an abstract of 250-300 words and a biography of approximately 100 words to Bill Baker (baker.1571@osu.edu) by February 1st, 2016. The conference will take place on March 24th-25th, 2017. Expected presentation length will be 20 minutes. Presentations in English or German are welcome.