

Call for Papers

DIEGESIS 11.1, summer 2022

Date of publication: June 2022

Topic: “Narrating Communities in Times of Pandemic”

Deadline for the submission of abstracts: March 31st, 2021

Deadline for the submission of articles: December 31st, 2021

About the TOPIC:

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only triggered medical and scientific development and technical change on a worldwide scale, for example enhancing the digitization of communication, but has also inscribed its traces in cultural production and reception. Within the wealth of narrative literature that has emerged in this period, our thematic issue will focus *not* on those that concentrate on the individual experience of the disease or Corona protection measures, but on those that can be analysed as “collective narratives” in the sense of Sommer (2009). What characterizes these texts and structures as collective narratives is the function they fulfil for a particular community, which draws its collective identity and shared values from them. This includes both particular “reality narratives” (Klein / Martínez 2009), i.e. narratives that claim to represent reality; and underlying narrative structures at operation within several such narratives. The narratives can manifest themselves across different media and genres: in contributions to social networks, in journalistic reporting, essayistic reflections, in political and scientific discourse, in testimonial literature, caricature, comic or documentary film. Dazzlingly diverse in terms of their ideological orientation and medial form, these collective narratives nevertheless constitute highly relevant contributions to the communicative memory of the pandemic, and contemporary narrative research with the task of developing appropriate categories for their analysis.

DIEGESIS seeks contributions that critically address the following questions, for example, but also related topics:

- What are the main narratives associated with the pandemic? How do these change as the COVID 19 pandemic itself unfolds? What distinctive features can be discerned between different media and genres?
- How is narrative reliability produced in collective narratives, or what space is given to unreliability, indeterminacy, or openness? How does the narrative function construct its authority? What role does trust play in the reception of these narratives?
- What emotions are articulated in the collective narratives, or how are emotions narratively coded and conveyed?
- In what temporal form are the collective narratives organised? How is the future told: as a prognosis, prophecy, science fiction, dystopia? How is the past told: as testimony, contemporary history, scandal? What temporal shape is given to the present, what demarcation of time is understood as “present”, for example?
- What shared characteristics emerge from conspiracy narratives around Corona? What is the significance of urban legends? What role do transitional forms between fictional and factual narration such as docufictions and scripted reality play? Are there “weak” and “strong” forms of factuality?

We invite abstracts of approximately 350-400 words by March 31st, 2021 at the latest. Please send your abstract, along with a brief CV, to the editorial team of *DIEGESIS*: diegesis@uni-wuppertal.de. The editorial team will decide on the acceptability of proposals by May 31st, 2021. Contributions have to be submitted by December 31st, 2021. The issue will be published in June 2022.

In addition, we always welcome REVIEWS of new works (i.e. works published in the last three to four years) in the field of narratology; we specifically welcome cross-disciplinary contributions in addition to contributions from those working in the fields of language and literature. Recommendations for reviews can be sent to the aforementioned e-mail address at any time; in your e-mail, you should name the book(s) you would like to review and provide a brief overview of your academic career.

Furthermore, we would also like to invite suggestions for CONFERENCE REPORTS on any events in the field of narrative research. If you want to send us proposals for such reports please include brief information on the topic, venue, date, and organizers of the event as well as a short outline of your academic career.

About *DIEGESIS*:

DIEGESIS is the first interdisciplinary journal dedicated to narrative research that provides free online access to full-text articles and reviews (www.diegesis.uni-wuppertal.de). The high standard of work published in *DIEGESIS* is ensured by a combination of competitive calls for papers and a peer review process.

DIEGESIS is published at the University of Wuppertal and in cooperation with the local Centre for Narrative Research (CNR) (www.zef.uni-wuppertal.de) by Matei Chihaiia (Romance Studies), Sandra Heinen (English Literature and Media Studies), Matías Martínez (German Literature), Katharina Rennhak (English Literature), Michael Scheffel (Comparative Literature), and Roy Sommer (English Literature).