

*XXXI Annual Conference of Polish Association for American Studies*

*October 23-25, 2019, University of Opole, Poland*

# The Sound of Silence in American Literature, Culture and Politics

The thematic focus of the XXXI Annual Polish Association for American Studies conference falls on cadences of speech and silence in American literature, culture and politics. In its original signification captured by the 1964 Simon and Garfunkel song, “the sound of silence” stands not only for thwarted communication, inability of people to communicate, the dissonance between speech and silence, but also alternative, non-verbal means of communication, hinting at a whole myriad of possibilities that the original curse of silence does not immediately suggest. Possible lines of investigation into the conference topic may include variations upon the following research themes:

- communication and dissonance traced in communication,
- verbal and non-verbal representation
- suppression of the voice and reclaiming of the voice,
- the unspeakable,
- the subaltern,
- the significance of speech and silence in American Ethnic Literature,
- the Postmodern denigration and appraisal of various senses,
- gender studies related topics,
- submerged narratives,
- storytelling,
- reading between the lines,
- innuendo,
- shame,
- affect,
- survivor studies,
- trauma studies,

- word,
- image,
- sign,
- the aural and the auditory versus the visual,
- transnational studies related topics,
- narratology,
- mnemonic techniques in oral poetry,
- rhetoric,
- the significance of speech and silence in public discourse and negotiations.

You are strongly encouraged to pursue the topics grounded in the leitmotif of the conference. Yet if you wish to present a paper tangential to the conference topic, we will be happy to welcome you as well. Polish Association for American Studies can boast a tradition of more than thirty years of annual conferences and multifaceted cooperation with scholars from all over the world. The intention of the organizers representing University of Opole and Polish Association for American Studies is to create a warm, welcoming atmosphere and make you feel at home on the grounds of the main University building, Collegium Maius,

University of Opole, in the very city center of Opole, just a stone's throw away from the XIII century-town-hall square, the Piast Tower, all major monuments and city attractions.

**Please send an abstract of around three hundred words to [paas2019@yahoo.com](mailto:paas2019@yahoo.com) by April 30. For logistical reasons, the organizers appreciate all early submissions, even if they are not yet fully fledged paper proposals, but only paper topics. If you intend to come, send us your paper topic as early as possible and you will be able to supplement an abstract at a later date.** Conference proceedings will be published, possibly in one of the special issue journals catalogued across diverse academic research databases.

For sights and sounds of the upcoming conference and its immediate location as well as neighboring locations, visit the links below.

Virtual tour of the conference site, Collegium Maius, University of Opole:

<http://www.uni.opole.pl/en/page/835/virtual-tour-of-collegium-maius>

The city of Opole website:

<http://info.um.opole.pl/en/>

Polish Association for American Studies website:

[www.paas.org.pl](http://www.paas.org.pl)

University of Opole website:

<http://www.uni.opole.pl/en>

The Institute of English Studies, University of Opole website:

<http://ifa.wfil.uni.opole.pl>

The sights and sounds of the adjacent Lower Silesia region (Dolny Śląsk):

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_QbSzZmxPuc&start\\_radio=1&list=RD\\_QbSzZmxPuc&t=8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_QbSzZmxPuc&start_radio=1&list=RD_QbSzZmxPuc&t=8)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4KoHQkNM-M>

See You in Opole, **October 23-25, 2019!**