

# Current Issues

in North American Studies and Cultural Studies  
Lecture Series | Winter Term 2015-2016

**NORTH  
AMERICAN  
STUDIES  
PROGRAM**

Kelly Kawar, M.A.

North American Studies Program



## “The Ethics of Life in Saul Bellow”

Tuesday, February 2, 2016 | 6:00–8:00 pm  
Room A, IAAK, Regina-Pacis-Weg 5



On Saul Bellow's style in *The Adventures of Augie March*, Philip Roth remarks: "There are sentences in the book whose effervescence, whose undercurrent of buoyancy leave one with the sense of so much going on, a theatrical, exhibitionistic, ardent prose tangle that lets in the dynamism of living without driving mentalness out." Such a description serves remarkably to characterize more than the signature vitality of Bellow's prose, pointing to the very 'tangle' of life forces – mental, physical, and spiritual – that Bellow's Artur Sammler confronts in the postwar ethical quest of *Mr. Sammler's Planet*. In parsing this 'tangle,' Kelly Kawar's talk aims to re-evaluate the particular ethical work of Bellow's novel, reflecting on the ambivalent value of 'life' from both (neo-)vitalist and biopolitical perspectives.

Kelly Kawar is a Lecturer and Research Associate in the North American Studies Program at the University of Bonn. She recently completed her dissertation, *From Tragedy to Testimony: Bare Life and the Hermeneutics of Suffering*, at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she will receive her PhD. Her research focuses on American literature, life writing, biopolitics, and ethical and political theory.