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Revitalizing U.S. Cultural Studies: Meaning and Materiality

Interrogating the relationship between meaning and materiality remains one of cultural studies most significant contributions to understanding culture, at the same time that it continually presents itself as an unresolved problem. The papers on this panel explore this history by examining the tension between the interpretation of texts versus mapping materialities, the interplay of meaning and the material in the emergence of cultural studies methods of doing history, and the problematically marginal status of technology in cultural studies. Each paper examines both how cultural studies has developed in relation to ways of understanding the relationship between meaning and the material, and how we might proceed to revitalize the practice of cultural studies.