

Description of Courses Taught by Prof. Nischik at the University of Konstanz (1994–2018)

Tennessee Williams' Plays (PS)

New York Poetry (HS)

The Early American Short Story (HS)

Im Seminar werden anhand exemplarischer Texte die Anfänge der amerikanischen Kurzgeschichte – beginnend mit Washington Irving – behandelt. Neben der gemeinsamen Erarbeitung der Texte soll auf die Theorie und die besonderen Stilmittel der Kurzgeschichte eingegangen werden. Weitere Aspekte sind der enge Zusammenhang des Genres mit der amerikanischen Geschichte wie auch die sozio-kulturellen Entstehungsbedingungen. Das Seminar wird in englischer Sprache abgehalten.

Film in the American Short Story (HS)

American Drama and Film: Earlier Developments (HS)

In diesem Seminar zu einem Bereich der "Comparative Arts" wollen wir uns einen Überblick verschaffen über die intermedialen Einflüsse des Films auf das frühere amerikanische Drama (i.w. erste Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts, doch werden auch Vorformen des Dramas im Amerika des 19. Jahrhunderts behandelt werden). Die zu untersuchenden Einflüsse betreffen sowohl autorenbiographische, thematische wie vermittlungstechnische Aspekte, die durch Lektüre einschlägiger theoretischer Schriften ergänzt werden. N.b.: Das Seminar widmet sich nicht der spezifischen Problematik von Dramenverfilmungen. Seminarsprache: Englisch; vgl. auch "American Drama and Film II: Later Developments."

Texte: Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman* (Reclam); Eugene O'Neill, *Anna Christie* / *The Emperor Jones* / *The Hairy Ape* (Random House Paperback); Eugene O'Neill, *The Movie Man: A Comedy in One Act* (wird als Kopie gestellt); Elmer Rice, *On Trial* (dito); Tennessee Williams, *Sweet Bird of Youth* / *A Streetcar Named Desire* / *The Glass Menagerie* (Penguin)

American Drama and Film: Later Developments (HS)

Dieses Seminar ergänzt das Seminar "American Drama and Film I: Earlier Developments" (s. dort) und widmet sich der Problematik in der 2. Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Die beiden Seminare streben insgesamt einen Überblick über den Einfluss des Films auf das amerikanische Drama an, werden jedoch unabhängig voneinander konzipiert, so dass auch die Teilnahme an nur einem der beiden Seminare möglich bzw. sinnvoll ist. Seminarsprache: Englisch

Texte: Jack Gelber, *The Connection* (Kopie); Adrienne Kennedy, *A Movie Star Has to Star in Black and White* (Kopie); David Mamet, *Speed the Plow* (Methuen); Sam Shepard, *The Unseen Hand and Other Plays* (Bantam); Jean-Claude van Itallie, *America Hurrah & Other Plays* (Grove-Atlantic)

Eugene O'Neill's Plays (HS)

In diesem Seminar soll anhand einer Behandlung ausgewählter Dramen aus O'Neills Früh- und Spätwerk ein Überblick über sein Dramenschaffen erreicht werden. Neben thematischer Analyse wird besonders die für O'Neill charakteristische Verbindung unterschiedlicher (dramatischer) Stilrichtungen im Zentrum der Analyse stehen (Naturalismus, Expressionismus, Symbolismus, epische Dramentechniken). Seminarsprache: Englisch

Texte: Eugene O'Neill, *Anna Christie / The Emperor Jones / The Hairy Ape* (Random House Paperback); *Later Plays* (Random House Paperback)

The North American Short Short Story (PS)

Die sehr kurze Form der Short Story, die sog. Short Short Story, hat sich im 20. Jahrhundert, speziell in den letzten beiden Dekaden, zu einer bemerkenswerten Untergattung der Short Story entwickelt. In diesem Seminar, das Gattungstheorie, Gattungsgeschichte und Textanalyse verbindet, sollen die literaturgeschichtlichen, literatursoziologischen, zeitgeschichtlichen sowie poetologischen Voraussetzungen bzw. Konsequenzen dieser Entwicklung in Bezug auf die US-amerikanische und die kanadische Literatur untersucht werden. Kurssprache: Englisch

Texte: *American and Canadian Short Stories*, ed. R.M. Nischik (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1994); *Short Short Stories Universal*, ed. R.M. Nischik (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1993); *Short Short Stories: An Anthology*, ed. R.M. Nischik (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1983)

The Motif of Film in Short Prose Texts (HS)

In diesem Seminar soll untersucht werden, wie das Motiv des Kinofilms in Beispieltexten verschiedener Literaturen (nord- und südamerikanische, britische, indische, deutsche, italienische, französische, russische Kurzprosatexte) verarbeitet wird. Es wird u.a. die Frage nach dem unterschiedlichen Stellenwert bzw. nach allgemeinen Parallelen und Kontrasten in der motivischen Behandlung in den einzelnen Nationalliteraturen zu stellen sein. Die meisten Beispieltexte liegen in deutscher Übersetzung vor und werden in einem Reader als Kopiervorlage zur Verfügung gestellt. Interessierte Studierende seien darüber hinaus aufgefordert, eigene Textvorschläge einzubringen. Weiteres in der 1. Sitzung.

Survey of American Literature I: Beginnings–1820 (PS)

In diesem Seminar wollen wir Literatur in Amerika von ihren prä-kolonialen Frühstufen über wesentliche Ausprägungen der kolonialen Literatur bis hin zur Zeit der Unabhängigkeit überschauen. Behandelt werden insofern Texte der indianischen Ureinwohner, Entdecker- bzw. Reiseberichte, vom Puritanismus inspirierte Textgattungen sowie auch politisch-rhetorisch orientierte Texte, prägende Grundlagen amerikanischer Geistes- bzw. Kulturgeschichte. Behandelte Autoren u.a. Christopher Columbus, Anne Bradstreet, Cotton Mather, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and Philip Freneau.

Text zur Anschaffung: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 4th. ed., vol. 1

David Mamet's Plays (HS)

David Mamet, von einem Kritiker der "Aristophanes der Sprachunfähigen" genannt, zählt neben Sam Shepard zu den interessantesten zeitgenössischen amerikanischen Dramatikern. Besonders in seinem Frühwerk in Sprachverwendung, Dialogstil und Dramentechnik von Beckett und Pinter beeinflusst, hat Mamet sich in seinem Oeuvre besonders mit den

(formenden wie auch deformierenden) amerikanischen Mythen beschäftigt, die er im Kontext unterschiedlicher sozialer Institutionen dekonstruiert: vom *American Dream* und dem *Show Business* (sei es Film, sei es Theater) bis zur "political correctness" und der Universität als gesellschaftlicher Mikrokosmos. Dieses Seminar setzt sich zum Ziel, Hauptthemen und -techniken der Dramatik Mamets sowie seinen spezifischen Beitrag zum amerikanischen Drama zu untersuchen. Seminarsprache: Englisch.

Texte: *Mamet: Plays One; Speed-the-Plow; Oleanna* (alle Methuen)

Examenskolloquium/Exam Colloquium (regularly)

This colloquium is geared toward my exam candidates taking the exam in the next period. The colloquium provides an opportunity for the discussion of general questions and concerns about the exam, while focusing on all the relevant components of the exam, particularly the oral exam. Syllabus to be determined in the first session.

Der amerikanische Transzendentalismus: Henry David Thoreau (HS)

H.D. Thoreau gilt heute neben R.W. Emerson als der bedeutendste Vertreter des amerikanischen Transzendentalismus, der einen wesentlichen Teil der amerikanischen Romantik darstellte. Thoreaus Werk ist im Spannungsfeld von Literatur, Philosophie und Politik anzusiedeln (er selbst bezeichnete sich einmal als "natural philosopher") und umfasst nichtfiktionale Gattungen wie Essay, Reisebericht und Journal, die er, eigenwillig Gattungsgrenzen dehnend, mit hoher stilistischer und rhetorischer Kunstfertigkeit gestaltete. Ein Schwerpunkt des Seminars wird auf dem Studium von *Walden, or Life in the Woods* (1854) liegen, mit dem Thoreau auch zum Vorläufer der ökologischen Bewegung in den USA wurde. Wir werden Auszüge seiner umfangreichen Tagebücher sowie seiner Briefe behandeln sowie einige seiner klassischen Essays, mit denen er auch zu politischen Umständen seiner Zeit dezidiert Stellung bezog und die im 20. Jahrhundert u.a. die amerikanische Bürgerrechtsbewegung stark beeinflussten ("Resistance to Civil Government", "Slavery in Massachusetts", "Life without Principle").

Texte: Alle Texte sind enthalten in der *Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 4.th ed., vol. 1

American Verse: 20th Century (PS)

In diesem einführenden, autorenorientierten Seminar soll ein Überblick angestrebt werden über Hauptströmungen und wesentliche Vertreter der amerikanischen Lyrik des 20. Jahrhunderts. Behandelte Autoren: Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams, Ezra Pound, Marianne Moore, T.S. Eliot, e.e. cummings, Allen Ginsberg, W.S. Merwin u.a. Seminarsprache: Englisch.

Buch zur Anschaffung: *Amerikanische Lyrik: Vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart*; zweisprachig, hg. Franz Link (Stuttgart: Reclam)

Hollywood: American Culture, Literature, and Film (Kurs)

mit J. Paech

Als etwa 1910 ein paar unabhängige Filmproduzenten in Kalifornien in der Nähe von Los Angeles ihre Kameras aufstellen, weil dort die Filmsonne am hellsten und dauerhaftesten scheint, begann die Geschichte der 'Weltmacht Hollywood' und ihres Mythos. Unser Kurs soll der Kultur-, Literatur- und Filmgeschichte Hollywoods nachgehen und nebenbei versuchen, die Frage zu beantworten: Was ist ein Hollywood-Film?

Der Kurs ist auf zwei Semester angelegt (kann aber auch einsemestrig belegt werden). Im Winter-Semester soll es u.a. um die Geschichte Hollywoods, das Studio-System, um Schriftsteller in und über Hollywood, Hollywood als Schauplatz von Filmen, um Hollywood in den Weltkriegen und im Kalten Krieg, schließlich um das Ende Hollywoods (?) gehen. Der zweite Teil im Sommer-Semester 1997 wird sich mit exemplarischen Analysen (zu Genres, Fluchtpunkt Hollywood im Exil, Produktionsgeschichten etc.) befassen.

Literatur: Bordwell, Staiger, Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960*. London 1988.

F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Jazz Age (HS)

"I had everything I wanted and I knew I would never be so happy again." (Fitzgerald retrospektiv über die 1920er Jahre)

Vergnügungslust/-sucht und Verschwendungswahn, Energetisierung der *post-war generation* und eine sich überhitzende Wirtschaftsentwicklung, die 1929 schließlich in die Great Depression mündete ("boom and bust"), Jazz und Blues und Ragtime, Charleston und Boogie-Woogie, Prohibition und organisiertes Verbrechen, inszenierte Freizügigkeit der Sitten und Jugendkult, Witz und Bon Mots des New Yorker Algonquin Round Table, Frauenwahlrecht und der (Frauen-)Typ des "Flapper", eine sich per Radio, Film und Printmedien explosionsartig entwickelnde Massenkultur: derartige Kennzeichen der "Roaring Twenties" werden gespiegelt in Leben und Werk des F. Scott Fitzgerald, der nicht nur der Namensgeber für die 1920er Jahre in den USA, sondern auch der herausragende Repräsentant und unmittelbare Chronist dieser Dekade war. Anhand des Studiums seiner Werke, die entweder in diesem Zeitraum entstanden sind oder das Jazz Age retrospektiv thematisieren (*Tender is the Night*), sollen auch wesentliche soziale bzw. kulturelle Charakteristika dieser prägenden Nachkriegsdekade herausgearbeitet werden. Doch auch anlässlich des Fitzgerald-Gedenkjahres (geb. 1896) soll insbesondere das Erzählwerk eines der bedeutendsten Repräsentanten der amerikanischen literarischen Moderne ins Zentrum gestellt werden.

Texte: *This Side of Paradise* (Penguin); *Tales of the Jazz Age and Other Stories* (Scribner's); *The Great Gatsby* (Reclam); *Tender is the Night* (Wordworth Classics od. alternativ Scribner's)

The American (Anti-)Hollywood Novel (PS)

In this seminar we will investigate the image of Hollywood in novels written by American writers who have had first-hand experience with the American film world. We will study classical (Fitzgerald, West), as well as more recent representatives of the Hollywood novel: the history of the Hollywood novel partly reflects the history of Hollywood and of American (popular) culture.

Texts treated in class: F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Last Tycoon* (Penguin); Nathanael West, *The Day of the Locust* (Penguin); Joan Didion, *Play It As It Lays* (Flamingo); Michael Tolkien, *The Player* (Faber)

Hollywood: American Culture, Literature, and Film, Part II (Kurs) mit J. Paech

Im Unterschied zum vergangenen Wintersemester, das sich eher chronologisch mit einzelnen Abschnitten der Film- und Literaturgeschichte Hollywoods beschäftigt hat, wird es in diesem zweiten Teil in jeweils Doppelsitzungen um einige Schwerpunktthemen gehen, die 'Hollywood' aus unterschiedlichen Perspektiven beleuchten: u.a. als Fluchtpunkt für Exilanten aus Europa; als Genre-Fabrik von Western und Musicals (MGM-Story). Der "Film aller

Filme" Selznick/Flemings *Gone With the Wind* soll in allen (Produktions-, Distributions- und Rezeptions-)Aspekten untersucht und Orson Welles als Hollywood-Rebell herausgestellt werden. Den Abschluss wird die Selbstreflexion Hollywoods im postmodernen Kino der Gegenwart bilden (u.a. Robert Altman: *The Player*).

Literatur (grundlegend): David Bordwell, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode Production to 1960* (New York 1985)

The West and the Frontier in American Literature and Culture: Beginnings, 19th Century (HS)

"Go West, Young Man" (Horace Greeley, 1838) and "Eastward I go only by force; but westward I go free" (H.D. Thoreau, 1862) – two statements from different ideological perspectives which nevertheless have one of the most crucial concepts for American self-definition in common. In this seminar we will trace some of the major steps in the development of the cultural symbols of the West and the Frontier in the USA from the beginnings to the end of the 19th century, also taking into account historical and political developments. There will later be two follow-up seminars (20th century and female perspective in a hypermasculinist context).

Texts treated in class: James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pioneers* (1823; Dent); H.D. Thoreau, "Walking" (1862; in: *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, pp. 2079-2100); *Stories of the Old West: Tales of the Mining Camp, Cavalry Troop, & Cattle Ranch*, ed. John Seelye (Penguin 1994); Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (1849; Oxford); further texts will be provided in photocopy.

The West and the Frontier in American Literature and Culture II: The Female Perspective (HS)

"In those days miners would flock in crowds to catch a glimpse of that rare and blessed spectacle, a woman ! [...] 'Fetch her out! We've got to see her!'" So heißt es in Mark Twains *Roughing It*. Frauen im maskulinistisch mythologisierten amerikanischen Westen bzw. an der Frontier wurden in kulturellen Repräsentationen lange entweder ganz weggelassen oder auf wenige typologisierende Rollen festgeschrieben. In diesem Seminar soll der *western myth* von einer anderen Perspektive betrachtet werden. Hierzu werden wir u.a. behandeln: einen 'Reisebericht' der transzendentalistischen Schriftstellerin Margaret Fuller (die auch eine wichtige Vorbereiterin der amerikanischen Frauenbewegung war: *Woman in the 19th Century*), Kurzprosaerzählungen des 19. und 20. Jh.s, darunter einen Kultroman der amerikanischen Hippiebewegung (*Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*), theoretische Texte sowie auch einen (umstrittenen) Film, *Thelma und Louise*, in dem sich Frauen den Weg nach Westen freischießen. Seminarsprache: Englisch.

Texte zur Anschaffung (weitere werden per Kopie gestellt): Margaret Fuller, *Summer on the Lakes*; Vicki Piekarski (ed.), *Westward the Women: An Anthology of Western Stories by Women*; Mary Austins Texte in *Stories of the Old West*, ed. John Seelye (Penguin); Willa Cather, *O Pioneers!*; Tom Robbins, *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*

Willa Cather (HS)

Dieses Seminar ist insofern eine autorenvertiefende Ergänzung zu dem Seminar "The West and the Frontier in American Literature and Culture II: The Female Perspective", als Willa Cather in diversen ihrer Romane die Pionierthematik ins Zentrum rückt und wiederholt anhand einer weiblichen Hauptfigur problematisiert. Cather schreibt in ausgeprägt

historischem Kontext und thematisiert Akkulturation und Enkulturation anhand europäischer Einwanderer. Ihre am psychologischen Realismus orientierte Erzählkunst ist häufig mit Henry James und Flaubert verglichen worden, und Cather zählt heute zu den klassischen Autoren der amerikanischen Literatur. Seminarsprache: Englisch

Wir wollen uns einen Überblick über ihr Werk verschaffen anhand der folgenden zur Anschaffung empfohlenen Romane: *O Pioneers!* (1913); *My Antonia* (1918); *A Lost Lady* (1923); *Death Comes For the Archbishop* (1927).

Basiskolleg "Amerika"

mit E. Torra

Diese Veranstaltung wird im Rahmen des Graduierten-Kollegs angeboten, doch sind auch andere fortgeschrittene Studierende, die an "Amerika" interessiert sind, willkommen.

"Amerika, du hast es besser," so Goethe, und Sigmund Freud: "Amerika ist ein Irrtum. Ein gigantischer Irrtum zwar – aber eben doch ein Irrtum." Amerika als Traum und Alptraum – in diesem Kolloquium wollen wir uns mit ausgewählten Themenbereichen der Amerikanistik aus vornehmlich theoretischer Perspektive beschäftigen. Als Themenschwerpunkte sind u.a. vorgesehen: Mythos Amerika: Gegenbild und Projektionsfläche, Akkulturation und Enkulturation: Europäische Auswanderung und ihre kulturgeschichtliche Dokumentation, Frontier/Mythos Westen, das Natur/Kultur-Paradigma in der amerikanischen Kulturgeschichte, Konstitutionsprobleme des Fachs Amerikanistik, Politische Rhetorik in den USA, der amerikanische Transzendentalismus, das Amerikabild in der deutschen Bildungspresse, Postkolonialismus und die USA, Postmoderne-Diskussion in der Literaturwissenschaft/Theorietransfer Europa – USA, Simulacrum Amerika, Literatur und Film/Hollywood.

Margaret Atwood: The Novels (HS)

In this seminar we will deal with all the novels by Atwood, though only five of them may be treated in class in greater detail (see below). Margaret Atwood is Canada's leading, most prominent writer and one of the most fascinating writers of our time. Her novels probe conventions in areas such as gender relations, power politics, language use, and she also elaborates genre conventions concerning the 'Bildungsroman', the Gothic Novel, the dystopian novel, or the picaresque novel. We will also discuss Volker Schlöndorff's first Hollywood film, based on Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (Filmskript Harold Pinter).

Books to be bought: *The Edible Woman*, *Surfacing*, *Lady Oracle*, *The Robber Bride* (all Virago); *The Handmaid's Tale* (Arrow)

The American West: Theory, Historiography, Cultural Criticism (HS)

This seminar will approach the concept/myth of the American West from a predominantly theoretical perspective, within the conceptual framework of cultural studies and textual studies. We will investigate, e.g., the significance of historiography, of pioneers' and settlers' reports, of political regulations, and of travel literature for the construction of the myth of the American West. We will also trace developments in the theoretical treatment of the American West. In the first part of this course, some useful fundamental theoretical contributions to cultural studies in general will be studied.

Texts to be bought: Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (Oxford Univ. Press); a Reader prepared for this seminar will be sold in the first session.

New York: Stories, Poetry (PS)

In this seminar we will trace the representation of New York in literary texts (short stories, poems) from the end of the 19th century to the present day, i.e. spanning 100 years, from Walt Whitman to Nikki Giovanni, from Stephen Crane to Tama Janowitz. How have these representations changed over the years, what aspects of this metropolis have writers particularly focussed on and in which function? This Proseminar will also deal with basic concepts of the analysis of fiction and poetry.

Texts: *New York Poems*, ed. Ferdinand Schunck (Stuttgart: Reclam 1991). A short story selection will be provided in photocopy.

The 1960s: American Western Literature and Film (HS)

"We stand today on the edge of a new frontier ... a frontier of unknown opportunities and perils" – thus John F. Kennedy in his inaugural address in 1960. A decade of political, ideological, and aesthetic reorientation, "the Sixties" have been called a "catchword for a state of mind." The Hippie Movement, Student Unrest, Youth Culture, Counter-Culture, Happenings, the Civil Rights Movement, and the merging of avant-garde and popular art into "postmodernism" are some of the phenomena we associate with this decade in America. In this seminar we will focus on the question of how the representation of the American West in American Literature and Film of the 1960's was affected by the cultural climate of the time. In class we will study representative plays, a novel plus its film adaptation, as well as representative film Westerns of the 1960's (*The Alamo*, dir. John Wayne; *How the West Was Won*, dir. John Ford et al.; *The Misfits*, dir. John Huston). Please note that extended sessions will be needed for showing at least some of the films. Topics for oral reports can be discussed in my "Sprechstunden" before the beginning of term.

Texts: Sam Shepard, *Cowboys # 2* (will be provided in photocopy); Arthur Kopit, *Indians* (Farrar, Straus & Co.); E.L. Doctorow, *Welcome to Hard Times* (Random House)

Margaret Atwood: Short Fiction, Poetry, Essays (HS)

This seminar is a follow-up to my earlier course on Atwood's novels, the participation in which would be a welcome, though not necessary complement to this course. This seminar will demonstrate Margaret Atwood's versatility in other literary genres, in which she is also considered a leading figure in North American literature: her literary and cultural criticism (essays), her vast poetic oeuvre, and her short fiction.

Texts: *Polarities: Selected Stories*, ed. R.M. Nischik (Stuttgart: Reclam 1994); *Good Bones* (Virago); *Poems 1976-1986* (Virago). A selection of her essays will be provided in photocopy.

Gender Studies: Using the Example of the Works of Margaret Atwood (PS)

Margaret Atwood zählt zu den vielseitigsten, faszinierendsten zeitgenössischen Schriftstellerinnen, erfolgreich sowohl bei den Literaturkritikern wie bei der allgemeinen Leserschaft. In diesem Seminar soll aus der Vielzahl möglicher Zugänge zu Atwoods Werk besonders derjenige praktiziert werden, der die Kategorie *gender* thematisiert, ein Aspekt, der in Atwoods Werk von ihren frühen Texten an zentral ist. Neben der Behandlung von grundlegenden Texten zu Gender Studies wird die Entwicklung dieser Kategorie im Werk Atwoods ein zweiter Schwerpunkt des Seminars sein.

Texte zur Anschaffung: *The Edible Woman* (Virago); *Lady Oracle* (Virago); *The Handmaid's Tale* (Arrow); *Polarities: Selected Stories* (Reclam); *Eating Fire: Selected Poetry 1965-1995* (Virago)

American Academic Fiction (HS)

In this course we will study academic novels and short stories of the 19th and, especially, 20th centuries. These are works which are mostly set on a university campus, and which focus, often critically, on aspects of university life, teaching, and educational policy, investigating their relevance to society in general.

Texts (will be provided in photocopy where no publisher is mentioned): Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Fanshawe*; Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar"; Owen Wister, *Philosophy 4: A Story of Harvard University*; Mary McCarthy, *The Groves of Academe* (Harcourt Brace); Vladimir Nabokov, *Pnin* (Vintage); diverse short stories

Sam Shepard (or: Representing the American Male) (HS)

Sam Shepard (dramatist, film actor, film script writer, author of short fiction) has been one of the most productive and multi-talented artists of post-war American culture. He has dealt with American myths and themes (such as the American Adam, the male hero, the Frontier and the West, Hollywood, the American Indian, the family, the popstar) in an innovative manner, and is, indeed, a star in his own right. One of his prime concerns has been the (re-)construction of the American male. In this seminar we will focus on a selection of his plays (early, middle, and later periods) and will also investigate two films in the production of which Shepard, as writer and actor, played an essential role: *Fool for Love* and Wim Wenders' *Paris, Texas*.

Books to be bought: *The Unseen Hand and Other Plays* (Bantam); *Seven Plays* (Faber and Faber)

Comparing Mythologies: The Canadian North vs. the American West (Kurs) mit C. Rosenthal

Whereas the US-American Dream is closely bound up with the idea of a manifest destiny and westward expansionism, Canada has been influenced by "The Idea of North," as Glenn Gould put it, in painting, music, and especially in literature. The course seeks to elucidate how the two borders with their very different underlying mythologies have shaped the self-understanding, politics, and literatures of these two North American countries. In class, we will read literary texts which exemplify the two diverse mythologies as well as cultural criticism which provides a framework for our literary analyses. A Reader with shorter literary as well as critical texts will be sold in the first session of class only.

Books to be bought: Willa Cather, *O Pioneers !* (New York: Dover); Arthur Kopit, *Indians* (Farrar, Straus & Co.); Aritha van Herk, *Places far from Ellesmere* (Alberta: Red Deer)

Introduction to American Studies (Kurs) mit C. Vials

This course aims to introduce you to the method of "American Studies" by taking an interdisciplinary look at representations of labor and race in American culture, roughly from the 1870s to the present date. To this end, we will be discussing modernity and postmodernity not only as literary phenomena, but as cultural forces with tangible effects on the everyday lives of working people. The cultural and existential effects of the frontier, economic crisis, the spectacles of the minstrel show and the freakshow, the industrial processes of Fordism and

Taylorism, and the rise of mass media, will be among the topics in our study of U.S. cultural history. We will be tracing our themes primarily through short fiction, film, photography, oral narratives, and essays, with particular attention to those cultural productions created for politically didactic purposes.

Authors to be read include: R. Wright, J. Conroy, Gilman, DuBois, Crane, Baudrillard, Slotkin, M. Gold, and C. West. The course also aims to improve your English writing abilities, thus you will be asked to write then revise a number of small essays ("response papers") in English.

Michael Ondaatje (HS)

Michael Ondaatje, born in Sri Lanka, of mixed Dutch, Sinhalese and Tamil ancestry, is one of the most interesting representatives of contemporary Canadian literature, linking his settings and themes to Asia, the American South and West, or Europe just as much as to Canada. Ondaatje is fascinated with borders – between cultures, genres, time periods, reality and fantasy, or self and society. We will deal with some of his fiction and poetry and will also discuss the film based on Ondaatje's novel *The English Patient*.

Texts to be bought: *The English Patient* (Picador); *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid* (Picador); *Running in the Family* (Picador); *In the Skin of a Lion* (Picador)

Survey of American Literature and Culture III: 1865–1914 (Kurs)

This course will provide a survey of the important period after the end of the Civil War in which American Realism and Naturalism developed, and in which African-American and female writers became important voices in American culture. Authors treated include Mark Twain, Bret Harte, W.D. Howells, Henry James, Kate Chopin, Booker T. Washington, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Edith Wharton, W.E.B. Du Bois, Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, and Henry Adams.

Text to be bought: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, vol. 2 (preferably 5th ed.)

The American Film Western of the 1990s (Kurs)

Obwohl in Abständen immer wieder totgesagt, hat sich der amerikanische Western-Film doch insgesamt als die langlebigste, erfolgreichste und eine der flexibelsten Gattungen des amerikanischen Films des 20. Jahrhunderts erwiesen. Aufbauend auf der Verarbeitung von uramerikanischen Mythen in diesem Genre zeigt sich die jeweilige repräsentierte Geschichtskonzeption über die Dekaden hinweg als rückgebunden an die zeitgenössische kulturelle Situation und die Selbstkonzeption Amerikas. Dies gilt speziell auch für den Western der letzten Dekade des 20. Jahrhunderts, in der mit 'epischen' Neuentwürfen (z.B. *Dances with Wolves*) und revisionistischen Umschreibungen von Western-Klassikern (z.B. Sharon Stones *The Quick and the Dead* mit Sergio Leones *Spiel mir das Lied vom Tod* als Prätext), aufbauend auf einer Neukonzeptionierung besonders von *gender* und *race*, ein weiteres bemerkenswertes *Western revival* erfolgte.

Zu behandelnde Werke: Kevin Costner, *Dances with Wolves*; Mike Robe, *Son of the Morning Star*; Michael Mann, *The Last of the Mohicans*; Clint Eastwood, *Unforgiven*; Walter Hill, *Geronimo*; Maggie Greenwald, *The Ballad of Little Jo*; Jonathan Kaplan, *Bad Girls*; Richard Donner, *Maverick*; Sam Raimi/Sharon Stone, *The Quick and the Dead*; Jim Jarmusch, *Dead Man*; Walter Hill, *Last Man Standing*

Margaret Atwood's Poetry (HS)**mit S. Ferguson**

The multitalented Atwood is the leading contemporary Canadian writer, who in 1999 finally won the Booker Prize, the most important literary prize in the English-speaking world. Although she is known mainly as a novelist, Atwood started out as a writer of poetry, and not a few critics argue that she is at her very best in this genre. In this course, we will survey Atwood's poetry from its beginnings till today, her main techniques, motifs, and themes, and will, indeed, find out why Atwood is one of the most important writers in the English language today.

Book for acquisition: Margaret Atwood, *Eating Fire: Selected Poetry 1965-1995* (Virago)

Forschungskolloquium/Research Colloquium (regularly)

Open for my doctoral students, MA British and American Studies/Masterschule: Englischsprachige Literaturen und Kulturen (ELK) students, and any advanced or prospective doctoral students.

American Hard-Boiled Detective Fiction and Film**mit C. Fitzpatrick**

In the American "pulp" magazines of the 1920s and 1930s, popular writers began to develop a new and quintessentially American style of detective fiction whose influence continues to be strong in contemporary American fiction and film. Set against a backdrop of rapid urban expansion, Jazz Age glamour, political corruption, and the prohibition-era underworld, this new "hard-boiled" style introduced a unique breed of detective – a tough-talking, sensitive, and independent loner working on the edge of the law who solved crimes with a combination of violence, worldliness, and intelligence. This course will provide an introduction to the hard-boiled genre and an overview of some of its most well-known authors with stories and novels from Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, James M. Cain, and Mickey Spillane. The course will then follow the development of the hard-boiled narrative through the second half of the 20th century with readings from Chester Himes and Sue Grafton, who reworked the genre to focus on race and gender by introducing black and female detectives, respectively. Film screenings will be held each week to complement the readings for the course; these will include some of the best and most iconic films of American *film noir* – *The Big Sleep*, *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, *Double Indemnity* – and more contemporary "neo-noir" films like *Devil in a Blue Dress* and *L.A. Confidential*.

The following texts will be required reading: Raymond Chandler, *Farewell, My Lovely* (Vintage, 1992); James M. Cain, *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (Vintage/Black Lizard, 1992); Chester Himes, *The Real Cool Killers* (Vintage, 1988); and Sue Grafton, *A is for Alibi* (Crime Line, 1987).

Conceptions of Love: American Love Stories (Kurs)

This course will deal with varying conceptions of love in American culture from the 17th century to the present day, with particular attention paid to literary texts (poetry and, mainly, short fiction) from the 19th and 20th centuries. The close reading of these texts will be complemented by a study of some essential theoretical approaches to the variable concept of love. Authors to be studied include Anne Bradstreet, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Kate Chopin, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Dorothy Parker, Bernard Malamud, Woody Allen, Alice Walker, Raymond Carver, and Michael Chabon.

Text material: a Reader prepared for this course; available in the first session

Survey of American Literature and Culture IV, 1914–1945: Modernism (Kurs)

This survey course will deal with the classical period of American Modernism, mainly the interwar period. Authors treated include Willa Cather, Gertrude Stein, Robert Frost, Sherwood Anderson, William Carlos Williams, Ezra Pound, H.D., T.S. Eliot, Eugene O'Neill, Zora Neale Hurston, Dorothy Parker, John Dos Passos, William Faulkner, Langston Hughes, and Ernest Hemingway. Represented text formats: poetry, fiction, drama, autobiographical and essay writing, literary and cultural criticism.

Book for acquisition: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, vol. 2 (5th edition, but 4th edition will do as well)

The American Minimalists (HS)

American so-called "minimalist" writing is a style of writing originating in the mid 1970s, mainly in short fiction by writers such as Raymond Carver, Ann Beattie, Jayne Anne Phillips, Frederick Barthelme, Bobby Ann Mason, and Joy Williams. We will concentrate on Raymond Carver and Ann Beattie, but will also deal with selected stories (photocopies) by other writers, mainly their "love stories." The minimalists' aesthetics and metaphysics will thus be investigated by focusing on the way in which a time-honored, complex anthropological concept like the one of love is represented and contextualized in minimalist love stories. We will take an 'enlarging' analytical look at the way in which small commonplace objects in a domestic context encapsulate maximum meaning in American minimalist writing.

Texts for acquisition: Raymond Carver, *Where I'm Calling From: Stories* (New York: Random House/Vintage Books, 1991 [1986]); Ann Beattie, *Distortions* (New York: Random House/Vintage Books, 1991 [1976])

Margaret Atwood and the Visual Media: Film, Photography Painting, Cartoons (HS)

This seminar will deal with Margaret Atwood's multifarious involvement with the visual media in several ways by analyzing: a) a controversial adaptation of her novel *The Handmaid's Tale* into film (Volker Schlöndorff's Hollywood film *Die Geschichte der Dienerin*); b) the function of the motifs of film and photography in her fiction and poetry; c) her revisionist treatment of classical paintings in her poetry; and d) various cartoons produced by Margaret Atwood.

Texts for acquisition: *The Handmaid's Tale* (Virago); *The Blind Assassin* (Virago); *Eating Fire: Selected Poetry 1965–1995* (Virago)

The Canadian Short Story I: Modernism (1918–1967) (Kurs)

This course will deal with the development of the modern Canadian short story in the period (ca. 1918–1967) which prepared the ground for what came to be called "The Elizabethan Age" in Canadian Literature (1967 ff.). Several by now classical short stories will be analyzed in detail, also paying attention to generic aspects of the short story and relevant methods of short story analysis. Authors treated include Stephen Leacock, Morley Callaghan, Sinclair Ross, Hugh Garner, Frederick Philip Grove, Raymond Knister, and Ethel Wilson.

Text for acquisition: A Reader will be sold in the first session.

The Canadian Short Story II: Contemporary Short Fiction (1967 ff.) (HS)

The Canadian short story has been called "the most active literary ambassador of Canada abroad." This seminar will deal with the rich range of Canadian contemporary short fiction since 1967, ranging from the realist via the postmodernist to the neo- or hyperrealist short story. Authors treated are among the best and best-known contemporary Canadian writers, such as Margaret Atwood, Alice Munro, Margaret Laurence, Mavis Gallant, Carol Shields, Clark Blaise, Leon Rooke, Norman Levine, Ray Smith, Hugh Hood, Timothy Findley, Katherine Govier, Audrey Thomas, et al.

For acquisition: *Contemporary Canadian Short Stories*, hg. Klaus Peter Müller (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1990); plus a Reader which will be sold in the first session

Margaret Atwood and the Visual Media: Photography, Film, Painting, Comics (PS)

Margaret Atwood zählt international zu den produktivsten und faszinierendsten zeitgenössischen SchriftstellerInnen und zeichnet sich u.a. durch das starke "Medienbewusstsein" ihrer kreativen Zugangsweisen bzw. ihrer literarischen Texte aus. Diese Veranstaltung wird den ausgeprägten Intermedialitätsgrad ausgewählter lyrischer und fiktionaler Texte Atwoods untersuchen. Neben der Behandlung von grundlegenden medientheoretischen Texten und einer genauen Analyse ausgewählter Texte Atwoods soll exemplarisch das ausgeprägte Ineinander von Text-Bildrelationen in zeitgenössischer Literatur und die prinzipielle mediale Bestimmtheit der Künste allgemein verdeutlicht werden.

Texte zur Anschaffung: *The Handmaid's Tale* (dt. *Der Report der Magd*); *Eating Fire: Selected Poetry 1965-1995* (Virago); weitere Texte werden in Kopie zugänglich gemacht.

Survey of American Literature and Culture II, 1820–1865: American Renaissance, American Romanticism (HS)

This survey seminar will deal with the most important formative period in American literature and culture, which witnessed the first flourishing of a national literature and culture ("American Renaissance"), American Romanticism, American Transcendentalism, early republican political rhetoric, and the transition in fiction from romance to realism. Genres to be treated include the novel, the short story, poetry, political speeches, essays, journalism, and letter writing. Students should be prepared for a substantial reading program for this seminar.

Text for acquisition: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* (preferably 6th ed., in this case vol. B)

Multiculturalism and North American Literature (Kurs)

Both the USA and Canada are classical immigration countries. Both American and Canadian literature are characterized by writing originating from a large number of different ethnic groups making up a mosaic of non-homogeneous national literature. In this course we will deal with political approaches, basic concepts, different conceptions, and problems in the context of multiculturalism in general and, specifically, literary multiculturalism. And we will also study a number of literary texts that will exemplify the "WASP" (narrowed down to the mainstream) literature in the United States and Canada.

Texts for acquisition: Thomas King, *Green Grass, Running Water* (Bantam); a Reader, to be acquired in the first session

The Canadian Artist Story and Gender: Alice Munro and John Metcalf (PS)

Margaret Atwood's Prose Poetry and Short Fiction (HS)

Margaret Atwood, figurehead of Canadian literature, has been in the literary limelight mainly for her steady production of fascinating long fictional prose (i.e. novels). But she is also an excellent writer of short fiction and of that hybrid genre, prose poetry. She has been credited with introducing Baudelairean prose poetry into Canadian literature. In this seminar we will deal with the high degree of intertextuality of Atwood's works by treating three of the five collections of short prose and prose poetry which Atwood has published to date. In the process we will see the tremendously wide range in theme, structure, technique, and impact of Atwood's short fiction and why she is considered, next to Alice Munro and Mavis Gallant, one of the three most important short fiction writers in Canada today.

Books for acquisition: *Good Bones*; *Bluebeard's Egg*; *Wilderness Tip*; a few other texts will be made available by photocopy.

The Canadian Artist Story (HS)

In a postcolonial country that had a precarious self-conception right up to the period which has come to be called the Canadian Renaissance, the status and function of the artist in his/her socio-cultural context has been of particular relevance in Canadian fiction in the second half of the 20th century. In this seminar we will examine the characteristics of the artist story in general and will then focus on textual examples which partly draw their significance from their Canadian context but which mainly make important statements on the role of the artist (and art) in contemporary Western society.

Text for acquisition: Alice Munro, *Lives of Girls and Women*; other texts will be provided in photocopy.

Trickster Tales: Native North American Short Fiction (HS)

mit E. Gruber

Native North American writing has probably been most prolific in recent decades in the genre of the short story. This seminar will discuss contemporary short fiction by Native American and Canadian First Nations authors, looking at frequent motifs and themes, trickster presences, language use and literary techniques, as well as influences from both the indigenous oral tradition and from Euroamerican literature. We will study texts by Sherman Alexie, Thomas King, and Beth Brant, among others, and will examine them in the light of their specific cultural, social, and historical background.

A Reader to be acquired can be ordered in the first session.

American Literature and Culture I (Kurs)

This course builds on "Introduction to American Literary Studies." It will provide a wide-ranging survey of American Literature and Culture from the earliest texts written about the ('new') continent by Natives, as well as by European explorers and settlers in the 16th/17th centuries, up to the present day.

Texts will be made available in a Reader.

American Poetry of the 20th Century and Its Translation into German (HS)

This seminar has four main aims: a) It will deal with the basics of (literary) translation theory; b) It will deal with American poetry of the 20th century, from modernism to the present day, specifically with its relationship to music (jazz, blues), as a motif but also in form; c) It will analyze, compare, and evaluate existing translations of American poems into German; d) We will prepare and discuss translations of remarkable poems which have not yet been translated into German. This seminar is linked to a project with the radio station of SWR 2. The poems selected for and discussed (and translated) in this seminar will be presented by professional actors at the annual poetry festival on Monte Verità in Ascona, Lago Maggiore/Switzerland (coinciding this year with the Ascona Jazz Festival featuring the legendary American jazz musician Charlie Mariano). Interested students may come along to the Festival in Ascona on Saturday, July 2nd, 2004, but the Festival will also be broadcast on SWR 2.

Literature: A Reader may be acquired in the first session.

Alice Munro (HS)

Alice Munro has repeatedly been called the best living short fiction writer in the English language. In any case, no other writer has published as many stories over such a long period in *The New Yorker*, the most sought after publishing medium for short fiction. In this seminar we will deal with what are by now "canonical" texts from all of Munro's writing periods. We will pay specific attention to gender construction in her works, the relevance of place and time, and her idiosyncratic narrative and linguistic style.

Book for acquisition: *Selected Stories* (Toronto 1996; pb.)

American Literature and Culture II (PS)

This seminar builds on the lecture course American Literature and Culture I the previous participation in which is a prerequisite for this part II. Part II will deal in depth and by means of text analyses with some selected areas of American Literature and Culture as treated in part I, such as Multiculturalism, the American Dream, the Frontier/the West, Puritanism, Political Rhetoric, and Transcendentalism.

Book for acquisition: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 6th ed.

North American Literature and Popular Culture (HS)

Ray B. Browne, the father of American Popular Culture Studies, once said, "All culture is popular culture, because culture is of and for the people." In this seminar, we will explore some aspects of the multifarious cross-connections and productive interstices between so-called high-brow and low-brow culture in the United States and Canada. Thematic areas include the literary rewriting of popular genres (e.g. Auster, Atwood), intermediality between fiction and film (e.g. film stories), literature and pop music as theme and technique (e.g. jazz: Toni Morrison, jazz poetry), literature and lyrics in dialogue (Leonard Cohen/Lord Byron, Bob Dylan/Archibald MacLeish, Joni Mitchell/W.B. Yeats), celebrities of both high and pop culture (e.g. Leonard Cohen, who is one of the earliest Canadian postmodernist writers of fiction and poetry), or the writer as insightful cartoonist and political commentator (Atwood, Thurber). We will also deal with fundamental theoretical literature on the topic (Adorno, Zizek, Fiedler, Browne).

Book for acquisition: *American Film Stories*, ed. Reingard M. Nischik (Stuttgart: Reclam). A Reader will be made available.

American Dreams/American Nightmares: Nationale Mythen und ihre Dekonstruktion im amerikanischen Film (HS) mit J. Paech

Konzepte wie Amerikanischer Traum, Manifest Destiny oder amerikanischer Exzeptionalismus sowie gängige Wendungen wie "from rags to riches" weisen darauf hin, dass es sich bei den USA um ein enorm mythenstarkes Land handelt. Diese Mythen erzählen von der Eroberung des Kontinents von Osten nach Westen, vom Aufstieg vom Tellerwäscher zum Millionär, von individueller Freiheit und Glück jedes Einzelnen. Sie sind nach wie vor virulent und haben großen Einfluss auf die amerikanische Kultur und das amerikanische Selbstverständnis, sie werden in der global erfolgreichsten Filmindustrie (Hollywood) perpetuiert bzw. affirmiert, aber zumal in Produktionen außerhalb des Mainstream auch dekonstruiert (der amerikanische Traum wird zum Alptraum), bis sie am Ende des 20. Jh. in die Angst vor Verschwörungen der Mächtigen, vor Massenmördern und Amokschützen und in Psychopathologien des Familienlebens vollends in einen Alptraum umzuschlagen drohen. In diesem Seminar (zu dem es im SS 2006 wohl auch noch Teil 2 geben wird) wollen wir nach grundlegender Behandlung der relevanten Mythen eine Vielzahl von Filmen unter ordnenden Gesichtspunkten wie (Alp-)Traumfabrik Hollywood, amerikanischer Westen, amerikanische Helden, amerikanische Großstadt, Kriege: Bürgerkrieg, Vietnam, Romantische Liebe, amerikanischer Raum etc. analysieren. Seminarsprache?

Zur Diskussion stehen u.a.: *Death of a Salesman* (Miller/Schlöndorff), *Citizen Kane* (Welles), *America, America* (Kazan), *American Beauty* (Mendes), *American Psycho* (Harron), *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valence* (Ford), *Once Upon a Time in America* (Leone), *Dead Man* und *Permanent Vacation* (Jarmusch), *Birth of a Nation* (Griffith), *Platoon* (Stone), *Apocalypse Now* (Coppola), *Easy Rider* (Hopper), *Gangs of New York*, *The Aviator* und *JFK* (Scorsese), *Superman* (Donner) u.v.a.m.

American Literature and Culture I (Vorlesung/lecture)

This lecture builds on "Introduction to American Literary Studies." It will provide a wide-ranging survey of American Literature and Culture from the earliest texts written about the "new" continent up to the present day.

Book for acquisition: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 6th ed.

Sam Shepard (Drama, Fiction, Film) (HS)

Sam Shepard (dramatist, film actor, film script writer, author of short fiction) has been one of the most productive and multi-talented artists of post-war American culture. He has dealt with American themes and myths (such as the American Adam, the male hero, the Frontier and the West, Hollywood, the American Indian, the family, the popstar) in an innovative manner, and is, indeed, a star in his own right. One of his prime concerns has been the (re-)construction of the American male. In this seminar we will focus on a selection of his plays (early, middle, and later periods) and will also investigate two films in the production of which Shepard, as writer and actor, played an essential role: *Fool for Love* and Wim Wenders' *Paris, Texas*.

Cult Books and Star Authors of North American Literature (HS) mit G. Banita

The purpose of this seminar is the study of several classic texts of North American literature that have become so-called cult books, while the authors themselves have acquired the status of stars and national mythmakers. From Mark Twain, Thoreau, and Edgar Allan Poe to J.D. Salinger, Jack Kerouac, and Sam Shepard, American writers have addressed wide audiences,

who in turn have hailed them as heroes and leaders of generations. Other texts for class include Nabokov's *Lolita*, Ondaatje's *The English Patient*, and Ginsberg's *Howl*. Some of these literary cult figures have emerged at the slowly receding border between popular culture and highbrow art, a case in point being Leonard Cohen, who will be studied as a prime example of a multi-faceted public personality. Surprisingly few female writers, among them Sylvia Plath (with *The Bell Jar*) and Margaret Atwood, have achieved this glory, but their textual and mediatic representations (and their relationship with fame) invite speculation as to the iconicity of the authorial persona in the age of its endless reproduction. Differences between the American and Canadian treatment of literary celebrity will also be touched upon. The seminar will include theoretical discussions of authorship in the context of literary celebrity (e.g. Roland Barthes, "The Writer on Holiday") and an analysis of the film *Sylvia* (2003) inspired by the life and work of Sylvia Plath.

Books for acquisition: Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*; J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*; Sam Shepard, *Fool for Love and Other Plays*; Michael Ondaatje, *The English Patient*

American Literature and Culture II (PS)

This seminar builds on the lecture course American Literature and Culture I the previous participation in which is a prerequisite for this part II. Part II will deal in depth and by way of text analyses with some selected areas of American Literature and Culture as treated in part I, such as Multiculturalism, the American Dream, the Frontier/the West, Puritanism, Political Rhetoric, Transcendentalism, and Comparative North American Studies.

Books for acquisition: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 6th ed.

Margaret Atwood's Later Fiction (HS)

In this seminar we will try to keep pace with one of the most fascinating and productive contemporary writers. We will focus on the recent fiction (novels, short-story cycle, "shorter fictions") by Canada's leading writer and will thereby try to come to terms with her tremendous generic, thematic, technical, and stylistic range, while dealing exclusively with her recent fiction (all of the 21st century).

Texts for acquisition: *The Blind Assassin* (Virago); *Oryx and Crake* (Virago); *The Penelopiad* (Canongate); *Alias Grace* (Seal Books). Texts from *The Tent* will be made available by photocopy.

Writing Literary History (HS)

In this seminar we will deal with the writing of literary history/histories both from a theoretical and from an empirical perspective. Thus general questions about canon formation will be discussed, while we will also conduct practical "case studies," by investigating various literary histories about American and Canadian literature, also through their various editions. On which grounds are particular writers and their works included or excluded? What kind of proportional treatment do they receive? What are the essential differences between particular literary histories – and what is their significance for scholars and students of North American studies and of literature in general?

Books for acquisition: *Amerikanische Literaturgeschichte* (ed. Zapf); *Kanadische Literaturgeschichte* (eds. Groß/Kloß/Nischik)

American Literature and Culture II (HS)

This seminar builds on the lecture course American Literature and Culture I the previous participation in which is a prerequisite for this part II. Part II will deal in depth and by means of text analyses with some selected areas of American Literature and Culture as treated in part I, such as Multiculturalism, the American Dream, the Frontier/the West, Puritanism, Political Rhetoric, and Transcendentalism.

Book for acquisition: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 6th ed.

Between Urban and Pastoral Iconography: Vancouver Fiction (HS)

Vancouver, Canada's western metropolis on the Pacific coast, counts as one of the most beautiful cities on earth. This results not only from its cityscape, but also from the natural context of this "jewel on the Pacific." This ambivalence of a metropolis surrounded by ocean, forest, and coastal mountains is also mirrored in the fiction set in this city, so that Vancouver fiction ranges between urban and pastoral iconography. In this seminar we will survey one hundred years of Vancouver short fiction, from Pauline Johnson to Sky Lee and Douglas Coupland, paying specific attention to the iconography used. We will also try to answer the question of whether female writers/female characters react differently than male writers/characters do in their perception of the city of Vancouver, that is, we will also address the question of whether gender is an important issue concerning city fiction as a (sub-)genre.

Texts: A Reader will be made available to the participants.

American Literature and Culture I (Vorlesung/lecture)

This lecture will provide a wide-ranging survey of American literature and culture from the earliest texts written about the "new" continent up to the present day

Book for acquisition: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 6th ed.

Literature and Cartoon Art (HS)

In this seminar we will first deal with the cartoon/comic strip/comic book/graphical novel in general, hybrid genres which all intertwine verbal text and images to tell miniscule (cartoon) to long (graphic novel) narratives. We will then trace the variable history of the cartoon/comic strip in the United States from 1895 (*Yellow Kid*) onwards. In a third step, we will study cartoons (James Thurber) and comic strips (Margaret Atwood) by an American and a Canadian writer who have also turned to this genre and produced demanding specimens that clearly demonstrate the cultural significance of cartoon art.

Texts: Copies of Atwood and Thurber comics and cartoons will be made available to the participants.

Comparative North American Studies (HS)

This seminar will deal with American and Canadian literature in a comparative manner. It will identify selected areas of relevance where a comparative study of both mainly English-speaking cultures, which are divided or, as the case may be, joined by the longest border on earth, proves profitable. Aspects treated will be looked at in a theoretical, historical, and text-analytical manner. Selected areas of investigation are: the American and Canadian modernist short story, North American love poetry, North American Native literature, the Canadian and the American North, the North American artist story, the North American farm novel, North American star authors, and North American urban fiction. This seminar, with its selected case

studies, is meant to show the significance and gains of innovatively broadening American Studies as well as Canadian Studies into North American Studies.

Texts to be studied will be made available via an electronic Semesterapparat.

Writing Canada: The Literary and Cultural Criticism of Margaret Atwood (HS)

Margaret Atwood is not only a renowned, world-class writer of fiction and poetry, but has also produced an impressive oeuvre of literary and cultural criticism over the past close to fifty years. She has produced seminal texts of Canadian criticism such as *Survival* and more recent contributions such as *Negotiating with the Dead* on the writer's craft. She has written innumerable reviews of works by fellow writers of different national origins. And she has had her say concerning contemporary issues of political, social, and ecological relevance, often in an international context. By studying a selection of her literary and cultural criticism over almost five decades, we practically see Canadian culture in the making, and, last but not least, also the issues a female writer has had to face in a postcolonial country. As Atwood, *the* voice of Canadian culture, once said: "World famous in Canada can be fun."

Book for acquisition: *Moving Targets: Writing with Intent 1982–2004* (2004). Other texts to be studied will be made available via an electronic Semesterapparat.

American Literature and Culture I (Vorlesung/lecture)

This lecture will provide a wide-ranging survey of American literature and culture from the earliest texts written about the "new" continent up to the present day.

Texts to be studied will be made available via an electronic Semesterapparat.

The Modernist North American Short Story (HS)

Both in the United States and in Canada, the short story has been called the "national literary genre," pointing to its unflagging prominence and significance in both literatures. It was during the period of modernism that the genre in both cultures developed in a manner inviting comparison. The seminar will have three main aims: to establish what "modernism" in literature means, particularly in short fiction; to study some of the established North American short-story writers and some of their canonical texts; to compare the development of the genre in both literatures, this being a rewarding case study within Comparative North American Studies. Issues of comparison include rural background/regionalism, the rise of city fiction, ladies of letters and female innovators, ethnicity in the modernist short story, literature and war – the Lost Generation, etc. Authors treated include Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Dorothy Parker, Gertrude Stein, Zora Neale Huston, J.D. Salinger, Morley Callaghan, Sinclair Ross, Ethel Wilson, and Mordecai Richler.

A Reader will be made available.

North American City Fiction: Asian American and Asian Canadian (HS)

In this seminar on contemporary Canadian and US American urban fiction we will deal specifically with Asian North American novels (and a few short stories) dealing with Vancouver and San Francisco, two popular cities on the West Coast with a high percentage of Asian inhabitants. Are so-called ethnic characters allotted a special place in the city? Where do they locate their ethnic roots, which role does history play? How do ethnic characters color the city? Which roles do multiculturalism and transculturalism play in these texts and which possibilities do the cities provide for ethnic groups to mix or to stay separate? How does

fiction link up to the countries' official ideologies concerning the integration of a multitude of ethnic groups in the United States and Canada? Such are the topical questions to be treated in this seminar.

Books for acquisition: Sky Lee, *Disappearing Moon Café* (Douglas & McIntyre, 2006); Wayson Choy, *The Jade Peony* (Other Press LLC, 2007); Larissa Lai, *When Fox Is a Thousand* (Arsenal Pulp, 2004); Amy Tan, *The Joy Luck Club* (Klett, Cambridge Literature Series, 1996). Short Stories will be made available as photocopies.

Negotiating Ethnicity: Thomas King and Dionne Brand (HS/OS)

This seminar will deal with two intriguing North American writers, one a Native American/First Nations writer, one Caribbean-Canadian. Different as their backgrounds, gender, and writing techniques are, they both make ethnicity, its challenges and chances, a central theme of their work. We will deal with issues like negotiating Indigenous identity, being Native in Canada, Indigenous storytelling and Western forms, gender issues and ethnicity, the diaspora experience, racism, sexism and the Black body, and ethnicity and community.

Books for acquisition: Thomas King, *Green Grass, Running Water* (Bantam Books, 1994); Dionne Brand, *What We All Long For* (Thomas Dunne, 2008). Poems, short stories, and essays will be made available as photocopies.

The Modernist North American Short Story (HS/OS)

The short story has been called the "national literary genre," pointing to its unflagging prominence and significance in both literatures. It was during the period of modernism that the genre developed in both cultures in a manner inviting comparison. The seminar will have three main aims: to establish what "modernism" in literature means, particularly in short fiction; to study some of the established North American short-story writers and some of their canonical texts; to compare the development of the genre in both literatures, this being a rewarding case study within Comparative North American Studies. Issues of comparison include rural background/regionalism, the rise of city fiction, ladies of letters and female innovators, literature and war – the Lost Generation, and, of course, technical aspects such as narrative and linguistic style. Authors focused on are Sherwood Anderson and Raymond Knister, Ernest Hemingway and Morley Callaghan, as well as Willa Cather and Ethel Wilson.

Texts will be provided via ILIAS.

Thomas King (HS/OS)

Thomas King is the most prominent First Nations writer in Canada. Of mixed ethnic heritage, he was born and raised in the United States, before he emigrated to Canada, where he today teaches at the University of Guelph. King's texts are often seemingly playful, hilarious, yet at the same time deeply committed and critical representations of being Native in North America. In this seminar, we will deal with several of the genres he has worked in: the novel, the short story, poetry, and "fictional non-fiction"/the essay. An analytic focus will be placed on his short story oeuvre, arguably his strongest genre.

Books for acquisition: Thomas King, *A Short History of Indians in Canada: Stories* (Harper Perennial); *One Good Story, That One* (Harper Perennial); *Green Grass, Running Water*. Poetry texts and essays will be provided via ILIAS.

American Dream vs. Survival: National Self-Conceptions of the United States and Canada (HS/OS)

The Western hemisphere had been a projection screen for European myths long before America was discovered or settled by Europeans. From these myths, but also from the experiences of Europeans and their descendants with the "New World," sprang the different national self-conceptions of the United States and Canada, the American Dream and Survival. In both countries, the arts in general and (literary) texts in particular have played a major role in the identification and the (de)construction of these self-conceptions, variously affirming, criticizing, and reevaluating them. In this seminar, we will discuss various texts from American and Canadian literatures and cultures that have significantly contributed to the development of the concepts of the American Dream and Survival (the latter in mainly its English-Canadian, but also its French-Canadian version), and we will contrast the different positions of the land, society, and the individual within each concept. Texts to be discussed range from literary classics such as Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer*, Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush*, F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, and Louis Hémon's *Maria Chapdelaine* to theoretical works and cultural documents such as Margaret Atwood's *Survival*, the Declaration of Independence, and the inaugural addresses of various American Presidents.

Book for acquisition: F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*. All other texts will be provided via ILIAS.

North American Border Narratives (HS/OS)

In contrast to the border between the United States and Mexico, the border between the United States and Canada has rarely been investigated in border studies and literary studies to date. Yet since 9/11, with a significant increase of "virtual fencing" (camera monitoring) at the US/Canadian border in the context of terrorism and drug smuggling surveillance, the northern North American border may actually no longer be called "the longest undefended border in the world," as it used to be. We will trace such historical and cultural developments by means of literary and theoretical texts, focusing on two novels and various American and Canadian short stories by authors of diverse ethnic heritage (including Thomas King, Alice Munro, Tim O'Brien, Joyce Carol Oates, Yann Martel, Clark Blaise, and Bharati Mukherjee). In spite of the superficial similarities between these two North American cultures, we will see that the border and border crossing often have a totally different meaning for Americans and Canadians. In this way, the border between the United States and Canada is indeed "a border like no other" (Claudia Sadowski-Smith).

Zur Anschaffung: Thomas King, *Truth and Bright Water* (1999, Grove Press); Jim Lynch, *Border Songs* (2009, Bloomsbury); ein Reader mit Short Stories und theoretischen Texten ist ab der 1. Sitzung erhältlich.

Multiculturalism in American and Canadian Literature and Culture (HS/OS)

Both the United States and Canada are classical immigration countries. Both American and Canadian literatures are characterized by writing originating from a large number of different ethnic groups making up a mosaic of a non-homogeneous national literature. In this seminar we will deal with political approaches, basic concepts, different conceptions, and problems in the context of multiculturalism in general and, specifically, literary multiculturalism. And we will study a number of literary texts (short stories, novel, poems) of North American literature – which in a traditional reception is too often narrowed down to the mainstream "WASP" literature in the United States and Canada. Thematic aspects covered will include immigration (first- and second-generation), border crossings, language and identity, ethnic spaces, and

multiculturalism and racism. We will also study such issues against the different national self-conceptions of the United States and Canada (cf. "melting pot" vs. "mosaic").

Zur Anschaffung: Dionne Brand, *What We All Long For* (2005; Thomas Dunne Books, pb.); ein Reader mit allen weiteren Seminartexten wird den TeilnehmerInnen ab der ersten Sitzung zur Verfügung gestellt werden.

Margaret Atwood's Novels: Early to Middle Period (HS/OS)

Margaret Atwood is one of the most renowned contemporary writers world-wide, appreciated both by literary critics and the general readership. Although she has excelled in various literary genres, her most widely read texts are her novels. In this seminar we will focus on the novels of her early to middle period (end of 1960s to early 1980s), which made her well-known to a national and international readership. We will, next to other analytic approaches, pay particular attention to her construction of gender images and also consider the reception of her earlier novels, including reviews of them from Canada, the United States, and Germany in our discussion.

Books for acquisition: *The Edible Woman* (Virago); *Surfacing* (Virago); *Lady Oracle* (Virago); *Bodily Harm* (vintage); *Life Before Man* (wegen Liefersituation derzeit noch unsicher)

Border Studies and North American Literature (HS/OS)

In contrast to the border between the United States and Mexico, the border between the United States and Canada has rarely been investigated in border studies and literary studies to date. Yet since 9/11, with a significant increase of "virtual fencing" (camera monitoring) at the US/Canadian border in the context of terrorism and drug smuggling surveillance, the northern North American border may actually no longer be called "the longest undefended border in the world," as it used to be. We will trace such historical and cultural developments by means of, first, theoretical texts. Which status and function do border studies have in cultural theory, both in Canada and the United States? As to literary texts, we will focus on a) various American and Canadian short stories (by authors such as Thomas King, Alice Munro, Tim O'Brien, Joyce Carol Oates, Saul Bellow, and Clark Blaise). We will b) discuss Jim Lynch's novel *Border Songs*, which deals with the US/Canadian border developments after 9/11. In spite of the superficial similarities between the two North American cultures, we will see that the border and border crossing often have a totally different meaning for Americans and Canadians. In this way, the border between the United States and Canada is indeed "a border like no other" (Claudia Sadowski-Smith).

Book for acquisition: Jim Lynch, *Border Songs* (2009, Bloomsbury). Theory texts and short stories will be made available via ILIAS.

Alice Munro (HS/OS)

Alice Munro has frequently been called the best living short fiction writer in the English language, or the best North American fiction writer alive, or the best short fiction writer alive. No other writer has published as many stories over such a long period in the *The New Yorker*, the pre-eminent publishing platform for short fiction. Recently, the Nobel Prize Committee, when awarding her the Nobel Prize in Literature, simply called Munro "Master of the contemporary short story." In this seminar we will deal with what are by now "canonical" stories from all of Munro's writing periods. We will pay specific attention to the relevance of place and time, her idiosyncratic narrative and linguistic style, gender construction in her

works, and her specific format of short story writing. We will also watch and discuss the award-winning film *Away from Her* (2006), based on Munro's short story "The Bear Came over the Mountain."

All texts will be available via ILIAS.

North American Border Narratives (HS/OS)

In contrast to the border between the United States and Mexico, the border between the United States and Canada has rarely been investigated in border studies and literary studies to date. Yet since 9/11, with a significant increase of "virtual fencing" (camera monitoring) at the US/Canadian border in the context of terrorism and drug smuggling surveillance, the northern North American border may actually no longer be called "the longest undefended border in the world," as it used to be. We will trace such historical and cultural developments by means of, first, theoretical texts. Which status and function does the border and do border studies have in cultural theory, both in Canada and the United States? As to literary texts, we will focus on a) various American and Canadian short stories (by authors such as Thomas King, Alice Munro, Tim O'Brien, Joyce Carol Oates, and Clark Blaise). We will b) discuss Jim Lynch's novel *Border Songs*, which deals with the US/Canadian border developments after 9/11.

All texts discussed will be made available via ILIAS.

American Literature and Culture I (Vorlesung/lecture)

This lecture will give an overview of the major periods, themes, and developments of (North) American literature as well as introduce students to basic terms, methods, and theories of American literary and cultural studies. Texts will be presented and analyzed within their historical and cultural setting and a look at Canadian Literature and Comparative North American Studies will be integrated as well.

All texts will be made available via ILIAS.

Margaret Atwood's Novels: Middle Period (HS/OS)

Margaret Atwood is one of the most renowned contemporary writers world-wide, appreciated both by literary critics and the general readership. Although she has excelled in various literary genres, her most widely read texts are her novels. In this seminar we will focus on the novels of her middle period (mid 1980s to 2000), which are the ones that made her into an international "star author" and into a candidate for the Nobel Prize in Literature. We will, next to other analytic approaches, pay particular attention to her construction of gender images and will view and discuss Volker Schlöndorff's first Hollywood movie, his controversial adaptation of Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*. As a more traditional form of reception, we will also include reviews of her middle-period novels from Canada, the United States, and Germany in our discussion.

Books for acquisition: *The Handmaid's Tale* (Vintage or Random House); *The Robber Bride*; *Alias Grace*; *The Blind Assassin* (all Virago); other editions than the ones mentioned are ok as well.

Alice Munro: Nobel Prize-Winning Master of the Short Story (HS/OS)

Alice Munro has frequently been called the best living short fiction writer in the English language, or the best short fiction writer alive, or the best North American fiction writer alive. No other writer has published as many stories over such a long period in *The New Yorker*, the

pre-eminent publishing platform for short fiction. More recently, the Nobel Prize Committee, when awarding her the Nobel Prize in Literature, simply called Munro "Master of the contemporary short story." In this seminar we will deal with what are by now "canonical" stories from all of Munro's writing periods. We will pay specific attention to the relevance of place and time, her idiosyncratic narrative and linguistic style, gender construction in her works, and her specific format of short story writing. We will also watch and discuss the award-winning film *Away from Her* (2006), based on Munro's short story "The Bear Came over the Mountain."

All texts will be made available via ILIAS.

Margaret Atwood's Short Fiction (HS/OS)

Margaret Atwood has been in the literary limelight mainly for her steady production of fascinating long fictional prose (i.e., novels). But she is also an excellent writer of short fiction. In this seminar we will survey her short story production by reading representative examples from her earliest collection, *Dancing Girls* (1977), through to her latest, highly acclaimed collection *Stone Mattress* (2014). In the process we will see the wide range in theme, structure, technique, language, and impact of Atwood's short fiction – in short, why she is considered, next to Alice Munro, to be one of the two most important short fiction writers in Canada and North America today.

All texts will be made available via ILIAS.

American Literature and Culture I (Vorlesung/lecture)

This lecture will give an overview of the major periods, themes, and developments of American literature as well as introduce students to basic terms, methods, and theories of American literary and cultural studies. Texts will be presented and analyzed within their historical and cultural settings.

All texts will be made available via ILIAS.

F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Jazz Age: Literature and Film (HS/OS)

"I had everything I wanted and knew I would never be so happy again." (Fitzgerald looking back on the 1920s)

Indulgence in extravagantly hedonistic behavior and spending craze, revitalization of the *post-war generation* and the overheated economy, which in 1929 culminated in the Great Depression ("boom and bust"), jazz and blues and ragtime, Charleston and boogie-woogie, Prohibition and organized crime, turning to liberal values and youth culture, witticisms and bon mots of New York's Algonquin Round Table, women's suffrage and the "flapper," a new type of woman, a mass culture developing explosively in radio, film, and print media: such hallmarks of the 1920s, which F. Scott Fitzgerald described as the "Roaring Twenties," are found in the life/biography and work of this preeminent representative and contemporary chronicler of that decade. Studying Fitzgerald's works either from this period or those retrospectively addressing the Jazz Age, we will work out the significant social and cultural characteristics of this defining post-war decade. Further, three adaptations of two of Fitzgerald's works will be discussed: two of *The Great Gatsby* and one of "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button."

Book for acquisition: Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (Reclam); other texts will be made available via ILIAS.

Multiple Liminality: Aging in the Canadian Short Story (HS/OS)

A liminal period or liminal state (*limen* = lat. border) is a border crossing period or state, a period or state in-between, not quite part of the previous state any more, neither still at the subsequent state. A common phenomenon from traveling, for instance, such periods and mental states are often marked by a heightened intensity and by a relativizing or even dismissal of established rules, sometimes changing one's view of life. In this seminar, we will first deal with the fascinating concept of "liminality" in general and will then turn towards the later stages of life, as they are experienced by protagonists in Canadian short fiction. I speak of "multiple liminality" because the short story as such has been called a "liminal" literary genre (and we will indeed deal with such generic questions as well) and because liminal, often life-changing experiences tend to take place in liminal spaces, such as (in the present context) the caring home or hospitals. A prototypical case in point is Nobel Prize winner Alice Munro's short story "The Bear Came Over the Mountain," an excellent story that was adapted to an equally excellent film by Sarah Polley (we will deal with both in the seminar). The short stories discussed in this seminar include texts by Alice Munro, Margaret Atwood, Jane Rule, Thomas King, and Joseph Boyden, the latter two of partly Indigenous/First Nations descent.

All texts will be made available via ILIAS.

Margaret Atwood's Middle Period Novels and Their Reception in Canada, the United States, and Germany (HS/OS)

Margaret Atwood is one of the most renowned contemporary writers world-wide, appreciated both by literary critics and the general readership. Although she has excelled in various literary genres, her most widely read texts are her novels. In this seminar, we will focus on two prize-winning novels of her middle period (mid-1980s to 2000), which contributed to making her an international "star author" and a perennial candidate for the Nobel Prize in Literature: *The Robber Bride* and *The Blind Assassin*. The latter was judged by *Time* magazine as the best novel of 2000 and it even included the book in its list of the 100 greatest English-language novels published since 1923. In the seminar, next to other analytic approaches, we will pay particular attention to Atwood's construction of gender images, her treatment of history, and her narrative technique. Another focus of the seminar will be on the reception of the two selected novels in the United States, Canada, and Germany. This will mainly be done by studying contemporary print reviews of the two novels from Canada, the United States, and Germany, with a pronounced comparative interest: Are there significant similarities and, in particular, differences in the reception of the two novels between these three countries?

Books for acquisition: Margaret Atwood, *The Robber Bride* (1993) and *The Blind Assassin* (2000); edition/publisher: both Virago; if you already own another edition, that is ok as well. The print reviews will be made available via ILIAS.

Introduction to Comparative North American Studies (HS/OS)

This seminar will deal with American and Canadian literature and culture in a comparative manner. It will identify selected areas of relevance where a comparative study of both cultures, which are separated, or (as the case may be) joined, by the longest border between sovereign states, proves highly advantageous. Aspects treated will be looked at in a theoretical and historical manner through succinct presentations by the lecturer in each session, and subsequently, with the students, in a text-analytical manner. Selected areas of study are: multiculturalism in the United States and Canada, Hollywood and "Hollywood of the North,"

the American and Canadian modernist short story, the Canada-US Border and Vietnam Draft Dodging, and North American Humor: A Comparative Approach. This seminar, with its selected case studies, is meant to show the significance, gains, and topicality of broadening American Studies as well as Canadian Studies into Comparative North American Studies.

We will deal with shorter texts and text extracts—all texts will be made available via ILIAS.

For orientation, consult these books: Reingard M. Nischik, *Comparative North American Studies: Transnational Approaches to American and Canadian Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) and Reingard M. Nischik, ed. *The Palgrave Handbook of Comparative North American Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014)

New York Literature: Stories and Poetry (HS/OS)

In this seminar we will trace expressive representations of New York in literary texts (short fiction and poetry) from the end of the nineteenth century to the end of the twentieth literature, spanning a hundred years, from Walt Whitman to Nikki Giovanni, from Stephen Crane to Tama Janowitz. How have these representations changed over the years, which aspects of this exciting metropolis have writers focused on particularly, and in which function? How are pertinent socio-historical developments reflected in New York literature? And which narrative and lyrical techniques do writers use to evoke this multi-faceted "Maximum City"? We will also deal with aspects of research on city literature in general.

Books for acquisition: *New York Fiction*, ed. Reingard M. Nischik (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2000) and *New York Poetry*, ed. Ferdinand Schunk (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001)

Margaret Atwood's Recent Short Fiction (HS/OS)

Margaret Atwood has been in the literary limelight particularly for her steady production of fascinating long fictional prose (i.e., novels). But she is also an outstanding writer of short fiction. In this seminar we will focus on her three latest short prose collections, which show the range of her creativity also in her short fiction: *The Tent* (2006), a collection of "short fictions," "essay-fiction," prose poetry, fables, and so-called "flash fiction"; *Moral Disorder* (2006), her first short story cycle; and her most recent, highly acclaimed collection *Stone Mattress: Nine Tales* (2014), several of them being "tales about tales." In the seminar we will thus see the wide range in theme, structure, technique, language, and impact of Atwood's short fiction – in short, why she is considered, next to Alice Munro, to be one of the important short fiction writers in North America and the world today.

Books for acquisition: Margaret Atwood, *Moral Disorder* and *Stone Mattress*; selections from *The Tent* will be made available via ILIAS.

New York Literature: Stories and Poetry (HS/OS)

In this seminar we will trace expressive representations of New York in literary texts (short fiction and poetry) from the end of the nineteenth century to the end of the twentieth literature, spanning a hundred years, from Walt Whitman to Nikki Giovanni, from Stephen Crane to Tama Janowitz. How have these representations changed over the years, which aspects of this exciting metropolis have writers focused on particularly, and in which function? How are pertinent socio-historical developments reflected in New York literature? And which narrative and lyrical techniques do writers use to evoke this multi-faceted "Maximum City"? We will also deal with aspects of research on city literature in general.

For acquisition: *New York Fiction*, ed. Reingard M. Nischik (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2000); poetry and other texts will be provided via ILIAS.

Nobel Laureate Alice Munro's Art of Writing (HS/OS)

Alice Munro has frequently been called the best living short fiction writer in the English language, or the best short fiction writer alive, or the best North American fiction writer alive. In 2013, the Nobel Prize Committee, when awarding her the Nobel Prize in Literature, simply called Munro "Master of the contemporary short story." In this seminar we will deal with what are by now "canonical" stories from all of Munro's writing periods. We will pay specific attention to her handling of place and time, her idiosyncratic narrative and verbal style, her focus on liminal situations, and her specific form/poetics of short story writing.

Texts will be made available via LIAS.

Meta-Writing: Writing and the Writer in North American Literary Texts (HS/OS)

In this seminar we will deal with texts by North American writers that deal with their profession, the challenges and rewards of writing, as well as with the writer. Most of the selected texts belong to the genre of short fiction, but we will also deal with several essays by well-known writers in which they contemplate on their own profession. Authors dealt with include Margaret Atwood, Norman Mailer, John Metcalf, and Nobel Laureate Alice Munro.

Texts will be made available via ILIAS.

September 28, 2018
