

Einführungsveranstaltungen

Introduction to British Cultural Studies

Prof. Dr. Zeno Ackermann, Mi 16-18 Uhr

"Culture is the software that determines our lives" (Rainer Winter). Cultural studies seek to understand how this 'software' shapes us and our social environment. However, cultural studies are just as interested in how we – as cultural, social and political *agents* – shape the 'software'. The goal is to throw fresh light on ways of representing, feeling and acting that are usually taken for granted. In consequence, cultural studies are practical and theoretical at the same time. The lecture will provide an introduction to both the specific 'project' of British cultural studies *and* to the study of British history, society and culture more generally. On the one hand, we will clarify key concepts in cultural theory and discuss exemplary cultural phenomena. On the other hand, we will not fail to address the geographical and historical basics of life in Britain as well as the impact of British history on the entire Anglophone world.

Einführungsvorlesung englische Literaturwissenschaft

Prof. Dr. Ralph Pordzik, Mi 14-16 Uhr

Diese Vorlesung führt exemplarisch und anhand ausgewählter Textbeispiele der englischsprachigen Literatur in die Verfahrensweisen des systematischen und kritischen Lesens ein. Ein Reader mit ausgewählten Primär- und Sekundärtexten wird zu Beginn des Semesters zur Verfügung gestellt; darüber hinaus ist den Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmern die Anschaffung und Lektüre von William Shakespeares *The Tempest* ans Herz gelegt.

Vorlesungsmodule

'Lyric/s': Popular Music and/as Contemporary Poetry

Prof. Dr. Zeno Ackermann, Di 10-12 Uhr

In a recent book on *The Poetry of Pop* (2017), Adam Bradley claims that much of the "magic" of popular music "resides in the language of the lyrics." As he points out, "[t]here's something irresistible about words set in song." The lecture will pick up on these propositions by combining the topics and approaches of popular music studies with those of literary criticism. On the one hand, it will discuss poetry *on* popular music, investigating the ways in which poets have celebrated and critiqued this key domain of contemporary cultural life. On the other hand, and most importantly, I want to take the lyrical dimension of 'song lyrics' seriously and explore the poetry *of* popular music. Accordingly, the lecture offers an advanced introduction not only to poetry and poetry analysis but also to popular music studies as a seminal field within cultural studies.

Survey Literary and Cultural History: The Victorian Period

Prof. Dr. Kirsten Sandrock, Di 16-18 Uhr

The Victorian Age, with its rich and powerful literature and culture, has shaped the Anglophone world until this day. This lecture series offers an overview of the literature and culture of the 19th century, focusing particularly on the UK in the period of Queen Victoria's reign (1837–1901) but also situating it in the long-term contexts of British and Anglophone literary history. We will begin in the early nineteenth century with Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and work our way through the Victorian Age. Key authors and texts we will be discussing include Jane Austen, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Lord Tennyson, Emily Bronte, George Eliot, Matthew Arnold, Charles Dickens and others. We will also consider contextual debates and their interaction with literature, such as Darwin and science, gender and the 'woman question', empire and nation as well as industrialism. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the primary sources and to read up on secondary texts provided in the lecture.

Seminare für niedrige Semester

Analysing Narrative Fiction: English Short Stories

PD Dr. Miriam Wallraven, Mo 14-16 Uhr

The English short story is one of the most versatile genres that can take up widely different topics, various motifs, and use a vast array of literary techniques in order to surprise the readers and create suspense. In comparison to novels, its brevity and restricted scope which creates an impression of special unity makes it readable in a short time. We will focus on short stories in the nineteenth and in the twentieth century: The seminar will, among other texts, deal with a Victorian Ghost story, take you on an excursion to a widely influential American short story, explore the formal experiments of British Modernism and lead you to one of the major contemporary Canadian authors. This course is designed for students in their first semesters who want to practise their tools for analysing prose fiction while reading intriguing and suspenseful texts. Together we will sharpen our tools by paying attention to narrative situation, voice and focalisation, plot and structure, characterisation, motifs, and genres. Regular and active participation in this seminar will thus provide you with the ability to pose profitable questions for unlocking prose texts in general and get access to their different layers, with a sound understanding of the genre of the short story as well as an insight into different literary periods.

All short stories will be made available in a reader in WueCampus at the beginning of term.

Please note: Regular attendance for the whole of the seminar is vital!

Fictional Universes, Possible Worlds: Einführung in die moderne Erzählanalyse

Prof. Dr. Ralph Pordzik, Di 10-12 Uhr

Dieses Seminar, das sich vor allem an die jüngeren Semester richtet, bietet eine umfassende Einführung in die Probleme der Romananalyse. Die Diskussionen konzentrieren sich auf die Entstehung narrativer Texte unter spezieller Berücksichtigung historischer und ästhetischer Kontexte sowie mit Blick auf erzähltheoretische Modelle der Fokalisierung (*point of view*) und der Stoffvermittlung durch Erzählinstanzen sowie differenzierte Formen der Sprach- und Bewusstseinspräsentation. Nach Vorübungen anhand kürzerer Textpassagen aus dem reichen Korpus der englischen Literatur werden detaillierte Analysen von E. M. Forsters *A Passage to India* und George Orwells *Nineteen Eighty-Four* den abschließenden Rahmen für die Diskussionen im Kurs bilden. Voraussetzungen zum Erwerb von 5 ECTS: sorgfältige Lektüre der genannten Texte, aktive Teilnahme an der Lehre und Abschlussklausur (*written exam*).

Why Poems Matter: Introduction to Poetry Analysis

Prof. Dr. Ralph Pordzik, Do 10-12 Uhr

This seminar offers an introduction to the analysis of Anglophone poetry. Designed for students in their first semesters who wish to sharpen their critical tools while reading intriguing and diverse poems written in various modes and genres, the course will concentrate on the changing aesthetics and rhetoric of lyrical form, with special attention to its historical context and meaning. It imparts the necessary knowledge for understanding poems and getting access to their various aspects of style, rhythm, meter, language and contents, with regard to literary periods from the Romantic Age to the 21st century. All poems will be made available in a reader via Wuecampus. The course is also suitable as an exercise in preparation for the *Staatsexamen*. Recommended reading: Christoph Bode: *Einführung in die Lyrikanalyse* (wvt, 2001).

Beginning Shakespeare

Daniela Kunz, Do 18-20 Uhr

„He was not of an age but for all time“ – dieses berühmte Zitat Ben Jonsons über seinen Freund und Kollegen William Shakespeare bringt die Faszination zum Ausdruck, die auch in unserer Zeit in Anbetracht seines literarischen Werkes ungebrochen ist. Das Seminar soll daher einen Einblick in das dramatische und lyrische Schaffen Shakespeares geben und sein Werk in Kontext zu Sprache, Weltbild, Gesellschaft und historischen Ereignissen der Frühen Neuzeit setzen.

The Comic Tradition in Irish Writing

Prof. Dr. Maureen O'Connor

This course considers the comic in contemporary Irish writing, shaped by a tradition of black comedy, informed and vexed by a history of complex and absurd confrontations of religion, culture, and language. We will apply excerpts from Simon Critchley's *On Humour* to literary texts to explore the implications of comic expression, in particular from the perspectives of gender and postcolonial theory.

Seminare für höhere Semester

Victorian Mythmakers: Medievalism, Folklore, and Legend in 19th-Century Literature and Culture

Prof. Dr. Ralph Pordzik, Mo 10-12 Uhr

Interest in the Victorian Age has grown steadily over the last decades and occasioned a renewed focus on the major ideas informing the works of its foremost artists, writers, and intellectuals. This seminar offers to provide insights into the highly differentiated aesthetic modes, discourses and mythological topoi representative of nineteenth-century literature and culture (some of which have been said to epitomize the "underbelly" or "dreamwork" of Victorian waking life). A variety of interrelated approaches will help explore the cultural and aesthetic functions and purposes of - among others - death and afterlife, the *New* and the *Fallen Woman*, the vampire, mermaids and mermen, medieval art and folklore, Christian iconology, Egypt and the Orient and (apocalyptic) myths of Lastness in Victorian literature and art. A folder with course material relating to poetry and painting will be provided but students are expected to have read Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (both Norton edition) by the start of the term as well. Course requirements: regular attendance, active participation in discussions, and final essay (*in-class*, date: **29.01**).

Adventure Literature in the 17th and 18th Century

PD Dr. Miriam Wallraven, Di 14-16 Uhr

This seminar will explore adventure literature in the form of imaginary travelogues in the 17th and 18th century. Since travel writing is always situated between "fact" and "fiction", we will look at different genres such as utopia, romance, diary, and satiric novel in order to find out how the "thrill of escape" (Paul Fussell) is constructed in fiction. These texts do not only raise questions of literary strategies of creating "reality" but also negotiate the nature of humankind and various philosophical and political concerns. State and politics, social structures, and gender roles are reflected on in these imaginary travelogues, which makes them versatile texts that go far beyond the fascination with other worlds. In this course, we will interpret and discuss these "adventurous texts" in the discourses of their times, social contexts, and literary markets.

Global Shakespeares

Anna Frieda Kuhn, Mi 12-14 Uhr

From Elizabethan England to Port Elizabeth, South Africa, Shakespeare's plays and poetry have transcended cultural boundaries and captivated diverse audiences for centuries. In this seminar, we will, therefore, embark on a journey through time and space to explore the enduring influence and global resonance of William Shakespeare's works.

We will analyse various global adaptations of Shakespeare, from Bollywood film adaptations to resistance theatre during Apartheid South Africa. In exploring the complexities of cross-cultural interpretations, we will aim to understand how different societies reinterpret Shakespeare to reflect their own historical, social, and political contexts: thus also examining the ways in which Shakespeare's works have become a source of cultural diplomacy, connecting people from different regions and fostering dialogue between diverse communities.

Further points of discussion will be the role of international theatre collaborations and the impact of digital technologies in disseminating Shakespeare's legacy worldwide.

Note that this seminar is set to feature a theatrical performance of 'The Rape of Lucrece' by actor Elena Pellone. While specific details are currently being finalized, all seminar participants will have the opportunity to attend the performance and actively engage in a discussion with Pellone on the role of trigger warnings and the #MeToo movement in contemporary Shakespeare performances.

To learn more about Elena Pellone and her performance, visit: <https://skene-veronashakespearefringefestival.dlss.univr.it/edition-2021/artists/elena-pellone/>

The Comedies of Susanna Centlivre

Dieter Hans Koch, Fr 10-12 Uhr

In this seminar we will explore the ambiguous world of 18th century comedy, a genre steeped in tradition yet open to change, threatened by censorship but not yet rendered thoroughly redundant by its own insignificance.

We will approach this kaleidoscope stage peering through the eyes of one of the most popular female playwrights of the age, Susanna Centlivre. Her prolific output (19 comedies written between 1700 – 1722, some of which we will discuss in great detail) will serve our studies as raw material from which we hope to derive a panoramic view of a crucial period in British history, the transition from Queen Anne to the Georgian era.

The Measure of a Man – Masculinities in Popular Culture

Adrian Döring, Mi 12-14 Uhr

Nearly half a century ago, Klaus Theweleit described in minute detail the crises of masculinity that lead to horrors of the Holocaust and the Second World War in his epic monography *Männerphantasien*. Authors like Nobel Prize Winner Elfriede Jelinek called it a “monolith”. A few years later, scholars like R.W. Connell gave us to understand that while Theweleit’s work might be monolithic, the same can’t be said for masculinities themselves.

From Gamergate over Andrew Tate to clandestine and violent incel-communities, the crisis of masculinity has already shaped our culture, politics and everyday life. On the other hand (and on a more positive note), we can observe a diverse array of masculinities – including non-CIS and non-binary representations – in popular culture. Is this development cultural pinkwashing or actual progress?

The seminar “The Measure of a Man – Masculinities in Popular Culture” seeks to map this terrain and discuss the various forms of masculinity as they have emerged in our cultural consciousness. We will read texts from various times and media, discuss different theory, and try to disentangle the complex discourse surrounding masculinity. The goal of this seminar is to understand how these perceptions of masculinity sediment in the stories we tell.

Ghosts, Memory and (Re)Mediation

Adrian Döring, Do 12-14 Uhr

“Hypermedia and transparent media”, write Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin in *Remediation*, “are opposite manifestations of the same desire: the desire to get past the limits of representation and to achieve the real.” In the digital 21st century, we are closer to this goal than ever before. Virtual and augmented realities are slowly becoming affordable for the average Western consumer. The media platforms on which we spend vast swathes of our time are information seamlessly mediated by images, sounds, letters and representations of other media.

Remediation asks how media is depicted within media, with why and how we use media to appropriate and exploit older forms of mediation. The topic is closely tied to New Media Theory and what Friedrich Kittler called “Aufschreibesysteme”: the systems in which we store and mediate knowledge and cultural memory and their specific effects. A popular culture that is obsessed with media from times passed is also related to Jacques Derrida’s idea of Hauntology and the practical application of the term by Mark Fisher.

The seminar “Ghosts, Memory and (Re-)Mediation” is about these diverse but old forms of generating and storing cultural memory; during the semester, we will discuss how contemporary culture is still haunted by the ghosts of media passed, learn for what reason media is depicted in other media, and explore the rich history of the representation of mediation in art, film and literature. What does it mean for us when we mediate everything - including ourselves?

Getting a Taste for African Literature

Camille Lavoix, Blockseminar

This seminar is at the crossroads between Food Studies and African Literature (postcolonial ecocriticism). For starters, we will indulge in an introduction of Food Studies, a field which has developed since the 1930s in Western academia. Together we will read classics in the field such as Sidney Mintz's *Sweetness and Power* (1985) and Alfred W. Crosby's *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (1972). Such books were influential in bringing an environmental and postcolonial dimension to the study of food. As Felipe Fernández-Armesto puts it, food is a "linkage in the chain of being: the substance of the eco-systems which human beings strive to dominate. Our most intimate contact with the natural environment occurs when we eat it" (xiii). As its main course, this seminar seeks to engage with the new flavors of food studies which are moving away from US-based studies and towards the realms of postcolonialism, environmentalism, queer studies, gender studies, etc. Indeed, our goal is to taste African literature, analyzing literary representations of food in African novels. The full corpus will be announced later.

Irish Women’s Writing at the Fin de Siècle

Prof. Dr. Maureen O’Connor, Do 10-12 Uhr

Irish feminist scholars have recently formulated a distinctive history for feminism in Ireland. Margaret Ward posits a historically and politically determined, singularly Irish feminism: ‘For women in Ireland, the Act of Union of 1800 not only defined the [...] relationship between Britain and Ireland, it also [...]

ensured a differentiation of Irish from British feminism'. This "Union of hearts", as it was referred to, with all of the unequal power and privilege such an alliance implied, made for a particular kind of experience of gender and nation in Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century. Many Irish writers associated with the phenomenon of the New Woman. We will consider work by Katharine Tynan, Eva Gore-Booth, Alice Milligan, George Egerton, Hannah Lynch, and Sarah Grand.

Für höhere Semester und Master

Commoning: Ökonomien, Ökologien und Kulturen des Gemeinsamen (Cultural Studies Colloquium)

Prof. Dr. Zeno Ackermann und Prof. Dr. MaryAnn Snyder-Körber, Mi 10-12 Uhr

Das Cultural Studies Colloquium setzt sich in diesem Semester mit aktuellen Diskursen auseinander, die unter Maßgabe des Begriffs *commoning* nach Alternativen zu kapitalistischen Wirtschafts- und Gesellschaftsformen suchen. Die entsprechenden aktivistischen, aber auch akademischen Ansätze fußen in der Wiederentdeckung der *commons*, also des Modells der gemeinsamen Bewirtschaftung von Ressourcen. In Abgrenzung zu den Prinzipien des Marktes und des Besitzindividualismus, aber auch in der Kritik staatlicher Regelungsallmacht suchen sie nicht nur nach Produktions- und Verteilungsmechanismen, die sich gegen die Logik eines extraktiven Kapitalismus sperren, sondern überhaupt nach fundamental anderen Formen, wie Gesellschaft und Welt gesehen und gestaltet werden können – nämlich kooperativ, situativ-relational und organisch. Entsprechende Ansätze können sich sowohl auf historische wie auch auf aktuelle Beispiele erfolgreicher Gemeinwirtschaft berufen – etwa die integrale Funktion der Allmende in der vorindustriellen Landwirtschaft, die aktuellen Erfolge von kooperativen Initiativen in 'unterentwickelten' Gesellschaften des globalen Südens (z. B. die Rückkehr zu traditionellen und ortsspezifischen Verfahren der Bewirtschaftung von Fruchtsamen) oder die erstaunlichen Errungenschaften von Initiativen der creative commons (z. B. bei der gemeinsamen Entwicklung von Computer-Programmen wie Linux oder bei der Erstellung von nicht-kommerziellen Internet-Archiven).

Das Seminar verfolgt drei Ziele:

(1.) Durch die Lektüre von paradigmatischen Texten, die im Übergangsbereich zwischen Aktivismus und akademischer Diskussion aus dem Diskurs um *commons* und *commoning* hervorgegangen sind, wollen wir dessen Grundbegriffe und Leitlinien verstehen und einordnen. Dabei gilt es, entsprechende Argumentationen in eine Relation zu Geschichte und Gegenwart ökonomischen Denkens (z. B. bei Adam Smith und Karl Marx) sowie zu historischen Umbrüchen (insbesondere dem Prozess der *enclosures*) zu setzen.

(2.) Im Sinn des Cultural Studies Colloquium, wollen wir der noch zu wenig beleuchteten Frage nachgehen, ob/wie der Diskurs um *commons* und *commoning* kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung befruchten könnte bzw. was die Kulturwissenschaften (besonders die ursprünglich als 'engaged scholarship' konzipierten Cultural Studies) zu diesem Diskurs beizutragen hätten. Was also fördert ein kulturwissenschaftlicher Blick auf bestimmte Praxisbeispiele des *commoning* zu Tage? Wie steht es um die Untersuchung von (historischen oder aktuellen) Kulturen des Gemeinsamen überhaupt? Was passiert, wenn im engeren Sinne 'kulturelle' Praktiken und Systeme (etwa der Literaturbetrieb oder die Musikkultur) über den Begriff der *commons* perspektiviert werden? Wie werden sogenannte *cultural commons* (etwa traditionelles Liedgut) privatisiert und vermarktet bzw. was kann entsprechenden weitgespannten Versuchen entgegengesetzt werden?

(3.) Aufgabe der Kulturwissenschaft ist es gleichzeitig, nicht nur die Argumentationslinien, sondern besonders auch die Rhetoriken und Imaginarien der *Commoning*-Bewegung kritisch zu untersuchen. Wie also funktioniert *commoning* als eine politische Handlungs-, Inszenierungs- und Diskursstrategie? Welche produktiven Energien werden freigesetzt? Wo treten in der Analyse Aporien und Gefahren dieser mächtigen Rhetorik hervor?

Women, Gender and Shakespeare

Prof. Dr. Kirsten Sandrock, Do 10-12 Uhr

Women play a key role in numerous works by Shakespeare. And yet, their roles are frequently complicated by early modern gender roles and theatrical conventions, such as the ban on female actors on public stages in early modernity. This seminar discusses some of the central questions relating to women, gender and Shakespeare by looking at a selection of texts and placing them both in their historical contexts and in contemporary theoretical debates. Texts we will study include the tragedies *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*, the comedies *Twelfth Night* and *Much Ado About Nothing* as well as the narrative poem *The Rape of Lucrece*.

It is planned that the seminar will be accompanied by a theatrical performance of *The Rape of Lucrece* by actor Elena Pellone, scheduled for early November. Details are yet to be confirmed, but seminar attendants will be invited to attend and be involved in the preparation of the discussion after the performance. For details on Elena Pellone and her performance, see <https://skene-veronashakespearefringefestival.dlcs.univr.it/edition-2021/artists/elena-pellone/>

Dawn of the Modern: Late-Victorian Structures of Feeling

Prof. Dr. Zeno Ackermann, Do 10-12 Uhr

The seminar will investigate the decades just before 1900. This was a threshold period: it has been described as a 'fin de siècle' in which Victorian certainties (including the belief in progress) eroded; but it can simultaneously be seen as a 'dawn of the modern,' a transitional phase that was forcefully drawn towards newly reflexive modes of art as well as newly complex conceptions of subjectivity, sociality and history. These heterogeneous structures of feeling will be approached through a selection of key literary narratives. We will discuss Stevenson's dark questioning of the integrated nature of personhood, Conan Doyle's ironic portrayal of the investigative genius as deviant individual, Wilde's uneasy groping for a new aesthetic negotiation of subjectivity and morality, Wells's shattering interrogation of the paradigm of progress, and finally Conrad's merciless unpacking of the destructive energies inherent in imperialism.