

American Studies Style Sheet

This style sheet serves as a formal guideline for term papers in Literary and Cultural Studies. For information on specific requirements or which language you are supposed to use, please check with your instructor. The basis of this style sheet is the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (Seventh Edition). It is recommended for further questions and information on how to write a term paper.

1 General information on formal requirements

Term papers, BA, MA or “Zulassungsarbeiten” should be printed on DIN A4 paper. The sheets are printed on one side, written in **Times New Roman, font size 12**, with **1.5 line spacing** and **full justification**. The margins are **2.5 cm** on the right-hand margin as well as top and bottom of the page and the left-hand margin for corrections should be **4.0 cm**.

The first line of a new paragraph is usually **indented 1.25 cm** (see also “8 Citations”).

2 Cover sheet

The cover sheet of your paper should include the following information: name of the university, department and chair, course title, instructor, semester in which you attended the course (summer or winter), module and exam number (“Prüfungsnummer”), title of your paper, your name, matriculation number, degree program and subject combination, term number (“Semesteranzahl”), and submission date. A sample cover sheet is included at the end of this document. You may use quotes in the title of your paper.

Example:

"I reckon I got to light out for the Territory": The Function of Space in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

3 Table of Contents

The Table of Contents includes all chapter headings used in your text and refers to the respective page numbers of the chapter beginnings. It should include the bibliography, but not itself.

4 Structure

Your paper should be structured logically. Subchapters should only be numbered separately if the chapter includes at least one other subchapter.

Example:

2 Huck's Spaces

2.1 "Sivilization" in the Douglas Household

2.2 The Old South

2.2.1 Geographical Dimensions

2.2.2 Political Dimensions

2.3 The Mississippi River

Please make sure to be consistent by either including a period or no period after each number.

5 Page numbers

Your paper should include page numbers beginning on the first page of text, meaning that the cover sheet and table of contents should not include page numbers on the page but can be counted as pages. (Your text should then start either on page 1 or page 3).

6 Punctuation (s. *MLA-Handbook*, ch. 3.2)

If your paper is written in English, you need to be aware that there are different rules of punctuation than in German (especially regarding commas). Double quotation marks at the top (" ") indicate quotations, titles of articles, and titles of short stories or poems. Single quotation marks are used for translations, definitions or quotations within quotations.

Examples:

Shelley thought poets "the unacknowledged legislators of the World." (794).

In his essay, "Hawthorne's 'Roger Malvin's Burial': A Postcolonial Reading," Manfred Mackenzie argues that Hawthorne's short story is informed by postcolonial elements.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman's short story "The Yellow Wall-Paper" was written in 1892. Anne Bradstreet's "The Author to her Book" consists of 22 verses.

The word *text* derives from the Latin verb *texere* 'to weave.'

"'Yes,' he said, 'I can imagine that.'"

Quotations are either indicated by a colon, or, if they are imbedded in your sentence structure, a comma or no punctuation.

Examples:

Shelley held a bold view: "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world" (794).

"Poets," according to Shelley, "are the unacknowledged legislators of the world" (794).

7 Cursive

Letters, words or sentences that serve as textual evidence or are yet to be defined, words and phrases in languages other than English, as well as titles of books, periodicals, magazines, and films should be cursive.

Example:

In Shakespeare's *Midsummernight's Dream*, the concept of *différance* applies primarily to the plot.

First of all, the term *plot* needs to be defined.

8 Quotations and omissions

Direct quotations as well as thoughts and arguments taken from other sources must be marked as such. Shorter quotations are separated from the text by double quotation marks; if the quotation is **longer than four typed lines**, it is completely indented by **2.5 cm** (1 inch) and in this case not introduced by quotation marks. These quotations are also written in Times New Roman, 12 pt with 1.5 line spacing.

Quotations must exactly match the original in spelling (including capitalization) and punctuation. Punctuation marks stand within the quotation marks, except when the sentence ends with the quotation and you quote parenthetically. All changes to the original text, explanations, or additions by the author of the paper should be indicated by square brackets. Omissions are marked by three dots with spaces in between: . . . If one or more complete sentences are omitted, this is indicated by four dots with spaces: In poems, the omission of a line is indicated by a whole line of dots with spaces. For a fluent writing style, it is recommended to include direct quotations in one's sentence structure. Examples:

Original: Postmodern culture, then, has a contradictory relationship to what we usually label our dominant, liberal humanist culture. (from: Linda Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, p. 6)

Zitat: In her influential study, Linda Hutcheon argues that "[p]ostmodern culture . . . has a contradictory relationship to . . . our dominant, liberal, humanist culture" (6).

Longer quotation with omissions:

As Linda Hutcheon summarizes:

What contemporary theory and fiction have both undergone . . . is what I earlier called the revenge of parole: speech-act theory, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and other formalizations on the level of theory are matched by historiographic metafiction's stress on the enunciation, on the subject's use of language and the multiple contexts in which that use situates itself. (168)

Images and excerpts from films or comics that are to be analyzed in the paper, for example in the form of a close reading, can either be inserted at the end of the paper in a list of illustrations (Appendix), which comes before the bibliography and is also listed in the table of contents, or directly in the paper and provided with a brief description:

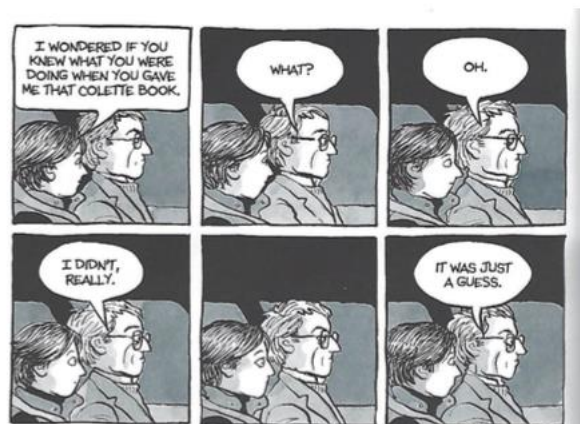


Fig. 2: A closer look at Alison and Bruce in the car, panels 1-6 (Bechdel 220).

Note on indirect citations:

When you paraphrase ideas from other sources, be especially careful to identify them as such.

Example:

Original: Some of Dickinson's most powerful poems express her firmly held conviction that life cannot be fully comprehended without an understanding of death. (from: Wendy Martin, *Columbia Literary History of the United States*, p. 625)

Plagiarized: Emily Dickinson firmly believed that we cannot fully comprehend life unless we also understand death.

Correct: As Wendy Martin has suggested, Emily Dickinson firmly believed that we cannot fully comprehend life unless we also understand death (625).

9 Citation method

Students are free to choose the method of citation (9.1 or 9.2) (after consulting with the instructor). The seventh edition of the MLA Handbook provides only for parenthetical citation. In any case, the citation style should be consistent throughout the paper.

9.1 Parenthetical Citation (see *MLA Handbook* ch. 6) – Recommended!

When using the parenthetical citation style, the author and page reference for citations are to be included in round brackets after the citation (**Gibaldi 204**). This applies to both direct and indirect (paraphrased) citations. This information serves as a direct reference to the bibliography at the end of the paper. When using a quotation that spans more than one page in the original source, the beginning and ending pages must be indicated in parentheses (**Hemingway 239-41**). If your paper includes more than one work by the same author, an abbreviated title must also be given (**Frye, *Anatomy* 237**). If the author (or, in the case of multiple titles, the work in question) is already mentioned in the sentence, the page number (**237**) is sufficient in parentheses. If there are multiple (max. three) authors, cite as follows (**Smith, Yang, and Moore 76**); if there are more than three authors, cite (**Smith et al. 76**). If the author is unknown, the title, abbreviated, is cited with the page number (**"Impact on Global Warming" 6**). If you use a citation that is already cited by the author of the work you are citing, this is indicated as follows (**qtd. in Gibaldi 259**). For non-printed sources, e.g., Internet sources, the following guidelines should be followed: 1. The first term of the text (the author's name, short form of the title, name of the website) as cited in the bibliography appears in the brackets (**Dawe**); 2. No additional paragraph references or page numbers need to be cited.

9.2 Citing with footnotes

When citing using footnotes, the bibliographic source references are given at the bottom of the respective page. Footnotes should be single-spaced and separated from the text by a vertical line. To improve the reading flow, the first line should be indented (or printed hanging) and spacing (3 or 6 pt.) should be maintained between footnotes. The first footnote reference to a source must be complete.¹ Each subsequent reference to the same source contains only the author and page number.² Essays, reviews, journal articles, etc. are cited differently than monographs (see also "Works Cited").³

If there are many citations from one or only a few primary texts (if there is a large

accumulation of similar footnotes), the information on the primary text can be parenthetical even if footnotes are used for other citations. In this case, the following information has to be taken into account: The first reference to the source is made entirely in a footnote; in addition, the footnote contains a reference stating that all parenthetical page references are taken from this edition and/or (in the case of several works) the abbreviation of the work used in square brackets.

Example:

Mark Twains *Huckleberry Finn* is often cited (as the only primary text) in your paper with many quotations from the text.⁴ After the first footnote, you only need to cite the page number:

"There was things which he stretched but mainly he told the truth" (11).

or: Toni Morrisons *Beloved*⁵ and *Song of Solomon*⁶ are frequently cited and abbreviated parenthetically as *B* and *SoS* in the remainder of the text. In the following, only the abbreviation is used:

"Life improved for Milkman enormously after he began working for Macon" (*SoS* 56).

9.3 Content Notes (s. *MLA Handbook*, ch. 6.5.1)

Regardless of whether parenthetical quotations or footnotes are used, so-called content notes can be included in the text. They serve to provide information and explanations that have no place in the actual body of text of the paper. If a source is referenced in a content note, it must also appear on the bibliography.

Example:

Brooks's "The Ballad of Chocolate Mabbie" is a poem about a series of proposed metonymic relations . . . that concludes with the speaker's hopeful recognition that if Mabbie aligns herself with like figures (her "chocolate companions") she will achieve a positive sense of self-reliance ("Mabbie on Mabbie to be").⁷

Example for correctly used footnotes:

¹ Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (New York: Modern Language Association, 1999) 270-79. Print.

² Gibaldi 284.

³ Daniel C. Hallin, "Sound Bite News: Television Coverage of Elections, 1968-1988." *Journal of Communication* 42.2 (1992): 5. Print.

⁴ Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (New York: Penguin, 1959) 4. Print. All parenthetical references follow this edition.

⁵ Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (London: Picador, 1987) 43. Print. Parenthetical quotes are from this edition [*B*].

⁶ Toni Morrison, *Song of Solomon* (New York: Plume, 1987) 214. Print. All parenthetical references are to this edition [*SoS*].

⁷ In this paper, I follow the definition of metonymy as a figure of contiguity. For a good definition of the term, see Martin.

10 Abbreviations (see *MLA Handbook*, ch. 7.4)

Abbreviations like "ibid.", "op. cit.", or "ebd." should generally be avoided (see. "citation method"). Frequently used abbreviations are:

ch., chs.	chapter, chapters
cf.	compare (Latin: <i>confer</i>)
ed.	editor, edition, edited by
e.g.	<i>exempli gratia</i> : for example
et al.	<i>et alii</i> / <i>et aliae</i> : and others
n. d.	no date of publication
n. p.	no place of publication or: no publisher
n. pag.	no pagination
UP	University Press
vol., vols.	volume, volumes

11 Works Cited or Bibliography

At the end of the paper there is a list of all literature used, which starts on a new page and is also listed in the table of contents. The entries are to be arranged alphabetically according to the last names of the authors. The basic entry of a monograph is always:

Last name, First name. *Title of the book*. Place of publication: Publisher, year of publication. Medium.

Particularities: In case of several places of publication, only the first one is mentioned. For page numbers with three or more digits, only the last two digits are mentioned for the second number: **134-54**, unless the first digit changes: **189-212**. If more than one work of an author is mentioned, their name is replaced with --- after the first time. If the abbreviation ed. **follows** the title of the book, it stands for *edited by* and can also follow several editors (in this case, do not use eds.! See example "Gilman").

Sample bibliography:

Primary Literature

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. London: Picador, 1987. Print.
---. *Song of Solomon*. New York: Plume, 1987. Print.

If you are using a newer edition of an older text, the year the work was first published can be included after the title:

Clemens, Samuel Langhorne (Mark Twain). *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. 1884. New York: Penguin, 1959. Print.
Silko, Leslie Marmon. *Ceremony*. 1977. New York: Penguin, 1986. Print.

Short stories, poems, chapters oder works in anthologies:

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. "The Yellow Wallpaper." *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Ed. Nina Baym et al. 3rd ed. Vol. 2. New York: Norton, 1989. 649-60. Print.

Text editions:

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Complete Poetry and Prose*. Ed. John H. Fisher. 2nd ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1989. Print.

Illustrated books and graphic novels:

Baum, L. Frank. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Introd. Regina Barreca. Illus. W. W. Denslow. New York: Signet-Penguin, 2006. Print.

Spiegelman, Art. *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*. 2 vols. New York: Pantheon-Random, 1986-91. Print.

Secondary Literature

Monographs:

Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957. Print.

---. *The Double Vision: Language and Meaning in Religion*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1991. Print.

Hutcheon, Linda. *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction*. New York: Routledge, 1988. Print.

Books written by two or more authors:

Names should be in the same order as on the title page of the book!

Marquart, James W., Sheldon Ekland Olson, and Jonathan R. Sorensen. *The Rope, the Chair, and the Needle: Capital Punishment in Texas, 1923-1990*. Austin: U of Texas P, 1994. Print.

Books written by **more than three** authors:

Boyer, Paul, et al. *The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People*. Lexington: Heath, 1993. Print.

Individual publications in a **series**:

Schaefer, Ursula. *Vokalität: Altenglische Dichtung zwischen Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit*. Tübingen: Narr, 1992. Print. **Scriptoria 39**.

Works in anthologies:

Birkle, Carmen. "'There is Plenty of Room for Us All': Charles W. Chesnutt's America." *Holding Their Own: Perspectives on the Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the United States*. Ed. Dorothea Fischer-Hornung and Heike Raphael-Hernandez. Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 2000. 241-58. Print.

Hornung, Alfred. "Violence in New York City: Hubert Selby's *Last Exit to Brooklyn* and Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho*." *L'Amérique urbaine des années soixante / Urban America in the Sixties*. Ed. Liliane Kerjan. Rennes: Presses Universitaires, 1994. 149-59. Print.

Articles in journals:

- Poole, Ralph J. "Cannibal Cruising, or, 'to the careful student of the Unnatural History of Civilization.'" *Amerikastudien / American Studies* 46.1 (2001): 71-85. Print.
- Sollors, Werner. "Ethnic Modernism, 1910-1950." *American Literary History* 15.1 (Spring 2003): 70-77. Print.

Newspaper articles:

- Manegold, Catherine S. "Becoming a Land of the Smoke-Free, Ban by Ban." *New York Times* 22 Mar. 1994: A1. Print.
- Ryan, Joan. "Terrorists Have Riddled Us All With Fear." *The San Francisco Chronicle* 12 Sept. 2001: 1. Print.

Reviews:

- Houston, Robert. "Take it Back for the Indians." Rev. of *The Crown of Columbus*, by Michael Dorris and Louise Erdrich. *New York Times Book Review* 18 Apr. 1991: 10. Print.
- Kauffman, Stanley. "A New Spielberg." Rev. of *Schindler's List*, dir. Steven Spielberg. *New Republic* 13 Dec. 1993: 239-40. Print.

Published Dissertations:

- Kane, Sonia. "Acts of Coercion: Father-Daughter Relationships and the Pressure to Confess in British Women's Fiction, 1778-1814." Diss. City U of New York, 2003. Print.

Unpublished Dissertations:

- Fullerton, Matilda. *Women's Leadership in the Public Schools: Towards a Feminist Educational Leadership Model*. Diss. Washington State U, 2001. Ann Arbor: UMI, 2001. Print.

Web sources:

It is essential to provide full information on the author, title of the paper, name of the website or online journal (in italics), publisher, date of publication, medium (web), and date the source was last accessed on. Page numbers are not required. Only the http-address is insufficient! Web sources should **not** be listed separately in the bibliography, but should be listed alphabetically under the authors' names.

- Dawe, James, ed. *Jane Austen Page*. N.d. Web. 15 Sept. 1998.
- Dove, Rita. "Lady Freedom Among Us." *The Electronic Text Center. Alderman Lib., U of Virginia*. Ed. David Seaman. 1998. Web. 19 June 1998.
- Ehrlich, Heyward. "A Poe Webliography: Edgar Allan Poe on the Internet." *Rutgers Newark Online*. 1966-2002. Web. 23 Nov. 2004.
- Feldvoß, Marlie. Rev. of *Indian Killer*, by Sherman Alexie. *Deutschlandfunk online*. 21 Sept. 1998. Web. 8 Oct. 2001.
- "The Impact of Global Warming in North America." *GLOBAL WARMING: Early Signs*. 1999. Web. 23 Mar. 2009.
- Murali, Ram. "The Making of an Anti-Hero: An Interview with Bret Easton Ellis." *Dartmouth Review Online*. 21 Apr. 1999. Web. 12 Nov. 2001.

Films:

The entry starts with the film title in italics followed by director, distributor (not production company!), year of release and medium. Other information such as names of screenwriter(s), actor(s), and producer(s) can be added between the title and distributor.

- Angels in America*. Screenplay by Tony Kushner. Dir. Mike Nichols. Perf. Al Pacino, Meryl Streep and Emma Thompson. HBO, 2003. Film.
- Annie Hall*. Dir. Woody Allen. Perf. Woody Allen and Diane Keaton. MGM, 1977. Film.
- The Celluloid Closet*. Dir. Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman. TriStar, 1995. Film.

TV series and shows:

Depending on the context of the citation, an entire series, individual seasons or individual episodes can be listed:

- RuPaul's Drag Race*. Dir. Nick Murray. Prod. Fenton Bailey et al. World of Wonder for Logo TV and VH1, 2009-2021.
- RuPaul's Drag Race: Season 7*. Dir. Nick Murray. Prod. Fenton Bailey et al. World of Wonder for Logo TV, 2015.
- "Divine Inspiration." *RuPaul's Drag Race: Season 7*. Dir. Nick Murray. Prod. Fenton Bailey et al. World of Wonder for Logo TV, 2015.

Notes on writing term papers in literary studies:

1) Do not lose sight of the reality principle

Your term paper is not expected to produce new scientific findings. Rather, you as the author of a term paper should show that you are capable of analyzing texts from a selected point of view independently, in a well-structured manner, and thoroughly, taking into account research in the field and other secondary literature. After reading a term paper, one should understand the text better than before; therefore, in many cases, it will also be necessary to place one's own research question in the literary studies tradition and the text in the traditions of genres that define it and its historical context.

2) Regarding the beginning of your paper: Grasp the topic precisely.

Developing your own topic suggestions and discussing them with the course instructor is one of the accomplishments of writing a term paper. Before writing the paper, it must be clear which question you want to use to analyze the text, what the chosen topic includes and what it does not include. Your considerations on how and with which analytical means you attempt to reach the goals set are to be formulated in the introduction. If the topic turns out to be too complicated or too comprehensive for a treatment on 10-12 pages, it can be modified after consulting with the course instructor.

3) Always work closely with the text

The texts used as a basis for your paper are the starting point and basis of all observations and conclusions. When writing your paper, citations and precise references to passages need to substantiate your work with the text. When analyzing older texts, a historical lexicon (*OED*) must be consulted.

4) Summarize only when absolutely necessary

The content of the texts analyzed in your paper as well as the author's biography can be assumed to be known; retelling the plot in your paper is as unnecessary as including the curriculum vitae of the author. Paraphrasing the plot in one's own words is only appropriate in case ambiguities need to be explained or presented in detail.

5) Always combine description with the analysis of what is described

Descriptions of stylistic and rhetoric peculiarities of a text must be followed by an explanation or analysis of how these peculiarities create meaning, i. e. it needs to be asked how the text component you describe is related to other stylistic devices that can be found in the text and what function it has in creating meaning.

6) Use an exemplary approach

Many topics cannot be fully analyzed in their entirety within the framework of one term paper. Therefore, do not obsess over including every single detail, but rather highlight the crucial and essential points in a justified (!) selection of examples.

7) Neither ignore opinions given in secondary literature nor regard them as binding

Working with texts in a scientific way includes informing oneself about the most important research results and the respective topic. It is almost always sufficient to consult the secondary literature published in the last 15 years. However, their results should not simply be adopted, but should be compared with one's own results and interpretations. In order to avoid being influenced too strongly by opinions expressed in secondary literature, it is advisable to work through it only after a close reading of the text you want to analyze and after your research question(s) has/have been developed. The influence of secondary literature on one's own analysis (this applies to literal and analogous adoptions) must be clearly documented.

8) Use a methodical approach

Working in an academic context means proceeding methodically, i. e. working with the text and in a clear structure towards the goal of your paper. The terms used in the title of the paper as well as terminology of the methods you use always need to be explained at the beginning of your paper if different definitions exist. Juggling with highbrow terminology or fashionable buzzwords does not show that you are competent. Personal reading experiences should not find their way into your paper; first person forms should be avoided if possible.

9) Finally: Consider the significance of your own findings

As a final remark, the relative significance of one's own findings for the text as a whole should be soberly considered and it should be reflected upon which of its aspects they help to clarify and which they do not. Thus, do not choose general cautionary phrases ("perhaps," "one could assume") or distance yourself from your own views by generous use of quotation marks ("Shakespeare's 'topicality' can be ..."), but concretely describe the findings and results achieved by your paper. In this context, the paper should be checked once again to see whether it is rationally and textually convincing and does not contain any extraneous actualizations. Repetitions are to be deleted during this critical reading.

10) Do not disregard formal requirements as unimportant

Incorrect punctuation and spelling as well as inconsistencies in the layout of footnotes and the bibliography are more than mere blemishes. While excellent form – according to the style sheet – cannot save a paper that is unsuccessful in terms of content, conversely the value of an otherwise good paper can be significantly diminished if formal requirements are ignored.

Note on plagiarism:

All quotations, even paraphrased thoughts **of another person**, must be marked as such. If this is not the case, it is plagiarism; even if it is “only” one or two sentences. Plagiarism is generally defined as the deliberate appropriation of another’s intellectual property. A plagiarist is someone who passes off another person’s work or parts of another person’s work as their own and thus commits “intellectual theft”. An attempt at plagiarism automatically leads to you failing the course.

The following declaration must be attached to each term paper, see:

https://www.neuphil.uni-wuerzburg.de/fileadmin/99050601/Downloads_fuer_Studierende/Selbststaendigkeitserklaerung_2021.pdf

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that

- I have written this paper on my own and have not used any aids other than those indicated.
- The „Prüfungsleistung“ has not been submitted to any other examination authority so far and will not be submitted to any other examination authority at the same time.
- All quotations or passages that are taken from other works in terms of wording or meaning have been clearly marked as such in each individual case, with precise indication of the source.
- I have read the „Merkblatt Plagiat“ (<https://www.neuphil.uni-wuerzburg.de/anglistik/studium/im-studium/lektuerelisten-hinweise-zu-hausarbeiten-materialien/>) and have taken note of its contents.
- I am familiar with the American Studies style sheet (<https://www.neuphil.uni-wuerzburg.de/anglistik/studium/im-studium/lektuerelisten-hinweise-zu-hausarbeiten-materialien/>) applicable to my field of study and the guidelines it contains regarding formatting, citations and the use of sources. I have implemented these guidelines to the best of my knowledge.

I am aware that any misrepresentations on this form will result in failure of the course.

Name (in block capitals)

Matriculation number

Place, date

Signature

Sample cover sheet; the red parts are to be replaced by the appropriate information:

Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg

Neuphilologisches Institut – Lehrstuhl für Amerikanistik

Course title according to the „Vorlesungsverzeichnis“

Name of instructor

Semester the course takes place in

Module description

„Prüfungsnummer“

Title of your paper

Title continued

First name LAST NAME, if applicable BIRTH NAME

Matriculation number

Degree program (including subject combination)

Term number (“Semesteranzahl”)

Date of submission

To be filled out by the instructor:

Date:	Grade:	Verbuchungsvermerk:

Local or Global? Negotiations of Identity in Drew Hayden Taylor's Plays

For at least the past fifteen years, multicultural criticism has been predominantly circling around questions of identity. What can also be diagnosed in ethnic studies is an ever-popular presence of essentialist approaches with particular emphasis on origin and biological heritage. In times of open borderlines, crumbling concepts of 'nation' or 'culture,' increasingly vigorous forces of 'political correctness' and worldwide communicational networks—however elitist or regional these may actually be—this is an understandable move. As historian Arthur Schlesinger puts it, "[t]he more people feel themselves adrift in a vast, impersonal, anonymous sea, the more desperately they swim toward any familiar, intelligible, protective life-raft; the more they crave a politics of identity."¹ In this quest for certainties, however, a radical focus on separatism² seems to stand in direct opposition to a peaceful global coexistence, as the recent proliferation of terrorism in the United States, in Northern Africa, and in the Middle East has shown.

On the one hand, humanity seems in need of group labels that are differentiated and protected against a loss of specifics; on the other hand, the global threats that arise from these struggles universalize our need for peace. With the example of two plays, *Someday* and *AlterNatives*, by Canadian author Drew Hayden Taylor, this study investigates the challenges of identity construction against the backdrop of an increasingly transnational world. As I will argue, these theatrical texts rely on the strong forces of humor and dialogue to reconsider given power systems, to lay open the relativity of positions, and to subvert the discursive processes of domination. Thus, apparently focusing on a regional (First Nations) context, both plays actually have a global impetus. Their invitation to audiences is transcultural in effect; exploring alternative identities without either essentializing or losing their political relevance in universalist generalization.

¹ Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society* (New York: Norton, 1998) 12. Print.

² Schlesinger 12-14.

Works Cited

- Alcoff, Linda. "The Problem of Speaking for Others." *Cultural Critique* 20 (Winter 1991/92): 5-32. Print.
- Gilbert, Helen, and Joanne Tompkins. *Post-Colonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics*. London: Routledge, 1996. Print.
- Hollinger, David. *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism*. New York: Basic Books, 1995. Print.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Nations Without Nationalism*. Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia UP, 1993. Print.
- Legros, Dominique. "First Nation Postmodern Cultures: (Re)Constructing the (De)Constructed and Celebrating the Changes." *Mirror Writing: (Re)Constructions of Native American Identity*. Ed. Thomas Claviez and Maria Moss. Berlin: Galda & Wilch, 2000. 125-54. Print.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. "Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinne." *Werke: Die Geburt der Tragödie; Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen I-IV; Nachgelassene Schriften 1870-73*. Ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. München: dtv, 1988. 875-90. Print.
- Schechner, Richard. "An Intercultural Primer." *American Theatre* (October 1991): 135-36. Print.
- Schlesinger, Arthur, Jr. *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society*. 1991. Rev. Ed. New York: Norton, 1998. Print.
- Sollors, Werner. *Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture*. New York: Oxford UP, 1986. Print.
- Taylor, Drew Hayden. *AlterNatives*. Burnaby, BC: Talonbooks, 2000. Print.
- . *Someday*. Burnaby, BC: Talonbooks, 1993. Print.
- Vizenor, Gerald. *Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance*. Hanover, NH: Wesleyan UP, 1994. Print.
- Wagnleitner, Reinhold. "Von der Coca-Colonization zur Sili-Colonization." *Kölner Beiträge zur Anglo-Amerikanischen Geschichte* 1. Ed. Michael Wala. August 2000. Web. 16 April 2002.
- Wikström, Tina. "Trickster Performance and Trickster Survival in Louise Erdrich's Novels: *Tracks*, *Love Medicine* and *The Bingo Palace*." 23rd American Indian Workshop "Ritual and Performance," Trinity College Dublin. 26-28 March 2002. Web. 14 March 2002.