

Seminar (SUV-Kategorie: 'Seminare für niedrige Semester'):

## **Beginning Cultural Studies: Grundbegriffe und Forschungsfelder**

Zeit: Do 16-18 // Philosophie-Gebäude, Ü 21

Sprechstunde: Do 12.30-13.30 // Raum 5/U/13

(Bitte vereinbaren Sie einen Sprechstundentermin durch Anruf bei Fr. Kernahan: 0931 / 31-86587.)

### **Kurs-Kategorie (SUV-Beschreibung):**

Dieses Seminar gehört in die Kurs-Kategorie 'Seminare für niedrige Semester'.

Die Kurse dieser Kategorie richten sich an BA- und Lehramtsstudierende im 2.-4. Fachsemester. In ihnen werden die in den Einführungsvorlesungen erworbenen Grundlagenkenntnisse im Umgang mit den einzelnen Gattungen (Drama, Lyrik, Prosa) bzw. mit kulturwissenschaftlichen Konzepten und Theorien vertieft und gesichert. Sie sollten nach dem Besuch der zugehörigen Einführungsvorlesung und vor dem Besuch eines Hauptseminars belegt werden.

### **Seminarbeschreibung:**

"Cultural Studies", so formulierte Stuart Hall um die Jahrtausendwende, "gehen davon aus, dass es einer Menge an theoretischer Arbeit bedarf, um die Dunkelheit des Offensichtlichen zu erhellen." Aufbauend auf der *Einführungsvorlesung zur britischen Landeskunde und Kulturwissenschaft* will das Seminar *Beginning Cultural Studies* grundlegende kulturwissenschaftliche Begrifflichkeiten klären. Gleichzeitig ist es im Anschluss an die Einführung nun aber auch an der Zeit, ausführlicher in die lebendige Auseinandersetzung mit kulturellen Phänomenen – in all ihrer vermeintlichen 'Offensichtlichkeit' und/oder 'Dunkelheit' – einzusteigen.

So werden wir die Lektüre theoretischer Texte (vor allem zu Problemen der Subjektivität, der Repräsentation und der Performanz) mit der Diskussion von konkreten kulturellen Praktiken und aktuellen kulturwissenschaftlichen Forschungsfeldern verbinden. Das Spektrum reicht von der Auseinandersetzung mit Mensch/Tier-Beziehungen bis zu den Klang-, Konsum- und Sozialformen der populären Musikkultur. – Seminarsprache: Deutsch und/oder Englisch (flexibel je nach dem spezifischen Kontext).

### **Vorbereitung vor Beginn der Vorlesungszeit**

Interessenten werden gebeten, vor der Anmeldung zum Seminar diese und die folgenden Seiten zu lesen.

Zur Vorbereitung wird allen TeilnehmerInnen empfohlen, noch vor Beginn der Vorlesungszeit ihre Kenntnisse in den Cultural Studies aufzufrischen. Dazu bietet es sich an, das Material der kulturwissenschaftlichen Einführungsvorlesung noch einmal zu sichten. Zur einführenden Lektüre eignet sich auch folgender Text (der über das Portal der Universitätsbibliothek abgerufen werden kann):

Jody Skinner, "Culture with a Big 'C' and with a Little 'c' in Anglo-American Cultural Studies," *Anglo-American Cultural Studies*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Francke, 2016) 326-348.

<https://bibliothek.uni-wuerzburg.de/permalink/bv/BV043460811>

Bitte berücksichtigen Sie auch die Aufgabe zur Vorbereitung auf die erste Seminarsitzung (sie findet sich gleich unten im Seminarplan).

**OUTLINE**

**AR** = assigned reading (Please prepare these texts for the respective meeting. If not indicated otherwise, the texts will be made available on WueCampus.)

**EXP** = These meetings will be moderated by experts (see explanation below).

**18/10 Introduction**

Preparatory assignment:

In the first meeting all participants will be asked to comment on the following questions:

- What is my conception of cultural studies?
- What specific interests, concerns and questions would I like to bring to bear on work in the field?

**25/10 What is cultural studies? – A low-key attempt at mapping the field**

AR: Jody Skinner, "Culture with a Big 'C' and with a Little 'c' in Anglo-American Cultural Studies," *Anglo-American Cultural Studies*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Francke, 2016) 326-348.

[Text can be accessed online through the website of the university library: <https://bibliothek.uni-wuerzburg.de/permalink/bv/BV043460811>.]

Preparatory assignment:

- (1) While reading & preparing the text, highlight the key terms mentioned in the text.
- (2) From the terms highlighted, select and list the *five* terms that you consider to be most important in the light of your own interests.
- (3) Be prepared to explain and comment on the five terms you have selected. Why do you consider these terms as especially important? What can you achieve by using them as 'tools' for an analysis of cultural texts and cultural phenomena?

**08/11 Contemporary media culture – A first specimen [EXP]**

"The Only Thing That's Changed Is..." (iPhone 6s TV Commercial, 2015) <https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AkQ9/apple-iphone-6s-the-only-thing-thats-changed-is>

Preparatory assignment/questions:

- (1) What aspects/dimension/spheres of culture or cultural activity are shown in the clip?
- (2) Why might the commercial be interesting, not only to a prospective 'consumer' but also to a scholar of culture?
- (3) What 'hot' topics (i.e. potential social or political problems, divisions and conflicts) are alluded to in the clip? Does the clip suggest solutions to such problems / divisions / conflicts?
- (4) How can the key terms you selected for the last meeting be brought to bear on the clip?

**15/11 "Culture is ordinary" – The beginnings of British Cultural Studies**

AR: Raymond Williams, "Culture Is Ordinary" (1958), *The Raymond Williams Reader*, ed. John Higgins (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001) 10-24.

- 22/11 **Early cultural studies and post-war entertainment culture:  
Richard Hoggart confronting the milk bar and the juke box [EXP]**
- Samples documenting the role of the milk bar and the juke box in 1950s British 'youth culture' (to be selected and prepared by the experts for this meeting).
- AR: [From:] Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy* (1957; Boston: Beacon Press, 1961):
- front matter, including list of contents and preface;
  - "The Juke-Box Boys" (202-205).
- 29/11 **New perspectives on the 'young audience'**
- AR: Stuart Hall and Paddy Whannel, "The Young Audience," *The Popular Arts* (1964); rpt. in *On Record: Rock, Pop, and the Written Word*, ed. Simon Frith and Andrew Goodwin (London: Routledge, 1990) 22-30.
- 06/12 **'Subcultures' and 'style' (I)**
- AR: Dick Hebdige, "Subculture and Style," *The Cultural Studies Reader*, ed. Simon During (Abingdon: Routledge, 1993) 429-440.
- 13/12 **'Subculture/s' and 'style' (II): The 'Mods' as a 'subculture' in 1960s Britain [EXP]**
- The Who, "My Generation" (1965).
- 20/12 **The problem of gender**
- AR: [From:] Judith Butler, "Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire," *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999) [only pp. 3-18].
- 10/01 **Gender in contemporary British advertising or popular music [EXP]**
- Specimen/s selected by the experts for the meeting.
- 17/01 **Ethnicity & the politics of representation (I)**
- AR: Stuart Hall, "New Ethnicities" (1989), *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1996) 441-449.
- Wed 18-20 // room TBA
- 23/01 Film screening: Stephen Frears (dir.), *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985)  
(Participation non-mandatory)
- 24/01 **Ethnicity & the politics of representation (II): An example from 1980s Britain [EXP.]**
- My Beautiful Laundrette*

31/01 **Animal studies / posthumanism [EXP.]**

AR: [From:] Donna J Haraway, "When Species Meet: Introductions," *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2008) 3-19. [= Beginning of Haraway's long introduction to the book.]

Pictorial representations of dogs – specimens selected by the experts from Robert Rosenblum, *Der Hund in der Kunst: Vom Rokoko zur Postmoderne* (Wien: Passagen-Verlag, 1989).

**Final test: Do, 07/02, 16-18 // room TBA**

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**Requirements & types of contributions:**

To earn credit points participants have to pass the *final test*.

In addition, participants must either act as *experts* for a specific meeting OR write a *reading response*.

*Experts* are teams of participants who do special preparatory work for a specific seminar meeting. In collaboration with me, the experts will chair parts of a seminar meeting. The experts' tasks include:

- doing further reading and research work on the topic of the meeting;
- selecting relevant material (e.g. images, text passages or film scenes) that will allow us to gain access to a specific cultural discourse and/or historical moment;
- preparing this material for discussion in class.

! Setting a clear agenda for discussion and suggesting exciting positions of their own is essential for a successful 'expert performance.'

A *reading response* is a *short* (ideally no longer than 2-3 pp.) essay-like academic text that responds to the material to be discussed in a specific meeting.

'Material' means everything (texts, audiovisual material etc.) on the desk for the meeting in question.

'Responding to' means to contextualize and discuss the material in light of the seminar's agenda.

→ How can the material be contextualized? (What is it? Who produced it for which purposes? Etc.)

→ How does the material tie in with the seminar discussion so far?

→ What questions should be posed in relation to the material?

→ What can (probably) be shown or established by posing these questions?

Reading responses are due two days before the respective meeting. Send your reading response by e-mail, as an attachment in Word or a PDF file. Please note that I may decide to publish reading responses on WueCampus. Moreover, reading responses may be returned for revision.