

# The American Short Story

## Dozent

PD Dr. Stefan L. Brandt, Guest Professor · Office Hours: Thursdays, 18-19, Room AR-H 206

## Angaben

Proseminar, 2 SWS, ECTS-Studium, ECTS-Credits: 7, Unterrichtssprache: Englisch

Module: LCMS-BA-2.1 (Textstrukturen); Mag.-AmL2 (Theorie, Geschichte und autorenspezifische Ausprägungen literarischer Gattungen); GYM 2.1 (Gattungspoetik und Gattungsgeschichte), BK 1.2 (Gattungspoetik und Gattungsgeschichte), GHR 1.2 (Gattungspoetik und Gattungsgeschichte), Sek.I-B4 (Amerikanische Literatur), Sek.II-B4 (Amerikanische Literatur)

Zeit: Do 14:00 - 16:00, Raum: AR-H 122/23, ab 12. April 2007

## Inhalt

The genre of the modern short story is often called a »uniquely American art form.« Given its concentration on intense and isolated experiences, the short story has been regarded by writers and critics alike as a suitable vehicle of representing American life. This introductory course offers an overview of various periods of the American short story, focusing on major writers from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and from various cultures and subcultures. What were the socio-cultural conditions under which short story writers were able to create their brief poetic tales? What themes and motifs does the short story make use of? In this seminar, we will discuss the function of literary devices such as character, plot, theme, point of view, setting, tone, and style, as well as the historical background and cultural mindset underlying the individual short story. Examples will include texts by Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Kate Chopin, Ernest Hemingway, J.D. Salinger, John Barth, Dale Peck, and Sherman Alexie.

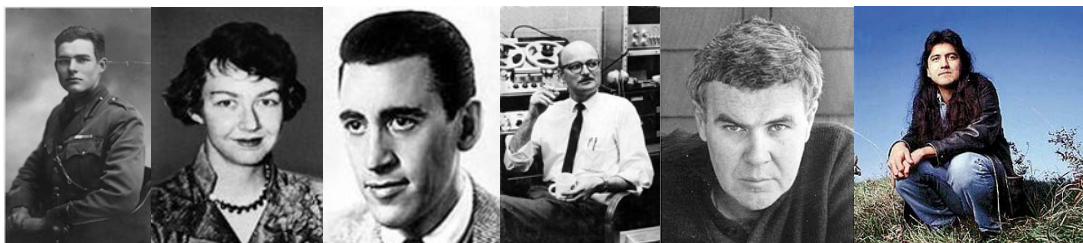
## Credit requirements:

For 5 or 7 credit points: regular attendance and thoughtful participation in class (1/3), an oral presentation as part of an expert group (1/3), and a final paper (8-10 pgs. / 13-15 pgs.) (1/3). There will be a few surprise quizzes on the readings to ensure that you keep up with the assignments. For 2 credit points: attendance & participation in class discussions (50%), oral presentation as part of an expert group (50%).

Deadline for Final Papers: Friday, July 27, 2007. There is no (!) extension of this deadline.

All primary texts can be found online at <http://bscw.avmz.uni-siegen.de/> (click on »Public« - then look for course title).

More primary and secondary material can be found in the »Semesterapparat Brandt« (Main Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor).



**Syllabus:**  
**12 April**

**Introduction**

**The Romantic Period (1820-1860)**

**19 April**

**Nathaniel Hawthorne**

»The Birthmark« (1843)

**26 April**

**Edgar Allan Poe**

»The Black Cat« (1843)

&

»The Cask of Amontillado« (1846)

**Realism, Local Color, and Naturalism (1860-1900)**

**03 May**

**Mark Twain**

»The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg« (1899)

**10 May**

**Kate Chopin**

»The Story of an Hour« (1894)

&

»The Storm« (1898)

**17 May**

**Ascension Day**

No class! Enjoy and relax!

**24 May**

**Jack London**

»To Build a Fire« (1908)

&

**O. Henry**

»The Furnished Room« (1906)

**The Modern Era (1900- 1945)**

**31 May**

**Ernest Hemingway**

»Cat in the Rain« (1925)

&

»A Clean, Well-Lighted Place« (1933)

**07 June**

**Feast of Corpus Christi (Fronleichnam)**

No class!

**The Postwar Era (1945-1960)**

**14 June**

**J.D. Salinger**

»A Perfect Day for Bananafish« (1948) &

»Pretty Mouth and Green My Eyes« (1951)

**21 June**

**Flannery O'Connor**

»The Artificial Nigger« (1953)

&

»A Good Man Is Hard to Find« (1953)

**Postmodern Fiction (1960-1990)**

**28 June**

**John Barth**

»Lost in the Funhouse« (1968)

&

**Raymond Carver**

»Cathedral« (1983)

**Confessional Literature and Neorealism (1980s - today)**

**05 July**

**Gail Donohue Storey**

»Totally Nude Live Girls« (1984)

&

**Dale Peck**

»Fucking Martin« (1993)

**12 July**

**Sherman Alexie**

»The Only Traffic Signal on the Reservation  
Doesn't Flash Red Anymore« (1993)

»The Lone Ranger and Tonto  
Fistfight in Heaven« (1993)