

**«NO GREATER THREAT»:
PARANOID CULTURE AND THE AMERICAN MEDIA
FROM THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION TO 09/11**

Dozent

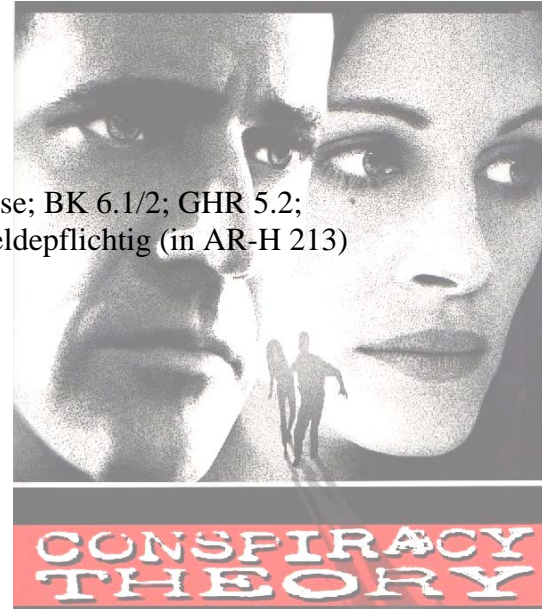
Priv.-Doz. Stefan Brandt

Angaben

Proseminar, 2 SWS, ECTS-Studium, ECTS-Credits: 7
Unterrichtssprache: Englisch, LCMS BA 2.2 Medienanalyse; BK 6.1/2; GHR 5.2;
Gym. 7.2 und 7.3; alter MA: AM L5, LA Sek II B 5; anmeldepflichtig (in AR-H 213)
Zeit und Ort: Di 14:00 - 16:00, [AR-K 601](#)
ab 25.4.2006

Studienfächer / Studienrichtungen:

ANG-M-AL ab 2
MPEB ab 2
[LCMS-BA-M2 ab 2](#)
ENG-SII-B ab 2
ENG-GHR ab 2
ENG-GYM ab 2
ENG-BK ab 2 6.2



Inhalt

According to a recent poll, about 75% of Americans believe that JFK's assassination was the product of a conspiracy. Over 70% believe «the government knows more about UFOs than they are telling us.» In this seminar, we will consider conspiracy theories — as well as other phenomena linked to the Culture of Anxiety — as social, cultural, and historical phenomena. We will discuss what attracts people to the rhetoric of fear and what conspiracy theories tell us about the groups that produce them. Is Richard Hofstadter correct when he speaks of the «Paranoid Style in American Culture»? Films to be examined include I MARRIED A COMMUNIST (1949), MY SON JOHN (1952), WAR OF THE WORLDS (1952/2004), JFK (1991), CONSPIRACY THEORY (1997), and FLIGHT PLAN (2005). In addition, we will look at television shows such as *South Park* and the *X-Files*.

ECTS-Informationen:

2 Credits: Regular attendance and participation in class (50%), Expert session (50%)

5 Credits: Regular attendance and participation in class (1/3), Expert session & Handout (1/3), Final exam: Analysis of a film sequence (1/3)

7 Credits: Regular attendance and participation in class (25%), Expert session & Handout (25%), Summary and analysis of one session (3-4 pages) (due 2 weeks after the session) (20%); Final exam: Analysis of a film sequence (30%)

Zusätzliche Informationen

Erwartete Teilnehmerzahl: 50

Syllabus:

- 25. April** **Introduction: September 11 and Conspiracy Theories**
- 02. May** **American Paranoid Culture**
Television and Beyond: *South Park* (2001)
- 09. May** **The Red Menace**
Anti-Communist Hysteria in *My Son John* (1952)
- 16. May** **The JFK Assassination**
JFK (1991)
- 23. May** **The Coming of the Apocalypse**
The Day After (1983)
- 30. May** **Alien Conspiracy Theories**
Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956/1977)
- 13. June** **Panic Bodies: The Fear of the Invisible**
Outbreak (1997)
- 20. June** **Personal Identity and the Crisis of Government**
Conspiracy Theory (1997)
- 27. June** **Enjoying Paranoia: The Power of the Unreal**
The X-Files
- 04. July** **Fear and Control: Hollywood and Islam**
Flight Plan (2005)
- 11. July** **Final Exam: Analysis of a film sequence (see handouts)**