

# Culture Department Course Offerings

## Summer Term 2024

### Bachelor

#### *Orientierungsmodul Kultur - Seminar*

32100 Martin Lütke

#### **Theorizing Culture (Seminar)**

Tue 10-12 h, 340

The object of this seminar is to introduce students to theories of culture(s) and cultural theory. With theories of culture abounding, we will only be able to discuss a selection of canonized texts. These texts will help to enhance our understanding of how we have come to theorize culture(s) in the field of literary and cultural studies, as well as cultural history. Furthermore, we will tackle various angles of how we make meaning of and through culture and how culture informs related fields of inquiry, such as, for example, media studies, philosophy, and sociology.

#### *Vertiefungsseminare Kultur*

32101 Rizvana Bradley (Vertiefung A/B)

#### **Horror and the Cinematic Unconscious**

Wed 12-14 h, 319

The philosopher and media theorist Eugene Thacker has argued that “horror is about the paradoxical thought of the unthinkable.” But how might such a conception of horror be complicated, enriched, or problematized if we were to approach the genre by way of the racial underside of the unthinkable? This course will explore cinematic and artistic exemplars of horror in order to think through the philosophical intersections of race and gender with notions of the haunted, the macabre, the Gothic, the monstrous. **Please register at:** [culture@jfki.fu-berlin.de](mailto:culture@jfki.fu-berlin.de) with your name, matriculation number, study program, home university (if applicable), zedat email address or email address of home university, and type of exchange program (if applicable). Deadline for registration is April 8, 2024. Please register on Campus Management as well and as soon as possible.

32102 David Langstaff (Vertiefung B)

#### **Geographical Imagination in the Twilight of the "American Century"**

Wed 14-16 h, 319

In its everyday usage, the term “geography” is typically invoked to designate an arena of specialized knowledge concerned with maps and mapping, with spatial representations of peoples and environments, of

territories and landscapes. In this popular sense, the notion of “space” is essentially geometric—space is little more than an empty container for representations of the shape, size, and relative position of objects, of the distances or boundaries between them. As young schoolchildren, most of us come to understand maps as simply practical tools for navigation, or else as banal artifacts we’ve had to encounter in compulsory exercises of rote memorization and regurgitation (e.g. identify this or that country, region, or capital city on a map). The field of Critical Geography, however, unsettles any presumption of space as an empty container for the already given, instead positing space as a question, an analytic, a constellation of socioecological relations that are historically situated and politically contested. ----- This course provides a broad survey of contemporary methods, approaches, and thematic concerns within the expansive and internally differentiated field of Critical Geography, emphasizing its stakes for grappling with a “long twentieth century” (in Giovanni Arrighi’s words) profoundly shaped by the rise and fall of U.S. hegemony. How might questions of space, time, and cartography need to be rethought, not only in the twilight of the historical period Henry Luce famously dubbed “the American Century,” but in light of the so-called Anthropocene, wherein the geological force of humanity threatens to unfold across a timescale that exceeds even human existence? How might a critical geographic imagination illuminate the uneven prospects and perils of this time of uncertainty and transition? In exploring such questions, we will engage Marxist, feminist, Black, Indigenous, postcolonial, posthuman, environmentalist, affective, and abolitionist geographical traditions, drawing on thinkers such as Doreen Massey, David Harvey, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, Natchee Blu Barnd, Neil Smith, Katherine McKittrick, Anna Tsing, André Mesquita, William Cronon, Dipesh Chakrabarty, and Lauren Berlant, among others.

32103 David Grundy (Vertiefung B)

### **Black Music and Black Liberation: Free Jazz Then and Now**

Thu 16-18 h, 203

The music known—not unproblematically—as Free Jazz offers an opportunity to explore an extraordinarily rich mixture of music, poetry, political aesthetics and broader cultural questions. In this course we will explore some of those intersections, from the era of Civil Rights through to the Black Power era and into today’s world. We’ll begin with an introductory session exploring the emergence of free jazz at the turn of the 1950s/1960s. Beginning with the Ornette Coleman record that, for better or worse, gave the music its name, each week will focus on a different artist as a lens to address different aspects of the music. By the end of the 1970s, although free jazz had continued to grow, it faced the economic challenges of the rightwing Reagan era and an increasing traditionalism in the jazz world which demonized more experimental forms. Yet the music continues to survive into the 21st century. In this course we will explore how, who, when, and why this all matters.

## *Colloquium*

32104 Lütke

### **BA-Colloquium Culture/Literature**

Wed 16-18 h, 201

This course will provide guidance to students who are preparing for or are in the process of writing their bachelor’s thesis. The colloquium will be divided into two sections. Section 1 will center on questions such as finding a topic, literature research, methodologies and theories, and academic writing. Section 2 of the course will take the form of a symposium where students give presentations on their proposed topics and the progress of their research so far.

# Master

## Modul A

32110 Frank Kelleter

### **A Revolutionary Culture: Sources of America's Political Imaginary** (Grundlagenvorlesung) Kelleter

Mon 16-19 h, 319

This lecture course deals with political aesthetics in the so-called “founding” era of the United States. We will look at documents, debates, and artifacts from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Topics include the emergence and consolidation appearance of a “republican” elite during and after the American Revolution, the cultural work of *The Federalist*, the French Revolution in America, the parallel of political parties and a national periodical press, the Haitian Revolution, the South and slavery, the impact of the American Revolution on American indigenous cultures, the black enlightenment, early trans-Atlantic feminism, the advent of the novel and its early genres (sentimental novel, Gothic novel, historical novel) as well as other issues.

The two-hour lecture course serves as “**Lecture**” of Culture- **Module A** (*American History of Ideas and Theories of American Culture*) in the MA program. Attendance of the additional academic hour (“tutorial” with further time for Q&A) is optional.

**Registration:** All participants must be registered via Blackboard *and* Campus Management before the first session. If you cannot register online or cannot attend the first session, please contact Prof. Kelleter before the beginning of the term.

**Requirements:** See Syllabus and Course Description (on Blackboard).

**First session:** April 15.

32111 Frank Kelleter

### **Post-Classical Theory (HS)**

Mon 14-16 h, 340

This seminar serves as “**Hauptseminar**” of Culture-**Module A** in the **Master's degree program**. We will study different types of cultural theory that have emerged after the “classical” paradigms of psychoanalysis, phenomenology, orthodox Marxism, and their poststructuralist inflections. Individual sessions will be dedicated to select developments from the 1970s-2000s (revisionary Marxism, field theory, actor-network-theory, systems theory). Additional topics (to be chosen and prepared by students) can include, but are not restricted to, other or later paradigms such as affect theory (e.g., Lauren Berlant, Kathleen Stewart, Sara Ahmed, Margaret Wetherell), post-critique (e.g., Rita Felski, Caroline Levine), new queer theories (e.g., José Esteban Muñoz), trans theories (e.g. Jack Halberstam, Paul Preciado), media archaeology and media ecology (e.g., Lisa Gitelman, Katherine Hayles, Jay Bolter, Richard Grusin), post-cinema theories (e.g., Shane Denson), seriality studies, critical university studies, global history (including perspectives on “settler colonialism”), theories of neoliberalism, critiques of postfeminism (e.g., the Judith Butler-Nancy Fraser debate, Catherine Rottenberg), black feminism (e.g., Combahee River Collective, Audre Lorde, bell hooks), Intersectionality theory (e.g., Kimberlé Crenshaw), critical race theories, critical whiteness studies (e.g., Claudia Rankine), Afropessimism, philosophies of blackness (e.g., Hortense Spillers, Saidiya Hartman), black Marxism, and other paradigms.

Unlike Prof. Kelleter’s lecture course, this seminar will be largely student-driven; more than half of the sessions will be designed and moderated by the participants. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with potential course material (theoretical paradigms and texts) *before* the first meeting, when all participants will be asked to propose and sign up for one session topic (theoretical paradigm and/or set of texts; compare Syllabus).

**Registration:** All participants need to be registered via Blackboard *and* Campus Management by the first session. If you cannot register online or cannot attend the first session, please contact Prof. Kelleter before the beginning of the term (no later than April 8). Before our first meeting, all communication about and within this class will be channeled through the course’s Blackboard site, so make sure you are registered there.

**Organization:** Please download the **Syllabus and Course Description** (with a description of all requirements) from the “Teaching” section of Prof. Kelleter’s JFKI website or from Blackboard (go to “Kursmaterial”; you may have to click on “open Syllabus here” to download it; if this doesn’t work, try a different browser: students have reported problems with the Chrome browser).

**Please read the Syllabus/Course Description carefully:** It contains detailed information about the seminar's structure and suggestions for preparing "your" session. Note that we will finalize our class schedule in the first two meetings. This means that everyone who wants to attend this course needs to **be present in the first session** in order to sign up for a topic (student-run session) or have contacted Prof. Kelleter beforehand by e-mail (no later than April 8). **First session:** April 15.

32115 Jobs/Lüthe

## **"I am not throwing away my shot": The Histories, Politics, and Aesthetics of the Musical Hamilton (2015)**

Tue 12-14 h, 340

The object of this seminar is to critically engage with the musical/musical film *Hamilton* composed (and realized) by Lin-Manuel Miranda to wide critical acclaim and general success. We will utilize the musical to inspire discussions and analyzes of the history of the Early American Republic as well as discussions pertaining to the cultural work and the overall aesthetics of the musical (film) for our day and age. *Hamilton* can arguably be regarded as a cornerstone and reference point in the general re-vitalization of the musical as a quintessential American genre, but has also contributed to the debates regarding the status of the Early American Republic within US public history.

### *Modul B*

32112 Spahn

## **Democracy, Reform, and Cultural Nationalism in the Age of Romanticism**

Tue 16-18 h, 319

This lecture course (basic lecture) deals with the interlocking of Romanticism, cultural nationalism, and practices of political reform; it focuses on a broad archive of autobiographical writings, political tracts, literary works, philosophical essays, and popular entertainment from the period between the Jacksonian era and the Civil War. Topics include the evolution of democratic culture, "Indian Removal," New England transcendentalism, debates on slavery and national expansion, sentimentalism and the abolitionist imagination, the emergence of popular entertainment forms and genres, and other critical issues of the time. Combining a focus on narrative forms and cultural self-descriptions with inquiries into shifting configurations and hierarchies of race, class, gender, and region, the lecture engages works by James Fenimore Cooper, William Apess, David Walker, Alexis de Tocqueville, Maria Stewart, Margaret Fuller, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Edgar Allan Poe, Lydia Maria Child, Frederick Douglass, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Harriet Jacobs, PT Barnum, Emily Dickinson, Harriet Beecher-Stowe and others.

32113 Spahn

## **Authorship and Race in American Culture**

Thu 14-16 h, 319

Cord Jefferson's award-winning *American Fiction* (2023), the film adaptation of Percival Everett's novel *Erasure* (2001), reflects on a long-standing debate in American culture on the relationship between authorship and race. In this seminar, we will use Jefferson's film and Everett's novel as an entry into the complex cultural and intellectual history of this debate from the Enlightenment to today, with a thematic emphasis on three periods: the first African American Renaissance in the 1850s, the years from the late nineteenth century to the Harlem Renaissance, and the mid-twentieth century. Authors will include Frederick Douglass, William Wilson, Frances Harper, Charles Chesnut, WEB Du Bois, James Weldon Johnson, Langston Hughes, Alain Locke, Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, and James Baldwin, among others.

Please purchase : Percival Everett, *Erasure* (2001/2021).

32115 Jobs/Lütke

## **"I am not throwing away my shot": The Histories, Politics, and Aesthetics of the Musical Hamilton (2015)**

Tue 12-14 h, 340

The object of this seminar is to critically engage with the musical/musical film *Hamilton* composed (and realized) by Lin-Manuel Miranda to wide critical acclaim and general success. We will utilize the musical to inspire discussions and analyzes of the history of the Early American Republic as well as discussions pertaining to the cultural work and the overall aesthetics of the musical (film) for our day and age. *Hamilton* can arguably be regarded as a cornerstone and reference point in the general re-vitalization of the musical as a quintessential American genre, but has also contributed to the debates regarding the status of the Early American Republic within US public history.

32213 Dikant

## **Crime and Punishment**

Wed 16-18, Online

In this seminar, we will study how narratives represent crime and its consequent punishment, focusing in particular on the spectacular crime of murder. We will engage with a broad range of texts from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century, discussing fictional and true crime narratives, criminal anthropology, philosophy, and critical theory. While the crime of murder is especially prominent in detective fiction, we will pay particular attention to narratives that feature more than just the criminal investigation and ask unsettling questions about criminality and justice. Our readings will include Herman Melville's *Billy Budd, Sailor*, Richard Wright's *Native Son*, and Maggie Nelson's *The Red Parts*, as well as theoretical writings by Cesare Lombroso, Michel Foucault, and Mark Seltzer.

## *Modul C*

32114 Rizvana Bradley

## **Political Depression and the Aesthetics of Sovereignty II (HS)**

Wed 16-18 h, 340

Last winter term, *Political Depression and the Aesthetics of Sovereignty (I)* began from the following questions: How might we begin to approach the affective contours of what Lauren Berlant theorized as the "impassivity" of the historical present, in ways that do not immediately circumscribe the terms of inquiry by demanding they lead to resolution, reparation, or redress? What forms of attunement, accompaniment, and experimentation might be occasioned by inhabiting what the Feel Tank Chicago termed "political depression" as an open question, rather than through predetermined diagnostics? *Political Depression and the Aesthetics of Sovereignty II* differentially extends these questions by attending to cinematic exemplars of the catastrophic imagination associated with the socio-ecological crises of late capitalism and the so-called Anthropocene. --- -- This course takes up such lines of inquiry through explorations of affect theory, its interlocutors, and its critics, with a particular emphasis on what Sianne Ngai terms "minor feelings" and "negative affects," in their racial and gendered dimensionality. We will pay special attention to films that obliquely take up this constellation of affective themes, investigating how they aesthetically refract, rather than simply reflect, the myriad impasses (economic, ecological, scientific, political, racial, gendered, etc.) of the present and the project of recuperating sovereignty in the midst of global crisis. Completion of *Political Depression and the Aesthetics of Sovereignty (I)* is not a prerequisite for enrollment.

**Please register at:** [culture@jfki.fu-berlin.de](mailto:culture@jfki.fu-berlin.de) with your name, matriculation number, study program, home university (if applicable), zedat email address or email address of home university, and type of exchange program (if applicable). Deadline for registration is April 8, 2024. Please register on Campus Management as well and as soon as possible.

## *Interdisziplinäres Modul*

32115 Jobs/Lüthe

### **"I am not throwing away my shot": The Histories, Politics, and Aesthetics of the Musical Hamilton (2015)**

Tue 12-14 h, 340

The object of this seminar is to critically engage with the musical/musical film Hamilton composed (and realized) by Lin-Manuel Miranda to wide critical acclaim and general success. We will utilize the musical to inspire discussions and analyzes of the history of the Early American Republic as well as discussions pertaining to the cultural work and the overall aesthetics of the musical (film) for our day and age. Hamilton can arguably be regarded as a cornerstone and reference point in the general re-vitalization of the musical as a quintessential American genre, but has also contributed to the debates regarding the status of the Early American Republic within US public history.

32116 Lüthe/Püschel

### **CEO Celebrity: Work Cultures and Capitalist Branding**

Fr 12-14 h, 340

## **Graduate School**

32120 Frank Kelleter

### **Advanced Theory and Methods in the Study of Culture**

(Oberseminar)

Tue 14-16 h, 319

This Ph.D.-course continues last semester's "Theory and Methods in the Study of Culture." Members of the Graduate School are invited to attend; please register prior to the first class with Prof. Kelleter (no later than April 8).

32130 Frank Kelleter / N.N.

### **Forschungskolloquium Kultur/Literatur**

Wed 18 – 20 h, 201

Each summer semester, the Departments of Culture and Literature organize a joint research colloquium with invited speakers. This course is addressed chiefly to Ph.D. students, post-docs, visiting scholars, and faculty members, but it is open to B.A. and M.A. students and the general public as well. It cannot be taken for credit; it is not an "M.A.-Kolloquium." For details, please see poster and program (online).