

Veranstalter	Dr. Jan D. Kucharzewski
Thema	“It’s the End of the World as We Know It”: The Representation of Crises in American Film and Literature [AA-V4a/b, ENG-13, AA-M5, AA-M7, AA-M15, AA-M16, AA-W, MW-M8, MW-W]
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar II
Veranstaltungsnummer	53- 573
Zeit	2st, Mo. 12-14
Raum	Phil 1250
Beginn	04.04.2011

Kursbeschreibung:

Although the Greek origin of the word crisis (*krisis*) originally denoted a “change” or a “point of decision,” contemporary usage of the term usually refers to an emergency, an unstable and dangerous situation that might lead to the collapse of a prevailing social, economic, or political system. The concept of crisis not only indicates financial breakdowns, terrorist attacks, wars, natural disasters, or revolutions, it can also mean crises of identity and subjectivity as well as crises of interpretation and representation. Since a crisis threatens to undermine established notions of certainty and stability, the question of representation becomes a crucial factor in the discourse of crisis: representing a crisis of any kind tends to generate frictions between the aesthetic conventions of the representational system through which the crisis is mediated and the by definition disruptive and excessive nature of a crisis.

In this seminar we will therefore examine a variety of postmodern and contemporary texts (and some movies) that attempt to represent different crises situations and investigate whether the representation of a crisis also generates a crisis of representation. The seminar will discuss topics such as the depiction of environmental disasters and wars in American film and literature, the crisis of self and gender identity in contemporary fiction, the crisis of interpretation as it emerges from postmodern theory, as well as popular culture’s current fixation on vampires, zombies, and viruses as metaphors for states of emergency. Writers and theorists we will be dealing with in this class include Tim O’Brien, Don DeLillo, Bret Easton Ellis, Stephen King, Jacques Derrida, Giorgio Agamben, Chuck Palahniuk, and Stewart O’Nan.

Teilnahmevoraussetzungen:

Neben den formalen Voraussetzungen die nachgewiesene Bereitschaft zur regelmäßigen aktiven Teilnahme am Seminar (anstelle von Referaten wird der Lesefortschritt der einzelnen Studierenden regelmäßig überprüft; der Nachweis von Textkenntnissen ist eine Grundvoraussetzung für eine erfolgreiche Seminarteilnahme).

Sprechstunde während der Vorlesungszeit:	Di 15-16 Uhr (o.n.V.)
Sprechstunden während der vorlesungsfreien Zeit:	Siehe Webseite des IAA