

Veranstalter	Dr. Jan D. Kucharzewski
Thema	Introduction to Postmodern American Literature and Theory [AA-A3, ENG7, AA-W]
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar Ib
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-562
Zeit	2st, Montag 14-16 Uhr
Raum	Phil 1269
Beginn	02.04.2012

Course Description

There is an episode of *The Simpsons* in which the barman, Moe Szyslak, tries to transform his shabby bar into a cool and futuristic club, decorating it with randomly chosen objects such as suspended rabbits and eyeballs. When Homer and the other regular customers don't get it, Moe explains: "It's po-mo!...Postmodern!...Yeah, all right – weird for the sake of weird."

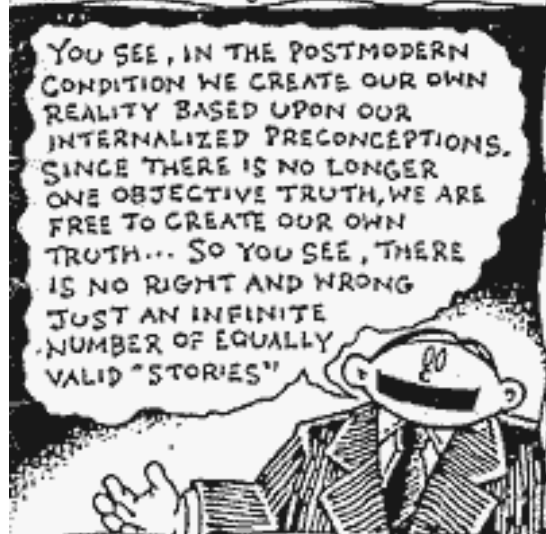
Moe expresses one of the most common misperceptions of postmodern art, namely that it is mostly nonsensical and therefore inaccessible. The irony, of course, is that *The Simpsons* are indeed one of the most postmodern TV shows ever made and the very fact that this show satirizes the idea of postmodernism is emblematic of the diffuse, complex and frequently schizophrenic aesthetic strategies associated with postmodern art and literature.

This seminar will introduce students to the basic ideas and methods of postmodern literature and theory. The aim of the course is to demystify the often confusing jargon or peculiar narrative strategies used by postmodern writers and elucidate the rather straightforward concepts that are at the center of postmodern literature. We will read postmodern authors such as Thomas Pynchon, Donald Barthelme, Jorge Luis Borges, Paul Auster, Kathy Acker and Don DeLillo, discuss the theories of Jacques Derrida, Jean Baudrillard and Roland Barthes, and analyze postmodern aspects in contemporary TV-shows such as *Seinfeld*, *Community*, *Glee*, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, and *The Simpsons*. Despite the complexity and the theoretical intricacies of postmodernism, the course will prove that dealing with postmodern art can actually be a lot of fun and that one need not be intimidated by the texts and the ideas behind them.

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). Die Anwesenheitsliste wird ab der ersten Sitzung geführt.

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



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