

Veranstalter	Prof. Susanne Rohr
Thema	Contemporary American Fiction [ENG-7a/b, AA-V4a/b, ENG-13, AA-MA3, AA-MA4, AA7, AA11, LAA10, LAA13, AA-W, AA-WB]
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar II
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-566
Zeit	Mi 12-14
Raum	Phil 1269
Beginn	06.04.2016

In this seminar, we will discuss different forms of contemporary American writing. We will try to get a better understanding of the literary traditions as well as the innovative force that the texts under consideration display. All texts were published in 2015, the material to be discussed comprises a graphic short story (“A Brief History of the Art Form Known as ‘Hortisculpture’”) various short stories from different genres (“The Little Green God of Agony,” “In Camera,” and “Betsy from Pike”), reflects ethnically marked literary traditions, such as African American writing (*The Turner House*), the surprising return of a genuinely American genre, the novel of passing (*Mislaid*), new forms such as the spin-off of a popular podcast radio show (*Welcome to Night Vale*), and, finally, the king of the best-seller list’s latest novel, Jonathan Franzen’s *Purity*. Among the authors are thus famous winners of very prestigious prizes, such as Jonathan Franzen, William H. Gass, and Stephen King, as well as lesser-known young creative voices (Adrian Tomine, John McManus, Angela Flournoy, Joseph Fink, Jeffrey Cranor, and Nell Zink).

Please note:

→ The scope of required reading in this course is **very demanding**. Please take this into account when deciding to participate in this course. You have to be a passionate reader and lover of literature to profit fully by the seminar! And you have to be able to purchase the novels (although there will, of course, be copies in the library, and you will find the short stories in the AGORA room connected to the seminar).

→ There will also be **8 quizzes** meant as encouragement to keep up with the assigned reading of which you will have to pass at least 6.

We will read and study the following texts:

The following texts are in the AGORA room:

Adrian Tomine, “A Brief History of the Art Form Known as ‘Hortisculpture,’” *Killing and Dying* (2015), 9-29

Stephen King „The Little Green God of Agony,“ *The Bazaar of Bad Dreams* (2015), 365-390

William H. Gass, „In Camera,“ *eyes* (2015), 1-75

John McManus, „Betsy from Pike,“ *Fox Tooth Heart* (2015), 31-54

Please purchase the following novels:

Angela Flournoy, *The Turner House* (2015), 338 pp

Nell Zink, *Mislaid* (2015), 242 pp

Jonathan Franzen, *Purity* (2015), 576 pp

Joseph Fink and Jeffrey Cranor, *Welcome to Night Vale* (2015), 416 pp

Credit requirements:

- ◆ Regular attendance (attendance will be recorded)
- ◆ 8 Quizzes (you must pass at least 6 in order to get credit for the course)
- ◆ 3 reviews, commented upon by a class mate
- ◆ Oral contribution
- ◆ Seminar paper of 15-20 pages

Sprechstunde während der Vorlesungszeit Prof. Rohr :	Mo. 14-15 Phil 1256
Sprechstunde während der Semesterferien Prof. Rohr:	Mi. 17.02., Do. 17.03. jeweils 14-15 Uhr in Phil 1256