

Veranstalter.....	<b>Prof. Dr. Ute Berns</b>
Thema .....	<b>Writing Nature: 1800 to Today</b> [AA-V3a/b, ENG-12, AA-M11, AA-M12, AA-M13, AA-MA3, AA-MA4, AA-W]
Art der Veranstaltung .....	<b>Seminar II</b>
Veranstaltungsnummer .....	<b>53-545</b>
Zeit.....	<b>2st. Di 14-16</b>
Raum.....	<b>Phil 1250</b>
Beginn.....	<b>01.04.2014</b>

Representations of nature date back long before the beginning of writing and they have changed across the centuries. The eighteenth century, in particular, saw a number of momentous cultural shifts in the way people perceived both their natural environments and, more specifically, animals; the effects of these shifts shaped the literature of the time and they continue to shape our perceptions of nature until today. Later the industrial revolution picking up speed in the nineteenth century, scientific theories of evolution and the environmentalist movements emerging in the last decades of the twentieth century have influenced the cultural experience and representation of nature. Literary texts have been a principal medium for shaping the perception and experience of nature. In this seminar we will discuss the concept of 'nature', focussing on the landscape/the environment on the one hand and the animal/the non-human species on the other. Turning to specific periods in British culture we will examine how cultural discourses – aesthetic and psychological, political and scientific – shape the literary representations of nature. Yet we will also analyse which specific functions these representations of landscapes and animals play in the literary texts themselves, and how literary texts give significance, agency or even a 'voice' to the natural. You will be introduced, among others, to notions of nature in the literary tradition such as the 'beautiful' and the 'sublime', as well as to concepts of contemporary ecocriticism, distinguishing between 'anthropocentric' or 'biocentric' perspectives. Since this course aims to cover different periods and debates, some of the texts will only be read in excerpts, and a reader will be provided at the beginning of the course.

#### Requirements:

Regular attendance, excellent knowledge of the course materials; active participation in the seminar discussion and a *Studienleistung* (presentation or other).

For a *Schein* : an additional *Prüfungsleistung* in the form of a term paper.