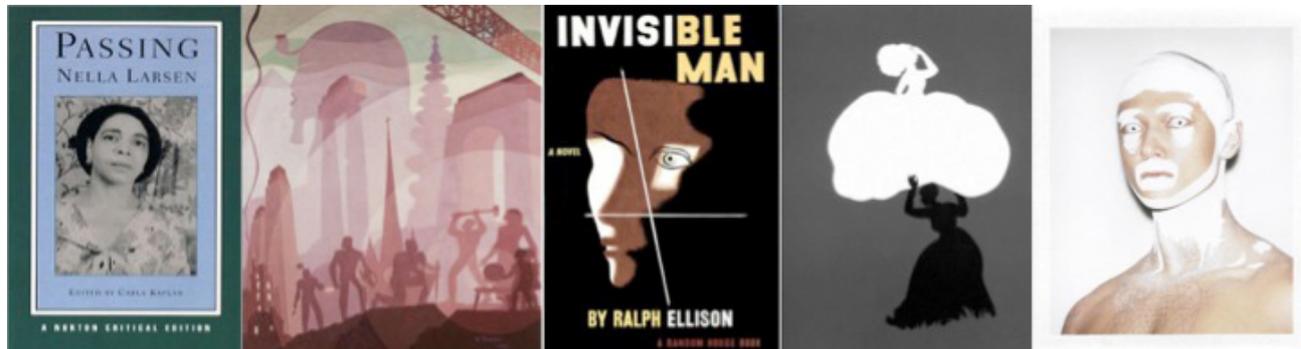


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| Veranstalter..... | Marius Henderson |
| Thema..... | From the Harlem Renaissance to Post-Soul Aesthetics: African American Literature and Art in the 20th and 21st Centuries |
| Art der Veranstaltung | Seminar I b |
| Veranstaltungsnummer..... | 53-559 |
| Zeit..... | 2 std., Do 14 - 16 |
| Raum | Phil 1250 |
| Beginn..... | 03. April 2014 |



This seminar will provide you with a broad overview of African American literature and art in the 20th and 21st centuries. The seminar will loosely follow a chronological structure and we will discuss literary texts from all three main genres: poetry, prose, and drama. Moreover, the vivid resonances between African American literature and the visual and performative arts is of eminent importance to this seminar.

Over the course of the semester you will become acquainted with conceptual and theoretical terms like *double consciousness*, *passing*, *signifyin(g)*, *hypervisibility*, *disidentification*, and *intersectionality*, and with artistic and aesthetic phases and movements, like the *Harlem Renaissance*, *The Black Arts Movement*, *Afrocentrism*, *Afrofuturism*, *Post-Soul* and *Post-Black Aesthetics*; all of which are crucial for getting a thorough impression of African American literature and art in the 20th and 21st centuries.

We will try to find out whether there might be continuities concerning the occurrence of certain aesthetic strategies, for instance concerning the tropes and figurations they employ, in the history of African American literature and art. We will also address the ways in which these aesthetic strategies often have challenged and deconstructed hegemonic racializing and/or racist discourses.

However, hopefully it will also become apparent during the seminar that African American literature and art can in no way be conceived of as a monolithic, homogeneous block, but they can be regarded as hybrid, diverse and multi-faceted, whether one looks at them from a diachronic or a synchronic perspective.

In the context of our discussions of the primary works of the seminar, we will scrutinize how “racial” categories have been constructed and have shifted throughout time. We will delve into the history of Blackness(es), and into the history of Whiteness(es) as well, in order to analyze how these socio-cultural formations have been conceptualized, materialized and enacted.

Besides taking into consideration representations of race in African American literature and art we will, however, always try to work with the category race from intersectional perspectives, and thus take into account how race intersects with other categories of social differentiation, like gender, age, class, religion, or sexuality.

Furthermore, we will look at resonances between African American literature and art and key concepts of European continental philosophy, like “freedom,” “anxiety,” “Enlightenment,” “dialectics;” as rendered by philosophers like Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Sartre. We will not treat the concepts and texts which we discuss in the seminar as isolated and restricted to the North American context, but as being part of transnational exchanges between Africa, Europe, and the Americas, and as part of what Paul Gilroy has termed “the black Atlantic.”

Among others, we will discuss literary texts by authors like Langston Hughes, Nella Larsen, Zora Neale Hurston, Ralph Ellison, Toni Morrison, Audre Lorde, Octavia E. Butler, Samuel R. Delany, Claudia Rankine, Evie Shockley; artworks by artists like Aaron Douglas, Romare Bearden, Betye Saar, Robert Colescott, Adrian Piper, Kara Walker, Glenn Ligon, Vaginal Davis, boychild; and articles by theorists like W.E.B. Du Bois, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., bell hooks, Patricia Hill Collins, Saidiya Hartman.

Credit Requirements: Regular Attendance, Active Participation, 3 Shorter Written Responses, Term Paper (8-12 Pages)