

Instructor: **Jolene Mathieson**

Title: **Money Talks**

Course: **Seminar II** [ENG-6, ENG-6a, AA-V3a, AA-V3b, ENG-12, AA7, AA-10, LAA9, LAA12, AA-MA3, AA-MA4, AA-W, AA-WB]

Number: **53–552**

Time: **Wednesdays, 12–14h**

Room: **Phil 1219**

Starts: **05.04.2017**

Course description:



James Gillray, *The British butcher, supplying John Bull with a substitute for bread*, 1795.



James Gillray, *John Bull Ground Down*, 1795.



James Gillray, *Transmuting All into Gold Paper*, 1797.

A decade following the advent of the global financial and European debt crises, and in the context of Brexit and its argument to maintain London's preeminent position as a leading financial hub by procuring independence from the European Union, this course will reflect on the long, storied, and somewhat tortured, relationship between wealth and ethics within British literature and culture. As this course takes its title from a long-standing idiom referring to the problematic influence and political power that money, and those who have it, are able to buy, we will first begin with the first book of Aristotle's *Politics*, a foundational and profoundly influential philosophical inquiry into wealth acquisition and ethics within Western thought. From here we will adopt a transhistorical approach situated within the field of New Economic Criticism and centred on canonical texts in literature and economic theory. Our corpus will include two plays, Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (ca. 1596) and George Bernard Shaw's *Mrs Warren's Profession* (1893), traditional economic theory in the form of excerpts from Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) and Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the 21st Century* (2013), excerpts from more polemical but poetic economic thought including Friedrich Engels' *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845) and John Maynard Keynes' "The End of *Laissez-Faire*" (1926). In addition to this, we will also look at two short stories from the Great Depression era as well as Henry Sutton's satirical novel, *Get Me Out of Here* (2011), which is set within the context of the 2007-2008 financial crisis.

Requirements: The *Studienleistung* will consist of thorough preparation of all reading material, completion of weekly homework assignments, and active participation. The *Prüfungsleistung* consists of a 16–20-page research paper. Each of you must purchase the 'Seminar 53–552' Reader at Cobra Copy (Von-Melle-Park 5, 20146 HH) as well as Henry Sutton's *Get Me Out of Here*.