

<b>Veranstalter</b>	<b>Prof. Dr. Astrid Böger</b>
<b>Thema</b>	<b>American Realism in Literature and Photography</b> [ENG-7, ENG-7a, AA-V4ab, ENG-13, AA7, AA11, LAA10, LAA13, AA-MA3, AA-MA4, AA-W, AA-WB]
<b>Art der Veranstaltung</b>	<b>Seminar II</b>
<b>Veranstaltungsnummer</b>	<b>53-569</b>
<b>Zeit</b>	<b>Mo 16-18</b>
<b>Raum</b>	<b>Phil 1269</b>
<b>Beginn</b>	<b>03.04.2017</b>

### **Course Description:**

The overall aim of this course is to better understand American realism as a powerful aesthetic formation which first emerged in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century but whose impact extends well beyond the geographical space of the United States proper, and which remains an important cultural formation even today. As our starting point, we will consider the question raised by Nany Armstrong, “What Is Real in Realism?”, before we explore the Pictorial Turn roughly located around 1850, when fiction more and more equated seeing with knowing and, as a consequence, “literary realism referenced a world of objects that either had been or could be photographed” (Armstrong). Alan Trachtenberg’s insightful essay “Photography: The Emergence of a Keyword” will help us further situate the medium of photography (which, as he reminds us, means literally “writing or drawing with light”) vis-à-vis literature. Throughout the seminar, an attempt will thus be made to create a productive inter-medial conversation between literature and photography, or the two most influential strands in American realism. Our reading list will include works by Henry James, Ambrose Bierce, Edith Wharton, William Dean Howells, Stephen Crane, and Willa Cather, among others. In the latter part of the course, we will turn to Naturalism as an important sub-formation of Realism, by focussing on works by Jacob Riis, Theodore Dreiser, and Paul Laurence Dunbar, all of which directly or indirectly engage the photographic medium in order to articulate a critique of the social realities of their time.

### **Course Requirements:**

Regular attendance and preparatory reading, active participation, response papers and/or an oral presentation as well as (for full course credit) a term paper of ca. 12-15 pages at the end of the course.

### **Recommended Reading:**

All students taking this course are strongly advised to consult a literary history such as Hubert Zapf’s *Amerikanische Literaturgeschichte* (Metzler 1996) prior to our first class in order to refresh their knowledge of American Realism in the larger context of American literature and culture.

<b>Sprechstunde während der Vorlesungszeit</b>	Di 16-17 Uhr und nach Vereinbarung per E-mail
<b>Sprechstunden während der vorlesungsfreien Zeit</b>	Genaue Termine werden noch bekannt gegeben