

Veranstalter	Prof. Dr. Susanne Rohr
Thema	Introduction to Theory [AA-A3, ENG-7, ENG-7a, AA11, LAA10, LAA13, AA-WB]
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar II
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-563
Zeit	2st, Mi. 12-14 Uhr
Raum	Ü35-01016
Beginn	18.10.2017

Are you fond of reading theoretical texts and dealing with rather complex abstract questions? Or are you eager to learn how to deal with literary theory? Or are you just curious to gain insight into the field and to find out what all the hullabaloo is about when rather enigmatic terms like “deconstruction” or “postcolonialism” appear in seminar discussions? *Then* this seminar is right for you as it aims at providing a thorough introduction into the main theoretical approaches and concepts in literary theory of the 20th century. Thus, you will learn how the various theories will conceptualize a literary text, how they typically approach a literary work, and which questions they typically ask.

However, let me hasten to add a distinct **word of warning**: this seminar is *not* for you if you rather shy away from seminars where you have to read extensively and, what is more, where you have to read texts that are not always easy to digest. Should this be the case, please spare yourself and your teacher the frustration and find more appropriate seminars. We offer a fabulous list of courses. Also, as we will discuss in groups first in *every* session before we enter into a general discussion, please keep this in mind if you are allergic to group work – again: please choose another seminar in this case.

But if you think that this seminar is right for you, then I promise I will see to it that we will have a good time, the heavy workload notwithstanding. And I will do my best to help you deal with the challenging material and make it digestible for both beginners and more advanced students.

The way we will go about all of this is as follows: we will work with one novel and approach it time and again on the basis of the various theoretical approaches. This novel is F. Scott Fitzgerald’s modernist classic *The Great Gatsby* (1925). (Yes, by the end of this seminar you will really know this novel VERY well.) Concerning the various theories, we will use Lois Tyson’s *Critical Theory Today: A User Friendly Guide*. 2nd edition. New York: Routledge, 2006. This reader provides clear and wonderfully lucid introductions into the various theoretical approaches, and we will work our way through this book chapter by chapter. Only the expert groups will deal with the theories themselves. The reading material for the expert groups will be provided in the Agora room.

Thus, you ***have to buy***

F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (1925) of which there exist very cheap editions, and you may want to consider buying the reader as well. There are good options for buying a used copy on amazon. I will, however, provide the various chapters of the reader in our Agora room, giving you the chance to download them there. The material for the expert groups will also be provided in the Agora room.

Credit requirements**Every student has to**

- attend regularly. No more than two absences if you want to gain credit for the course.
- sign up for participation in an expert group. Experts are expected to read original material for the respective session (provided in the Agora room) and briefly present in class
 - a) the three major challenges the texts presented and
 - b) the three major insights they gained from the texts.
 - c) Experts are furthermore expected to play an active role in both the general discussion and the discussion in the group work phase.

Depending on your module and the credit points you would like to gain for this course you may have to hand in a

- Written paper (length depending on your module)