

Veranstalter	Julius Greve
Thema	Writing Subculture: The Representation of Aberrant Communities in American Literature [ENG-7/a, AA-V4a/b, ENG-13, AA-MA1, AA-MA2, AA-MA5, AA7, AA11, LAA10, LAA13, AA-W, AA-WB]
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar II
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-571
Zeit	Mo 10-12
Raum	Phil 1263
Beginn	17. Oktober 2016

Course Description:

Beatniks, hippies, bikers—these are just a few of the American subcultures to emerge after the Second World War. As aberrant communities of unruly youths and social misfits, they have had a lasting impact on contemporary global culture and the way society thinks about itself. Today, there are multiple subcultural groups, the majority of which are crucial for many people’s identity formation and their differentiation from so-called “mainstream culture.” As Ken Gelder (2007) writes, “subcultures are a matter of *narration*,” they allow for different ways of telling a story about oneself and about one’s social environment, sometimes by attracting attention at all costs. Thus, many subcultures tend to have their own distinct kind of language, dress code, preferred type of music genre, or political ideology. To be part of a subculture means to be “in the know” about a certain manner of signification and communication.

This course examines how American literature reflects both on distinct subcultures but also on the phenomenon of subculture itself. While taking into account the medial interaction between the visual, musical, and textual aspects of various subcultures, we will also address what it means to represent a subculture in literary form—either from within or from without—by analyzing novels and shorter texts by writers as different as Henry Rollins and William T. Vollmann. Aside from the additional theoretical essays and literary pieces, all of which will be made available at the start of the semester, the following novels need to be purchased by the participants:

- Jack Kerouac, *The Subterraneans*
- Hunter S. Thompson, *Hell’s Angels: The Strange and Terrible Saga of the Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs*
- Kathy Acker, *Blood and Guts in High School*
- Chuck Palahniuk, *Rant: An Oral Biography of Buster Casey*