

AMERYKANISTYKA

Studia stacjonarne I stopnia

FAKULTETY 2024/2025 SEMESTR LETNI

O przydziale do grupy decyduje kolejność zgłoszeń.

Liczebność grup: 15-30 osób

II BA-A WYBIERA **JEDEN** FAKULTET

III BA-A WYBIERA **DWA** FAKULTETY

Profesor dr hab. Jean Ward

The Poetry of T. S. Eliot and the Concept of Autobiographical Places
/ Poezja T.S. Eliota a miejsca autobiograficzne

This elective is designed to acquaint students with the poetry of T.S. Eliot as an American writer who made Great Britain, and specifically England, one of his “autobiographical places” (Małgorzata Czermińska’s term). In addition to examining the general qualities of Eliot’s poetry, we shall consider what images of the United States and of Britain emerge from it and look at Eliot’s approach to the culture and society of his first homeland as well as of the one which he chose to adopt. We shall trace the development of his poetry from “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” to *Four Quartets*, attempting to “experience” it by reading aloud in various ways and by listening to readings such as Fiona Shaw’s one-person performance of *The Waste Land*.

Małgorzata Czermińska’s study *The Autobiographical Triangle* trans. Jean Ward (Peter Lang, 2019) will serve as a point of reference. The most important reading will be of Eliot’s poetry, but various print and online resources will be recommended, including podcasts such as *The Waste Land and Modernity* from the series *In Our Time* (BBC Radio 4).

Dr Weronika Metlenga

Quincy Jones: Music & Vision

We will trace how, thanks to his vision and openness to cultural diversity, Quincy Jones created a musical catalog that is one of the most important contributions to contemporary art (incl. music & film). From jazz, through hip-hop to pop - we will discover how, by combining genres, the American musical visionary connected generations and their characteristic cultural aspects, thanks to which his legacy is still present. Jones produced the best-selling music album in history: Michael Jackson's *Thriller*, which sold over 70 million copies and composed soundtracks to films such as *In the Heat of the Night*, *The Anderson Tapes*, *The Italian Job*, on which we will *inter alia* focus on. He also collaborated with artists such as Frank Sinatra, Aretha Franklin, Ella Fitzgerald, and Ray Charles. As part of the classes, we will also watch and discuss a film about the composer's life and work – the 2018 documentary “Quincy”.

Dr Milosz Wojtyna

Narratological Analysis of Contemporary TV Series

The course is devoted to the interpretation and formal-narrative analysis of selected contemporary TV series. We will watch carefully and draw interpretive conclusions not only about the individual series, but also about the general trends on “small screens” that are prominent today.

Key areas of interest: aesthetics, narrative rhetoric, styles of reading, genre bending and genre blending, negotiations with conventions, thematic preoccupations, the rise of the TV series as artistic form, streaming platforms and new reception practices, subversive forms, metanarrative, social agenda, characterisation, marketability, dystopia, technology.

Examples of key texts discussed:

Mr Robot, Westworld, The Young Pope, The Affair, The Get Down, Atlanta, Breaking Bad, Game of Thrones, The Wire, True Detective, Stranger Things, Fargo, BoJack Horseman, Orange is the New Black, Fleabag, The Handmaid's Tale, House of Cards, Peaky Blinders, The Bridge, Narcos, Rick and Morty, South Park, Black Mirror, The Office, The Americans, Killing Eve, Better Call Saul, Chernobyl, The OA, Sense8, Prison Break, Lost, Billions, Futurama, Ash vs Evil Dead, The Strain, Boardwalk Empire, Mad Men, Manhunt: Unabomber, Dexter, The Crown, Dark, House, 13 Reasons Why, Sex Education, Watchmen, Sharp Objects, Bodyguard, Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt, The Knick, American Gods, Animals, Legion, SS-GB, The Man in the High Castle, The Girlfriend Experience, The Night Manager, Utopia, The Fall, Grey's Anatomy, Big Little Lies, The Good Place, You, Years and Years, Homecoming, Euphoria.

Mgr Sarah Flamminio

American Films: From Silent Cinema to Blockbusters

The goal of this class is to familiarize students with US film history from the era of silent films up through the 1970s. Students will be introduced to the basic technical components of early film, as well as basic vocabulary to describe film scenes. The Hayes Code will be used to provide a framework for discussion of the early effects of censorship on US films. Film is not only a medium of entertainment, it can also be a powerful instrument of social norms or of social change.

Students will not only become familiar with the glamor of old Hollywood but also the often-overlooked darker aspects of worker exploitation, the infamous casting couch, the star management system that pushed vulnerable young adults into addiction, and much more. Other significant aspects of the course include the struggle between films and TV for audience appeal, the genesis of the blockbuster and the feature of commercial tie-ins with films.

Films explored in this class will include (but are not limited to): *City Lights*, *The Great Train Robbery*, *The Sinking of the Lusitania*, *Nanook of the North*, *Gone With the Wind*, *The Negro Soldier*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *12 Angry Men*, *Jaws*, *Star Wars: A New Hope*, *The Princess Bride*, *The Untouchables*, *This Film is Not Yet Rated*.

Ryan Habermeyer PhD

The Disinformation Imagination: Conspiracy Theory & Its Literary Accomplices

This course explores the theoretical frameworks and literary manifestations of conspiracy theory: from unreliable narrators to paranoid plot structures, to experimental narrative techniques like fraudulent literary artifacts. We will examine how conspiracy theory is not merely a special kind of narrative promoted by tinfoil-hat-wearing wackos but operates as a mode of folklore establishing the informal norms, beliefs, and behaviors of community belonging as well as demarcating the ideological boundaries of self and Other. By unraveling the intersections of literary craft, conspiracy theory, contemporary neuroscience, and computational folkloristics, we hope to discover how the uniquely human act of storytelling interrogates, subverts, complicates, but also potentially propagates a kind of Post-truth conspiratorial mindset.

Readings for this course will focus predominantly on American literature and culture, the contemporary global leader in the disinformation imagination. We will first undertake a theoretical inquiry into the long history of conspiratorial thinking in the United States and the unique political dynamics that make the country a breeding ground for misinformation: from the Salem Witch trials and colonial settlement to post-Civil War racial paranoia, to Area 51, the JFK assassination, Moon landing, COVID, and QAnon. We will read foundational texts like Richard Hofstadter's "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," as well as excerpts from modern classics like Stephen Lewandowsky's *The Conspiracy Theory Handbook* and Anna Merlan's *The Republic of Lies: American Conspiracy Theorists and Their Surprising Rise to Power*. We will then shift to selections of science-fiction, horror, and the fantastic by H.P. Lovecraft, Jorge Luis Borges, Philip K. Dick, and George Saunders before tackling novels by William S. Burroughs (*Naked Lunch*), Thomas Pynchon (*The Crying of Lot 49*), Ralph Ellison (*The Invisible Man*), Ishmael Reed (*Mumbo Jumbo*), and Vladimir Nabokov (*Pale Fire*). Supplementary film screenings will include Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958), Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), Polanski's *Chinatown* (1974), Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982), and the Wachowskis' *The Matrix* (1999).

Dr hab. Arkadiusz Misztal, prof. UG & Visiting Professor

Under Surveillance: Being watched in XXI century America

Never before has so much been known about so many. CCTV cameras, TSA scanners, NSA databases, big data marketers, predator drones, “stop and frisk” tactics, Facebook algorithms, hidden spyware, and even old-fashioned nosy neighbors—surveillance has become so ubiquitous that we take its presence for granted. While many types of surveillance are pitched as ways to make us safer, almost no one has examined the unintended consequences of living under constant scrutiny and how it changes the way we think and feel about the world. This course, based on Randolph Lewis' book *Under Surveillance* (2017), offers a highly original look at the emotional, ethical, and aesthetic challenges of living with surveillance in America since 9/11. Taking a broad and humanistic approach, this elective explores the growth of surveillance by analyzing contemporary US culture and society, their patterns, values, and concepts through readings, video, and discussion.