

Staffel XII

ERFOLG IN SERIE

Amerikanische TV-Serien als Gesellschaftsdramen



Gefördert durch das
Auswärtige Amt



Auswärtiges Amt

FILMVORTRÄGE

The West Wing

Marc-Oliver Frisch, UdS
Dienstag, 22.10.2024
19:00 Uhr

Designated Survivor

Dr. Svetlana Seibel, UdS
Dienstag, 29.10.2024
19:00 Uhr

The Bridge – Die Brücke

Prof. Dr. Astrid M. Fellner
Dienstag, 03.12.2024
19:00 Uhr

South Park

Danielle Kopf-Giammanco
Dienstag, 10.12.2024
19:00 Uhr



Alle Veranstaltungen um 19:00 Uhr im Kino achteinhalb, Nauwieserstraße 19
Eintritt frei



The West Wing (1999–2006)

Creator: Aaron Sorkin

Referent: Marc-Oliver Frisch (UdS)

Dienstag | 22.10.2024 | 19:00 Uhr

The West Wing revolves around the administration of fictional President Josiah Bartlet, a Democrat from New Hampshire portrayed by Martin Sheen. Along with a staff of former political advisers, speech writers, and pollsters to rival Bartlet's own, Aaron Sorkin and director Thomas Schlamme popularized the so-called “walk-and-talk” approach to television drama. They told stories about the day-to-day of governing the United States: the business of managing a census, nominating Supreme Court Justices, arranging Middle East peace talks, mounting re-election campaigns, dealing with undisclosed illnesses, ordering political assassinations, and pardoning turkeys. The show proved to be a hit with viewers. But despite being nominated for 98 Primetime Emmy Awards and winning 27 of them during its seven-season run, **The West Wing** had its share of detractors on both sides of the aisle. Early on, conservatives disparagingly referred to it as “The Left Wing,” and more progressive critics didn't necessarily disagree about it being an at times maddening exercise in liberal wish-fulfillment. The show's legacy continues to be controversial, with some going so far as to blame the high-minded and often downright heroic depiction of its characters and their work for the shortcomings of subsequent Democratic administrations and campaigns. In this talk we will reconsider **The West Wing** in light of recent U.S. politics.

Marc-Oliver Frisch is a freelance critic and translator and a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of North American Literature at Universität des Saarlandes.



Designated Survivor (2016–2019)

Creator: David Guggenheim

Referentin: Dr. Svetlana Seibel (UdS)

Dienstag | 29.10.2024 | 19:00 Uhr

The President of the United States is a potent symbolic figure in American culture, and so it is not surprising that American political dramas often revolve around it. Nor is entertainment just entertainment in this context. “[H]owever seemingly trivial films and television programs featuring fictional presidents in prominent roles appear to be, they play a vital and significant role in articulating what characteristics people look for in a commander in chief,” writes film and television scholar Gregory Frame (xi). Measured against the political reality of the United States, Tom Kirkman, the fictional president of **Designated Survivor**, is rather uncharacteristic: he is not a career politician, he is a president who did not run for the office, and as far as party affiliation goes, he is an independent. Having premiered on ABC in 2016, **Designated Survivor** creates a presidential scenario which is almost a complete opposite to the one developed in **House of Cards**, one of the most successful contemporary political dramas on television. Instead of presenting politics as a fundamentally ruthless and unscrupulous business, **Designated Survivor** shows a president whose primary aspiration is ethical politics guided by human decency. Portrayed by Kiefer Sutherland, whose characterization in his role as federal agent Jack Bauer in the hit series **24** creates a telling contrast to the ethos of Tom Kirkman (Frame xiv), the presidential character of **Designated Survivor** functions as a thought experiment. Over its three seasons, and in the final season in particular, the show poses the question whether and in how far it is possible to maintain idealistic values when placed in the simultaneously powerful and constrained position of an American President. These and other themes will be explored in this talk.

Dr. Svetlana Seibel is a postdoctoral research associate in North American Literary and Cultural Studies at Saarland University and coordinator of the certificate study program “Applied Pop Studies.”



The Bridge – Die Brücke (2013–2014)

Creators: Elwood Reid, Björn Stein, Meredith Stiehm

Referentin: Prof. Dr. Astrid M. Fellner

Dienstag | 03.12.2024 | 19:00 Uhr

Brücken, Grenzen, Kriminalfälle: Zwei TV Serien, die grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit von Kriminalisten und Kriminalistinnen in den Vordergrund stellen. Die Handlung der US-amerikanischen Krimiserie **The Bridge** – America (2013) von Meredith Stiehm und Elwood Reid spielt auf der Brücke zwischen El Paso und Ciudad Juárez. Die Serie basiert auf der dänisch-schwedisch-deutschen Krimiserie **Die Brücke** (2011–2018), deren Hauptschauplatz die Öresundbrücke ist, die das schwedische Malmö und die dänische Stadt Kopenhagen verbindet. An der „Bridge of the Americas“ im berühmtesten amerikanisch-mexikanischen Grenzgebiet zwischen El Paso und Juárez ermittelt die amerikanische Ermittlerin Sonya Cross (Diane Kruger) gemeinsam mit ihrem mexikanischen Kollegen Marcelo Ruiz (Démian Bichir) im Fall eines Serienkillers. Dieser Vortrag führt in die Welt der grenzüberschreitenden popkulturellen Kriminalistik ein und versucht beide Krimiserien vor dem Hintergrund der internationalen Zusammenarbeit zu analysieren.

Prof. Dr. Astrid M. Fellner ist Professorin für Nordamerikanische Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft an der Universität des Saarlandes und Leiterin des interdisziplinären Kompetenzzentrums „UniGR-Center for Border Studies“ am Standort Saarbrücken. Sie lehrt kulturwissenschaftliche Grenzforschung und ist Mitbegründerin des trilingualen und trilingualen Master Border Studies. Ihre Bücher und Aufsätze beschäftigen sich mit Border Studies, U.S.-Latino/a Literaturen, Populäre Kulturen, kanadische Literatur und Gender/Queer Studies.



South Park (1997–)

Creators: Trey Parker, Matt Stone

Referentin: Danielle Kopf-Giammanco

Dienstag | 10.12.2024 | 19:00 Uhr

Coloradans Trey Parker and Matt Stone's brainchild, **South Park**, is a satirical, animated sitcom that often ventures into dark, surreal, and scatological (toilet) humor. Parker and Stone also frequently include Colorado-specific insider knowledge and humor, making it seem as if they are directly speaking to fellow Coloradans. During its twenty-six seasons, it has followed the lives of four elementary school children growing up in a fictional Colorado mountain town, South Park. The show has been largely a success in terms of ratings and awards despite (or perhaps because of) its relatively low budget animation, as well as quick script writing. Most episodes revolve around contemporary, politicized issues from a moral or common-sense perspective, which are often juxtaposed. In pitting morality and popular political rhetoric against each other, **South Park** is well acquainted with controversy as they are not afraid to insult, troll, and gaslight their audience. For broadcasting regulations, Hollywood norms, and those focused on 'polite society,' **South Park** is the sitcom version of a clever, but cantankerous child holding their finger one centimeter away; still not touching you. The show's consistent challenge to broadcasting censorship and political correctness has had a lasting cultural impact on both the internet and traditional media.

Danielle Kopf-Giammanco is the Coordinator for English at the Writing Center at Saarland University and teaches writing. She is also currently working on her PhD dissertation which focuses on American true crime television narratives in the late twentieth century in North American Literary and Cultural Studies.

Alle Veranstaltungen um 19:00 Uhr im Kino achteinhalb
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