



"I'LL BE BACK!"

THE MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES OF ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

Lecturer: Univ.-Prof. Dr. Stefan L. Brandt

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Room and Time: SR 34 D2 · Thu, 13:30-15:00

First session: October 10, 2013

Course number: SE 512.252

Course description: Throughout his film career, Arnold Schwarzenegger has shown a remarkable capability of transforming into different personalities and transcending genre conventions. While his early American films, for example, *Conan the Barbarian* (1981) and *Red Sonja* (1985), capitalized upon Schwarzenegger's reputation as a muscle man (acquired from his work as a professional bodybuilder and Mister Universe), later movies presented him in a relatively wide range of character roles, especially in the comedy sector. The latter phase includes the box office successes *Twins* (1988), *Kindergarten Cop* (1990), *True Lies* (1994), and *Junior* (1994). Many of his appearances offer ironic references to his real-life activities and diverse political engagements. Probably more than with other actors, Schwarzenegger's public image – as 'modern Hercules' and 'The Governator' – became intermingled with his cinematic performances. Prominent examples include documentaries and reports about the Austrian American actor as well as his most influential comedies, action thrillers and science fiction flicks.

Methods: This is an interactive course. Participation in group discussions as well as contributions to the discussion forum on Moodle will be part of the final grade. Each meeting will be held by 'experts' who organize the sessions by means of questions, games, illustrations, video clips and group work. The most essential facts will be conveyed in a short information block. The experts will provide the other students with three questions in the discussion forum to be posted at least ten days before the session.

Aims: The course aims to develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of Arnold Schwarzenegger within American cultural practice.

Assessment: Regular attendance; active in-class participation; presentation as part of an expert session with two-page handout (to be uploaded in PDF form) and three online questions; at least eight entries in the discussion forum; mid-term assignment of three- and final paper of twelve pages.

Grading: Attendance, participation, discussion entries (1/3); expert sessions (1/3); mid-term & final paper (1/3).

Syllabus

Oct. 10 **Introduction – Why Study Arnold?**

Basic texts (recommended):

Michael Butter, et al., "On the Cultural Significance of Arnold Schwarzenegger" (2011).¹

Oct. 17 **No Class!**

Oct. 24 **The Immigrant – *Hercules in New York* (1970)**

Additional text: Günter Bischof & Philipp Strobl, "California Dreaming: Arnold Schwarzenegger as the Quintessential American Immigrant" (2011).

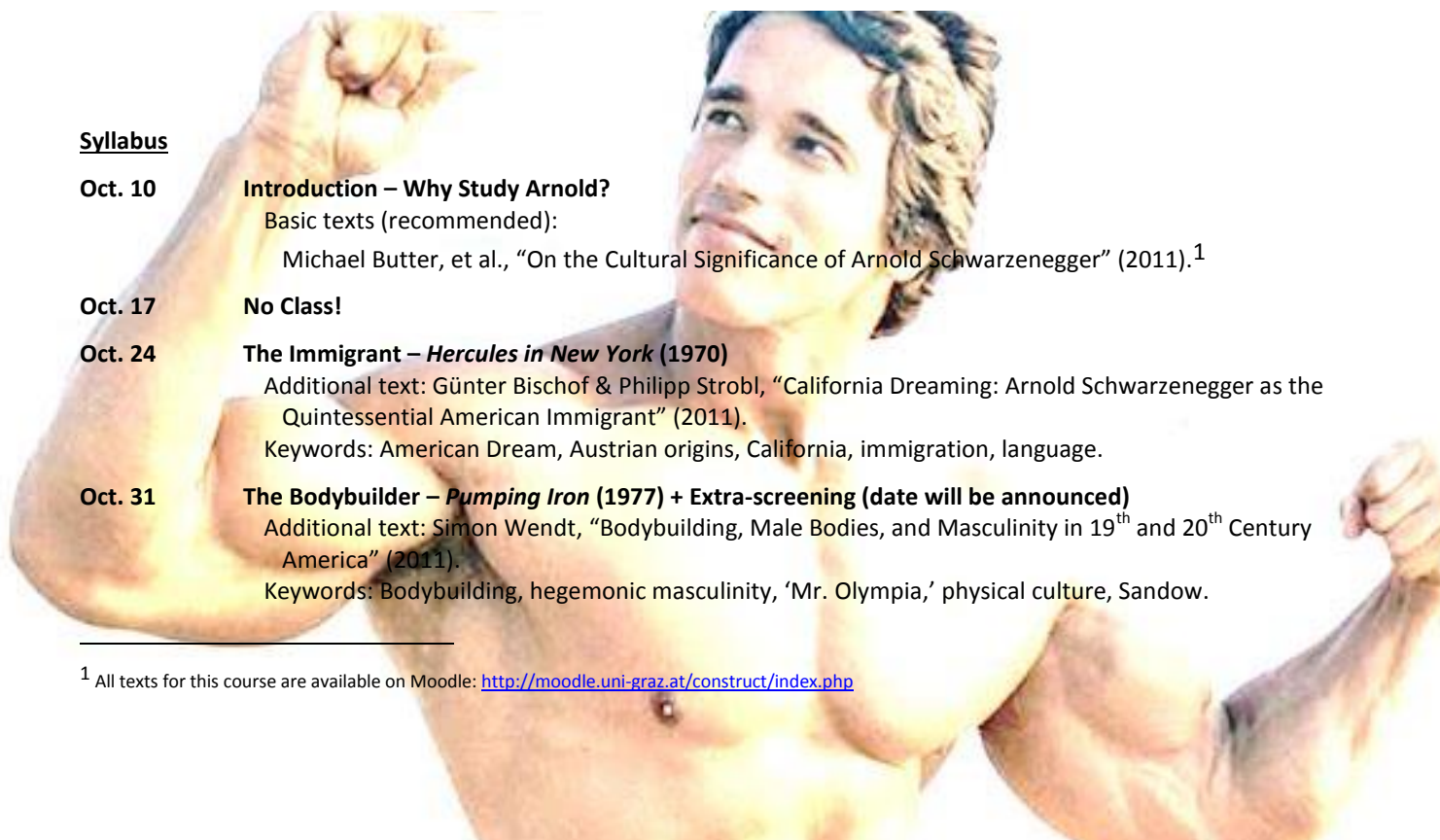
Keywords: American Dream, Austrian origins, California, immigration, language.

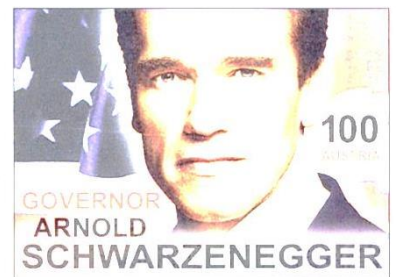
Oct. 31 **The Bodybuilder – *Pumping Iron* (1977) + Extra-screening (date will be announced)**

Additional text: Simon Wendt, "Bodybuilding, Male Bodies, and Masculinity in 19th and 20th Century America" (2011).

Keywords: Bodybuilding, hegemonic masculinity, 'Mr. Olympia,' physical culture, Sandow.

¹ All texts for this course are available on Moodle: <http://moodle.uni-graz.at/construct/index.php>





- Nov. 7** **The Movie Star – *Conan the Barbarian* (1981)**
 Additional text: Julian Hanich, “Mr. Schnitzelicious, the Muscle Man” (2011).
 Keywords: Gender, identification, *Predator*, self-empowerment, somatic empathy.
- Nov. 14** **The Machine – *The Terminator* (1984)**
 Additional text: Lisa Gotto, “On the Mediality of Arnold Schwarzenegger’s Cinematically Built Bodies” (2011).
 Keywords: Cyborg, ‘human vs. machine’, robots, ‘self vs. other’, technology.
- Nov. 21** **The Comedian – *Twins* (1989)**
 Additional text: Michael Butter, “From Rough Guy to Family Guy – The Transformation of Arnold Schwarzenegger’s Star Persona” (2011).
 Keywords: Character transformation, image, *Kindergarten Cop*, star cult.
- Nov. 28** **The Action Hero – *Total Recall* (1990) + Extra-screening (date will be announced)**
 Additional text: Frank Grady, “Autobiography in the Schwarzenegger Action Film” (2003).
 Keywords: Action genre, amnesia, Cold War, ecology, *Red Heat*, technology.
- Deadline for mid-term assignment –
- Dec. 5** **The Postmodern Hero – *True Lies* (1994)**
 Additional text: Dave Saunders, “Man of Irony,” from *Schwarzenegger and the Movies* (2009).
 Keywords: Intertextuality, *Last Action Hero*, ‘reality vs. fiction,’ stereotyping.
- Dec. 12** **Excursion to the Arnold Schwarzenegger Museum in Thal**
- Dec. 19** **The Family Guy – *Jingle Bells* (1996)**
 Additional text: Lisa Gotto, “On the Mediality of Arnold Schwarzenegger’s Cinematically Built Bodies” (2011).
 Keywords: Christmas, Consumerism, family values, Maria Shriver, toy metaphor.
- Jan. 9** **The Savior – *The End of Days* (1999)**
 Additional text: Rüdiger Heinze, “Conformist Rebels and Popular Outsiders” (2011).
 Keywords: Apocalypse, Christianity, *The 6th Day*, redemption, religious symbols, Satan.
- Jan. 16** **The Conservative – *Collateral Damage* (2003) + Extra-screening (date will be announced)**
 Additional text: P. Keller, “Images of California Conservatism: Schwarzenegger and Political Ideology” (2011).
 Keywords: Conservatism, fear, globalism, loss, revenge, terrorism.
- Jan. 23** **The Governor – *The Last Stand* (2013)**
 Additional text: Michael A. Messner, “The Masculinity of the Governor” (2007).
 Keywords: Aging, borders, ‘good vs. evil,’ ideology, loner, politics.
- Deadline for final paper –



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