

## **‘American’ Women and Their Cultural Representation From the Seventeenth Through the Twenty-First Century**

**Teacher Seminar, 3 February 2012**

**Speaker: Prof. Dr. Udo Hebel,  
Professur für Amerikanistik, Universität Regensburg**

Organizer: Amerika-Haus-Bibliothek, B.A.Z. Amerika-Haus

Registration fee: € 10

From the first literary and visual renderings of women in America in seventeenth-century texts and paintings to recent controversies over supposedly improper depictions of Michelle Obama, representations of ‘American’ women – and the discussion and assessment of these representations – have been indicative of cultural, social, and political developments in America. From Puritan ‘good wives’ and ‘republican mothers’ to twentieth-century flappers, suburban housewives, and contemporary media celebrities, the construction of ‘American’ womanhood and of ‘American’ women has been a seminal part of the multivocal, frequently contested formulation of American ideologies and identities. The seminar will give an overview of dominant cultural conceptions and ideologies – and their challenges and critiques by dissenting women (and men) – in regard to what ‘American’ women were expected to be like from colonial times through the women’s movements of more recent times. We will look at literary and visual representations of prototypical ‘American’ women, mothers, daughters, grandmothers etc. and explore representations of specific groups such as, e.g., pioneer women, immigrant women, women artists, suburban women, first ladies, women soldiers, African American (and other ethnic) women, women politicians and activists, media celebrities, etc. The format of the seminar will be a ppt-based lecture with ongoing plenary discussion.

- 9 – 10:30      ‘American’ Women and Their Cultural and Political Positions from Colonial Times through the Immediate Present
- 10:30 – 11:00      Coffee Break
- 11:00 – 13:00      Discussion of materials for teaching from the fields of American literature, photography/fine arts, film/TV series, popular music.