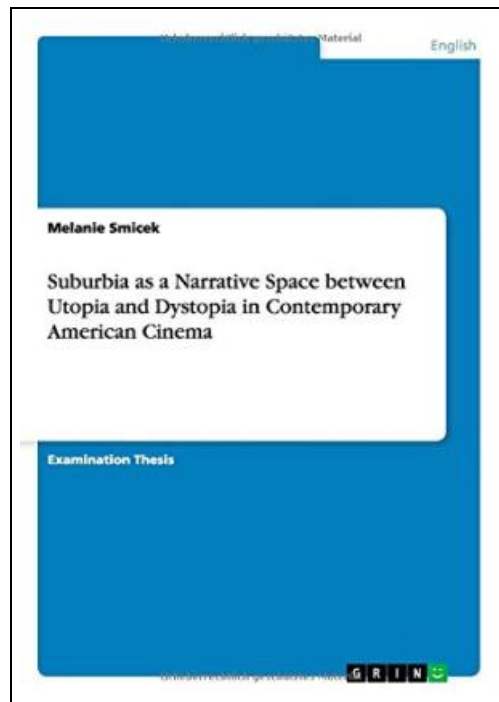


## Suburbia as a Narrative Space between Utopia and Dystopia in Contemporary American Cinema



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## SUBURBIA AS A NARRATIVE SPACE BETWEEN UTOPIA AND DYSTOPIA IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN CINEMA



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GRIN Verlag Jun 2014, 2014. Taschenbuch. Condition: Neu. Neuware - Examination Thesis from the year 2012 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Other, grade: 1,0, University of Cologne, language: English, abstract: [Suburbia] has become the quintessential physical achievement of the United States; it is perhaps more representative of its culture than big cars, tall buildings, or professional football. Suburbia symbolizes the fullest, most unadulterated embodiment of contemporary culture. As Kenneth Jackson notes in his price-winning chronicle *Crabgrass Frontier*, the suburban landscape has become inseparable from American culture within the last two centuries. Nowadays living in the suburbs is the norm for most Americans, as since the 1990s, more than two third of the population lives in suburban districts. The term suburbia does not only relate to the geographical concept that differentiates these dwellings from urban or rural areas, but also describes a cultural, ideological space incorporating Americans' hopes for an economically safe and prosperous family life. Closely tied to the history and culture of the USA, suburbia marks a dynamic ideological space that is constantly influenced and recreated by both the events of everyday life and artistic discourse. Thus, the depiction of suburban life functions as a central narrative element in numerous works of American literature, art and film. In this context, fictional texts do not merely represent suburbia, but also have a decisive role in the shaping of suburban spaces. The treatment of suburbia as a cultural space in American movies is of special interest, as their commercial success and popularity make films important cultural texts. As Spigel notes, 'television and new media redirect our experience of private and public spheres' and therefore highly influence our perceptions of the spaces we inhabit. Regarding suburban landscapes, this aspect is particularly interesting because the inexorable rise of the...



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