

English 98: Junior Tutorial
Spring 2017
Time/Location: TBD

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Office hours: TBD

WWII and the Work of Memory

Description

How do individual and collective memories shape WWII's afterlives in culture and politics? The 1980s-90s coalesced a "memory boom": a transnational rise in memory work delving into the events and sufferers of 20th century atrocities. Collective memory centered on memorializing World War II – particularly, the Holocaust and the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings. Memory work in part shifts these two realities from their immediate contexts to fuel imaginaries of peace, human rights, nuclear nonproliferation, and justice widely held in common by global public norms and policies. Through a variety of cultural works and sociopolitical effects, these events have come to bear expectations and burdens, as symbols of universal inhumanities that successive generations should ensure never again occur.

To take up the task of exploring what memory (and forgetting) at different collective and individual scales does to and for WWII's afterlives, our tutorial will constellate a selection of novels, graphic novels, narrative nonfiction, essays, and film. Focusing on works speaking to the Holocaust and the bombings, and readings from psychoanalysis, memory studies, cultural theory, etc., we aim to identify a range of theoretical frames, literary genres, and artistic forms for interpreting how collective remembrance of trauma is constructed. How does memory form through literature and culture both intimately connected to and decoupled from nation-states? What types of narratives emerge and spread? Is global collective memory even possible? How does fiction question how memory operates and how history is conveyed? (NB: *Some readings may change over the semester as students' interests develop.*)

Required Texts

* Readings with an asterisk will be uploaded online, or copies will be handed out in advance.

Austerlitz, W.G. Sebald
Maus I, Art Spiegelman
Pnin, Vladimir Nabokov
At the Mind's Limits, Jean Améry
Eichmann in Jerusalem, Hannah Arendt
The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay, Michael Chabon
An Artist of the Floating World, Kazuo Ishiguro
Burnt Shadows, Kamila Shamsie
Hiroshima, John Hersey
The Windup Bird Chronicle, Haruki Murakami, trans. Jay Rubin
Hiroshima Mon Amour, screenplay Marguerite Duras, dir. Alain Resnais
Waiting for the Barbarians, J.M. Coetzee (**or text of choice**)

Recommended Texts

The Craft of Research, Booth, Colomb, Williams and *Revising Prose*, Lapham

Goals

To introduce the discipline and practice of English literary studies at an upper-division level, & to write 20-25pp research paper in preparation for an honors thesis. You will be able to:

- Design a research question
- Develop a critical bibliography around that question, including diverse methods and viewpoints
- Put secondary criticism in conversation with a your own ideas and with other criticism
- Write with greater clarity and precision

Course-specific goal: to reflect critically on the ways in which literary approaches centered on memory, trauma, psychoanalysis, and historicism, along with broad questions of representation, historiography, ethics, and epistemology, engage works centered on the Holocaust and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Assignments

- *Thoughtful participation* (10%): Students will be responsible for introducing (5-7 min. short presentation) selected secondary readings each week (starting **Week 2**).
- *Short paper* (10%): Due **Week 5**. 5-7pp close reading of a primary text (followed by a conference with the tutor).
- *Prospectus and annotated bibliography* (10%): Due **Week 6**. 2pp prospectus, 8-10 sources.
- *Short assignments* (10%): To help you think about your essay at a steady pace throughout the semester. Includes topics of interest list for library session, glossary and summary exercises, Department Writing Fellow meeting, presentation, draft revision workshop. Details TBD.
- *Full draft* (20%): Due **Week 11, [DATE]**, to course site and hard copy to tutor's box (2nd floor Barker).
- *Final paper* (40%): 20-25pp, due **Week 14, [DATE]**. Submit to tutor and department by 5pm. **If you do not turn in a final paper, you will not pass the tutorial.**

Schedule

- Week 1** *Introduction: the Holocaust and WWII. Questions of representation, knowledge, ethics?*
Read together in class excerpts: from *The Holocaust and Memory in a Global Age*, Daniel Levy & Natan Sznaider and from *At the Mind's Limits*, Jean Améry. Presentation sign-up sheet circulated.
- Week 2** *The stakes of trauma and memory studies, key terms?*
Primary: Austerlitz, W.G. Sebald.
Secondary: Excerpt, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*, Cathy Caruth.
Excerpt, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*, James E. Young.
- Week 3** *Memory and the graphic novel. Testimony, postmemory, collective memory?*
Primary: *Maus Vol. I*, Art Spiegelman.
Secondary: "Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory," Marianne Hirsch, *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, 2001. *Excerpt, *The Past Within Us: Media, Memory, History*, Tessa Morris-Suzuki.

Assignments: List of potential research topics and interests due in class, in preparation for next week's library session.

- Week 4** *How do we ask good research questions?*
Primary: Library session with the English department research librarian.
Assignments: Start next week's reading, work on short paper.
- Week 5** *Mourning, melancholia, psychoanalytical approaches?*
Primary: *Pnin*, Vladimir Nabokov.
Secondary: *"Mourning and Melancholia," Sigmund Freud.
Assignments: Short paper due.
- Week 6** *Paratexts and exploring reception, book history, culture industry, new historicism?*
Primary: *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*, Michael Chabon.
Secondary: Paratexts: Dark Horse Comics and short stories. "The Joys and Perils of Victimhood," Ian Buruma, *New York Review of Books*, 1999. Excerpt, "Towards a Poetics of Culture," Stephen Greenblatt.
Assignments: 2pp prospectus and annotated bibliography (8-10 sources) due. Email to everyone in the tutorial and me.
- Week 7** *Major critiques of memory studies. "Coming to terms" and forgetting/ amnesia?*
Primary: *An Artist of the Floating World*, Kazuo Ishiguro.
Secondary: "What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean?" Theodor Adorno.
Assignment: Short assignment due TBD. We will also spend part of the session workshopping prospectuses and bibliographies.
- Week 8** *Journalism and narrative nonfiction. The 'limits' of the novel?*
Primary: Selections from *Hiroshima*, John Hersey and *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Hannah Arendt.
Secondary: Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller."
- Week 9** *Identity politics and 'ressentiment'?*
Primary: *Burnt Shadows*, Kamila Shamsie.
Secondary: "Wounded Attachments," Wendy Brown, *Political Theory*, 1993.
- Week 10** *Nuclear culture, loss, and the "fabulously textual" bomb?*
Primary: *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, dir. Alain Resnais.
Secondary: "No Apocalypse, Not Now (Full Speed Ahead, Seven Missiles, Seven Missives)," Jacques Derrida, trans. Catherine Porter and Philip Lewis, *Diacritics*, 1984.
Assignments: Full draft due in class.
- Week 11** *Temporality and the "dialectics of memory"?*
Primary: *The Windup Bird Chronicle*, Haruki Murakami, trans. Jay Rubin.
Secondary: Judith Butler, "After Loss, What Then?" Excerpt, Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces*.
- Week 12** *'Global' memory and contemporary human rights discourses?*

Primary: Waiting for the Barbarians, J.M. Coetzee (or text of choice).
Secondary: Excerpt, Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization, Michael Rothberg, 2009.

Week 13 Presentations and draft revision workshops.

Week 14 Department junior tutorial conference, [DATE].

Final 20-25 pp. tutorial papers due in the middle of reading period, [MAY X]. Submit your paper via email and a hard copy to the department by 5pm.

Policies

Personal Electronic Devices: Not allowed in class, unless you need something for a presentation or otherwise have obtained permission in advance.

Academic Integrity: Familiarize yourself with Harvard FAS's Honor Code. If you have questions about anything related to citations, plagiarism, etc. or aren't sure, please ask. Check out the [Harvard Guide to Using Sources](#) and [Literary Research at Harvard](#).

Collaboration Policy: You are encouraged to talk with other students about the course and its readings, and to read each other's work. In individual assignments, academic collaboration and external sources should be always cited.

Attendance: Your tutorial attendance is vital to your own success as well as to the success of the class as a whole – so is attendance of Junior Tutorial General Meetings and other required events. I will allow each student a “free” tutorial absence to be used in case of sickness, travel, etc.: no explanation necessary. Missing more than one class will decrease your participation grade; excessive absence could result in failing the course. Also, being late really disrupts the work we're doing together: 2 lates = 1 absence. If you have attenuating circumstances, communicate with me in a timely manner so that we can discuss how to deal with it.

Deadlines and Extensions: Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due by 11:59pm on the date listed in the schedule. Late assignments will be docked 1/3 letter grade per day late, except for the final paper, which must be turned in by the due date. Students failing to turn in a final paper, or turning it in late without an official excuse, will fail the tutorial. If, well in advance of an assignment, you expect you will need an extension, please talk with me.

Email: The course email list and Canvas site will be used to distribute important info throughout the semester—from distributing handouts to adjusting assignments and deadlines. I'll usually respond to emails within 24 hours, but mark time-sensitive or urgent emails in the subject.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: *“Students needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a documented disability must present their Faculty Letter from the [Accessible Education Office](#) (AEO) and speak with the professor by the end of the second week of the term. Failure to do so may result in the Course Head's inability to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential, although Faculty are invited to contact AEO to discuss appropriate implementation.”*