

FS 2022 – M.A. Seminar
Trauma and Memory Culture
Prof. Elisabeth Bronfen
Wednesday 16.15 – 18.00

This research seminar will offer a transhistorical exploration of theoretical and literary entanglements of trauma and cultural memory. We will focus on three sites: Herman Melville's literary works as an aesthetic reflection on the traumatic core at the heart of the American national project; Sigmund Freud's discussion of the traumatic aetiology of hysteria and the way *Westworld* rethinks his psychoanalytic model; and Hannah Arendt's philosophical engagement with the traumatic history of the holocaust in her report on the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem and the critical debate this engendered.

Texts marked with an * will be made available on OLAT.

The course will be conducted in **hybrid form**. While each session will meet in person, there is the option of joining the class on-line.

- (1) Feb 23 **Meet and Greet in person:** Introductions and course organization

TRAUMA AND THE AMERICAN NATION

- (2) Mar 2 **Cathy Caruth.** From *Unclaimed Experience. Trauma, Narrative, and History*: "Introduction", "Unclaimed Experience" "Traumatic Departures" and "Traumatic Awakenings"*
Ruth Leys. From *Trauma. A Genealogy*: "The Pathos of the Literal: Trauma and the Crisis of Representation"*

- (3) Mar 9 **Herman Melville.** "Benito Cereno"*

- (4) Mar 16 **Herman Melville.** *Moby Dick or The Whale*

- (5) Mar 23 **Herman Melville.** *Moby Dick or The Whale*

TRAUMA AND HYSTERIA

- (6) Mar 30 **Josef Breuer & Sigmund Freud.** From *Studies on Hysteria*: "The Mechanism of Hysterical Phenomena" and "Fräulein O."*
Elisabeth Bronfen. From *The Knotted Subject. Hysteria and its Discontents*: excerpt from "Navel Inversions" (pp. 32-42) and from "Medicine's Hysteria Romance" (pp. 101-118)*

- (7) Apr 13 **Sigmund Freud.** "Fragments of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria"*
Elisabeth Bronfen. From *The Knotted Subject. Hysteria and its Discontents*: excerpt from "You Freud, Me Jane: Alfred Hitchcock's Marnie, the Case History Revisited" (pp. 332-343)*

- (8) Apr 27 **Lisa Joy & Jonathan Nolan.** *WESTWORLD*, Season 1.

- (9) May 4 **Lisa Joy & Jonathan Nolan.** *WESTWORLD*, Season 2.

TRAUMA AND THE HOLOCAUST

- (10) May 11 **Hannah Arendt.** *Eichmann in Jerusalem. A Report on the Banality of Evil*
- (11) May 18 **Shoshana Felman.** From *The Juridical Unconscious*: “Introduction” and “Theaters of Justice: Arendt in Jerusalem, the Eichmann Trial, and the Redefinition of Legal Meaning in the Wake of the Holocaust”*
- (12) June 1 **Anne Michaels.** *Fugitive Piece*

Course Requirements

Portfolio (40% of final grade)

Forum Posts: All students must write a forum post for 10 of the seminar sessions (approx. 400 words), to be posted on the course’s OLAT forum by 9 a.m. on Tuesday of the respective week. Contributions should entail a thesis, but could also contain a series of questions, comments, or associations. This should not only help you practice your argumentative skills, but also facilitates class discussion by allowing us to see in what directions you have been thinking while preparing for each session. The point is not to read out what you have written but, using what you have developed in writing, to engage in a dialogue with the other members of the class. Please note that thesis papers that are not posted on time will not be counted towards your portfolio grade.

Short Research Paper or Visual Research Essay: Students will do background research on the subject of the session assigned to them and compile this research in a short essay (1250-2000 words). This can also be a visual essay (max. 5 min.). You will be asked to speak to the content of your research in the corresponding session. Students will be asked to sign up for a session via the OLAT forum at the beginning of the semester. A final version of the research paper should be sent as a PDF/transfer link for the visual essay to morgane.ghilardi@es.uzh.ch one week after the session.

Handing in your portfolio: At the end of the semester, please compile your forum posts and your short research essay using the template provided on OLAT. You should send your portfolio as a PDF by **June 3, 2022** to morgane.ghilardi@es.uzh.ch.

Final Essay (60% of final grade)

All students must hand in an essay (approx. 8000 words) which should evolve from the materials read and viewed in this research seminar, while taking the class discussion into an original direction. The paper must be handed in by **October 1, 2022**. The essay should comply with the MLA style and format guidelines (i.e. be typed in a **12p serif font**, 1.5-spaced, **ample margins** for comments by the instructor, and have a title page).

Hand in a **hardcopy** of your essay to Prof. Bronfen’s pigeonhole and send a **PDF** version (incl. *Selbstständigkeitserklärung*) to morgane.ghilardi@es.uzh.ch.

A Preliminary Bibliography

- Assmann, Aleida. *Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses*. Beck Verlag, 1999.
- Bond, Lucy and Stef Craps. *Trauma*. Routledge, 2019.
- Caruth, Cathy (ed.). *Trauma. Explorations in Memory*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
- Davis, Colin and Hanna Meretoja (eds). *The Routledge Companion of Literature and Trauma*. Routledge, 2020.
- Felman, Shoshana and Dori Laub. *Testimony. Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*. Routledge, 1992.
- Herman, Judith. *Trauma and Recovery*. Basic Books, 2015.
- Illouz, Eva. "The Melodrama of the Self". *Melodrama After the Tears: New Perspectives on Politics of Victimhood*. Edited by Scott Loren and Jörg Metelmann. Amsterdam University Press, 2016.
- Kaplan, E. Ann. *Trauma Culture: The Politics of Terror and Loss in Media and Literature*. Rutgers University Press, 2005.
- Kurtz, J. Roger. *Trauma and Literature*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- Pollock, Griselda. *After-Affects / After-Images. Trauma and Aesthetic Transformation in the Virtual feminist Museum*. Manchester University Press 2013.
- Vinci, Tony M. *Ghost, Android, Animal: Trauma and Literature Beyond the Human*. Routledge 2021.