

FS 2021 – M.A. Seminar
The Pandemic Archive
Prof. Elisabeth Bronfen
Thursday 16.15 – 18.00

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

(1) Feb 25 Meet and Greet: “The Revelation of St. John the Divine”. *The New Testament*
(Preferably *The King James Bible*)

(2) Mar 4 Albert Camus, *La Peste/ The Plague* (1947)

HISTORIC LITERARY PANDEMICS

(3) Mar 11 Daniel Defoe, *A Journal of the Plague Year* (1722)

(4) Mar 18 Mary Shelley, *The Last Man* (1826)

(5) Mar 25 Katherine Anne Porter, “Pale Horse, Pale Rider”* (1939)

GOTHIC PANDEMICS

(6) Apr 15 Edgar Allan Poe, “The Masque of the Red Death”* (1842) and
Roger Corman’s cinematic adaptation, *The Masque of the Red Death* (1964)

(7) Apr 22 F.W. Murnau, *Nosferatu. Symphonie des Grauens* (1922)

(8) Apr 29 George A. Romero, *Dawn of the Dead* (1978)

CINEMATIC OUTBREAK NARRATIVES

(9) May 6 *Outbreak*, Wolfgang Petersen (1995)

(10) May 20 *Contagion*, Steven Soderbergh (2011)

CONTEMPORARY LITERARY PANDEMICS

(11) May 27 Ling Ma, *Severance* (2018)

(12) June 3 Lawrence Wright, *The End of October* (2020)

Preparatory Materials

- Blumenberg, Hans. "Infektion als absolute Metapher." *Begriffe in Geschichten*. Suhrkamp, 1998, pp. 93-95.
- Bronfen, Elisabeth. *Angesteckt. Zeitgemässes über Pandemie und Kultur*. Echtzeit, 2020.
- Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and its Discontents* (1939). W.W. Norton & Co., 2010.
- Haraway, Donna. *Staying with the Trouble. Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke UP, 2016.
- Horn, Eva. *Zukunft als Katastrophe. Diktion und Prävention*. Fischer, 2020.
- Sontag, Susan. *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors*. Picador, 2001.
- Strowick, Elisabeth. *Sprechende Körper – Poetik der Ansteckung. Performativa in Literatur und Rhetorik*. Willhelm Fink Verlag, 2007.
- Wald, Priscilla. *Contagious: Cultures, Carriers, and the Outbreak Narrative*. Duke UP, 2008.

Course Requirements

Portfolio

Forum Posts

All students must prepare write a forum post **for 10 of the seminar sessions** (approx. 400 words), to be posted on the OLAT forum by 9 a.m. on Wednesday of the respective week. Each post should entail a **thesis**, but could also contain a series of questions, comments or associations. It should present an argument; indeed, it should help you practice your skills at argumentation. At the same time, it will facilitate class discussion and allow 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 enter into a dialog with the other members of the class. The thesis papers will count towards your portfolio and, thus, are compulsory. Please note that thesis papers that are not posted on time will not be counted towards your points, i.e. portfolio grade.

Short Research Paper

Students will do background research on the subject of session and compile this research in a short essay (1250-2000 words). They will be asked to speak to the content of their research **in the corresponding session**. A final version of the research paper should be sent as a PDF **one week after the session** to morgane.ghilardi@es.uzh.ch.

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**. Students should send their portfolio as a PDF by **June 4, 2021** to morgane.ghilardi@es.uzh.ch. The portfolio accounts for **40% of the final grade**.

Final Seminar Essay

All students must hand in an essay (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, 2021**. The essay should be typed in a 12p serif font, double spaced, and have a title page. Hand in your essay as a PDF (incl. *Selbstständigkeitserklärung*) to morgane.ghilardi@es.uzh.ch. The portfolio accounts for **60% of the final grade**. If you would like to discuss your thesis and outline before writing your essay, you can get in touch with Prof. Elisabeth Bronfen or one of her assistants, Morgane Ghilardi and Mansi Tiwari.