

Trauma, Memory, and Identity
Sociology (920:570)

Trauma and Theory
Women's and Gender Studies (988:525)

Fall 2006

Mondays 1:10 – 3:50/4:10

Lucy Stone Hall, Room A 256, Livingston (September – October)

Ruth Dill Johnson Crockett Bldg. Room 011, Douglass (November – December)

This is a co-taught, cross-listed course. Students may register under either number. The seminar content and procedures are identical in all instances. The class meets for half of the semester in Room A256, LSH, Livingston Campus and for the other half in Room 011, RDJC Bldg., Douglass Campus.

Instructors:

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Course Overview:

"Trauma" and "memory" have become key words across several fields of inquiry. The burgeoning scholarship on the Holocaust, narratives of survivors and perpetrators, recovered/repressed memories, disease, natural disasters, and the politics of commemoration and memorialization exemplify a growing interest in questions of trauma and memory. This course examines trauma and memory as rooted in both individual and collective forms of identity, and subject to the interventions of cultural and political movements.

What exactly constitutes trauma remains a vexed question, complicated by an increasing awareness that those who experience trauma are often unable or unwilling to acknowledge or speak it. As a consequence, the literatures on trauma include the testimonies of survivors and perpetrators but also those who suffer along with them or in their aftermath, and raise methodological issues of validity and reliability of the evidence available.

Questions of memory are also complex. Memory is never automatic nor a direct or exact recollection of the past, let alone a traumatic past. People remember as members of groups, and thus collective relationships to a trauma shape the ways people remember, forget, and deny. Memories of trauma are located in time, both historical and generational as well as place. Yet time and place do not convey essential or absolute characteristics, and thus the form and content of memory is always subject to change. Nonetheless we recognize that patterns and institutional forms of memory exist, and we pay particular attention to the public expressions and uses of traumatic memory, as well as forgiveness, restitution, and reconciliation.

Our seminar begins with these concerns and relies on a variety of approaches -- sociological, feminist, cultural, and discourse analyses to name some of the primary ones. We read a range of literatures given our assumption that by working in multiple disciplines and attending to various forms of trauma and memory, our individual intellectual research projects will be

strengthened. At the same time, we scrutinize popular and intellectual practices, which presume some traumas are unique and not amenable to comparison and generalization.

We have organized the seminar in ways that require the active participation of all its members. Everyone must come to class having thoughtfully read and considered all the assigned readings for that week. In addition, each person will co-facilitate one seminar meeting with the instructor(s). This responsibility means that no later than 48 hours in advance of the seminar's start, student facilitators will email all class members a short (one- to two-page) analytic summary of the readings, followed by a list of suggested discussion questions or topics.

In addition, there is a final paper due at the end of the semester, which will enable people to explore their own particular research interests. We have reserved the class meeting on November 27th for oral presentations of these works-in-progress. Moreover, there is an ongoing series of earlier deadlines for developing your projects, which appears in the syllabus. All papers are due without exception on December 11th in class. No incomplete grades will be given and instead you will be graded on work completed during the regularly scheduled term. Both instructors will read all student work and be equally responsible for grading. Term grades will give near equal weight to the quality of your class participation, including facilitation, and the final paper, with the exact formula to be decided in each student's favor.

This syllabus is subject to revision.

Required Readings:

The following books are available for purchase from New Jersey Books, 108 Somerset Street, New Brunswick, NJ; telephone 732/828-7401.

**All other readings are posted on the course website at <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal/>, or they can be found on the web, as listed on the syllabus.

Alexander, Jeffrey, Ron Eyerman, Bernard Giesen, Neil J. Smelser and Piotr Sztompka. 2004. *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. Berkeley: University of California Press. ISBN 0520235959

Cohen, Stanley. 2001. *States of Denial: Knowing About Atrocities and Suffering*. Cambridge, UK: Polity. ISBN 0745623921.

Rogers, Kim Lacy and Selma Leydesdorff, eds. with Graham Dawson. 2004. *Trauma: Life Stories of Survivors*. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers. ISBN 0765808196

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

September 11 – Seminar Introduction and Overview (JG and AS)

The September 11 Digital Archive: Saving The Histories of September 11, 2001
<http://911digitalarchive.org/>

Sturken, Marita. "Memorializing Absence" <http://www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/sturken.htm>

September 18 - Collective Memory and Trauma (JG)

This week begins with some of the foundational texts on collective memory and then grapples with how best to conceptualize memory and trauma.

Hallbwachs, Maurice. 1992. Pp. 41-53 and 54-83 in Coser, Lewis. ed. and trans. *On Collective Memory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Nora, Pierre. 1989. "Between Memory and History." *Representations* 26:7-24.

Caruth, Cathy. 1996. "Introduction: Wound and Voice." Pp. 1-9 in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hirsch, Marianne and Valerie Smith. 2002. "Feminism and Cultural Memory: An Introduction." *Signs* 28:1-19.

Alexander, Jeffrey C. 2004. "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma." Pp. 1-30 and "On the Social Construction of Moral Universals: the 'Holocaust' from War Crime to Trauma Drama." Pp. 196-263 in Alexander, Jeffrey C., Ron Eyerman, Bernhard Giesen, Neil J. Smelser and Piotr Sztompka, eds. *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*.

Yaeger, Patricia. 2002. "Consuming Trauma; Or the Pleasures of Merely Circulating." Pp. 25-51 in Miller, Nancy K. and Jason Tougas, eds. *Extremities: Trauma, Testimony, and Community*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

September 25 - Trauma, Silence, and Denial (AS)

How perpetrators often deny or mask their actions, why survivors are often driven to be silent. How power shapes national narratives of forgetting, and individual choices to remain silent.

Cohen, Stanley. 2001. *States of Denial: Knowing About Atrocities and Suffering*, Pp. 1-139.

Leydesdorff, Selma, Graham Dawson, Natasha Burchardt and T. G. Ashplant. 2004. "Introduction: Trauma and Life Stories." Pp. 1-26 in Rogers, Kim and Selma Leydesdorff, eds. *Trauma: Life Stories of Survivors*.

Zur, Judith. 2004. "Remembering and Forgetting: Guatemalan War Widows' Forbidden Memories." Pp. 45-59 in Rogers, Kim and Selma Leydesdorff, eds. *Trauma: Life Stories of Survivors*

Dawson, Graham. 2004, "Trauma, Memory, Politics: The Irish Troubles." Pp. 180-204 in Rogers, Kim and Selma Leydesdorff, eds. *Trauma: Life Stories of Survivors*.

October 2 – No seminar meeting

**A preliminary statement of your research project is due on October 4th. Email a short project description to both instructors. We urge you to be as specific as possible and include citations to a few key reference works. If you remain undecided about your focus, provisionally we will accept ideas for two possible projects.

October 9 - Survivors of Trauma and the Remaking of the Self (AS)

Guest speakers: Nancy Isserman and Sherry Bowen, "Transcending Trauma" Project

Storytelling and witnesses in the reconstruction of selves after trauma. The unspeakability of certain stories. Stories' latent and manifest meanings.

Herman, Judith Lewis. 1992. "A New Diagnosis." Pp. 115-129 and "Remembrance and Mourning." Pp. 175-95 in *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, New York: Basic.

Susan Rose, "Naming and Reclaiming," pp160-179 in Rogers, Kim and Selma Leydesdorff, eds. *Trauma: Life Stories of Survivors*.

Sheryl Perlmutter Bowen and Juliet Spitzer, n.d. "Survivors Sometimes Tell Their Stories."

Wajnryb, Ruth. 1999. "The Holocaust as Unspeakable: Public Ritual versus Private Hell," *Journal of Intercultural Studies*: 20:81-93.

October 16 - The Meanings of Generational and Historical Time and Place (JG)

**Revised and expanded project statements are due by October 14. Please email your statements to all seminar members for discussion in class on the 16th.

If neither time nor place has essential meaning, how can we interpret their influence of traumatic memory?

Eyerman, Ron. 2004. "Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity." Pp. 60-111 in Alexander, Jeffrey, Ron Eyerman, Bernard Giesen, Neil J. Smelser and Piotr Sztompka. *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*.

Giesen, Bernard. 2004. "The Trauma of Perpetrators: The Holocaust as the Traumatic Reference of German National Identity." Pp. 112-54 in Alexander, Jeffrey, Ron Eyerman, Bernard Giesen, Neil J. Smelser and Piotr Sztompka. *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*.

Hirsch, Marianne. 2002. "Marked by Memory: Feminist Reflections on Trauma and Transmission." Pp. 71-91 in Miller, Nancy K. and Jason Tougas, eds. *Extremities: Trauma, Testimony, and Community*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Sicher, Efraim. 2000. "The Future of the Past: Counteremory and Postmemory in Contemporary American Post-Holocaust Narratives." *History and Memory* 12:56-91.

Malkki, Liisa H. 1995. "An Ethnography of Displacement in the National Order of Things." Pp. 1-17 *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

October 23 - Media, Social Distance and the Problem of Empathy (AS)

We will discuss the ways individuals and collectivities become bystanders, and how the mass media facilitates social distancing and "compassion fatigue." What are the prospects for breaking through this distance, to show empathy for those who are suffering?

Stanley Cohen, *States of Denial*, Pp. 140-248.

Leff, Laurel. "News of the Holocaust: Why FDR Didn't Tell and the Press Didn't Ask," http://varianfry.org/documents_english/leff_fdr_press.pdf

Power, Samantha. 2001. "Bystanders to Genocide: Why the US Let the Rwandan Tragedy Happen," *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 2001, pp. 84-108.

Kleinman, Arthur and Joan Kleinman. 1997. "The Appeal of Experience; The Dismay of Images: Cultural Appropriations of Suffering in Our Times." *Daedalus* 125:

October 30 - Gathering and Interpreting Evidence of Trauma (JG)

This week focuses on methodological issues. We emphasize data gathering and assess different forms of evidence.

Clark, Mary Marshall. 2002. "The September 11, 2001, Oral History Narrative and Memory Project: A First Report." *Journal of American History* 89:569-79.

Confino, Alan. 1997. "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method." *American Historical Review* 105:1386-1403.

Field, Sean 2004. "Interviewing in a Culture of Violence." Pp. 60 – 79 in Rogers, Kim and Selma Leydesdorff, eds. *Trauma: Life Stories of Survivors*.

Jacobs, Janet Liebman. 2004. "Women, Genocide and Memory: The Ethics of Feminist Ethnography in Holocaust Research." *Gender & Society* 18:223-38.

Kaplan, Temma. 2002. "Reversing the Shame and Gendering the Memory." *Signs* 28:179-99.

Laub, Dori. 1995. "Truth and Testimony: The Process and the Struggle." Pp. 61-76 in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Tec, Nachama. 1999. "Diaries and Oral History: Reflections on Methodological Issues in Holocaust Research." Pp. 267-76 in Shapiro, Robert Moses, ed. *Holocaust Chronicles: Individualizing the Holocaust through Diaries and Other Contemporaneous Personal Accounts*. Jersey City, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, Inc.

Young, Allan. 1995. "The Technology of Diagnosis," Pp. 145-175 in *The Harmony of Illusions: Inventing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Recommended lecture: November 2. Dr. Elizabeth Loftus, UC Irvine, "What's the Matter with Memory?" Rutgers Student Center, Multipurpose Room, 7:30pm.

November 6 - Analyzing Trauma Narratives (JG)

****Final Projects:** By November 4th, email all class members with a brief overview of your project and questions regarding your research. Are you looking for sources and need suggestions? Are you encountering problems not easily resolved? Now is the time to seek advice without penalty or prejudice.

This week's readings cover a range of interpretative issues including emphasis and repetition; cultural tropes and assumptions; absence, illusion and negation; comparison and generalizability among others. We analyze the content and form of a trial transcript from the Hague. We also read and listen in class to an oral testimony and interpret both narrative forms.

Welzer, Harald. 2005. "Grandpa Wasn't a Nazi: The Holocaust in Family Remembrance." American Jewish Committee.

Campbell, Kirsten. 2002. "Legal Memories: Sexual Assault, Memory and International Humanitarian Law." *Signs* 28:149-78.

International Criminal Tribunal for (the former) Yugoslavia (ICTY). The Foca Trials transcripts. <http://www.un.org/icty/foca/appeal/judgement/index.htm>

Gerson, Judith. "In Cuba I Was a German Shepherd: Notes on Comparison and Generalizability in Holocaust Memoirs." In Gerson, Judith and Diane Wolf, eds. *Sociology Confronts the Holocaust*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, forthcoming.

November 13 – Trauma Survivors and Political Claims-Making (AS)

Guest Speaker: Tom DeGloma, Department of Sociology, Rutgers University

How trauma survivors mobilize in different contexts and the kinds of claims they make; PTSD as a master narrative; debates surrounding the persistence of trauma through space and time.

Zerubavel, Eviatar. 2003. *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 1-5.

DeGloma, Thomas. n.d. Excerpt from "Narrating Social Illness in a Diagnostic World: PTSD and the Fusion of Sociological Thought with Psychiatric Discourse."

Kidron, Carol A. 2004. "Surviving a Distant Past: A Case Study of the Cultural Construction of Trauma Descendant Identity." *Ethos* 31: 513-44.

Sturken, Marita. 1999. "Narratives of Recovery: Repressed Memory as Cultural Memory," Pp. 231-48 in Bal, Mieke, Jonathan Crewe, and Leo Spitzer, eds. *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present* Hanover: Dartmouth/University of New England Press.

Horowitz, David. 2000. "10 Reasons Why Reparations For Blacks Are A Bad Idea For Blacks And Racist, Too" FrontPageMagazine.com: <http://www.frontpagemag.com/Articles/Printable.asp?ID=1098>

Browse the websites of:

The National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America: <http://ncobra.org/>

Vietnam Veterans Against War: <http://www.vvaw.org/>

Swift Boat Veterans for Truth: <http://www.swiftvets.com/index.php>

November 20 - Exhibiting Trauma: Museums and Memorialization (JG)

Guest speaker: Dr. Paul Williams, Program in Museum Studies, NYU

What is the intent of a memorial? How have different nations understood and memorialized their traumatic pasts? Who decides how and which traumatic pasts should be remembered? What makes a memorial meaningful or effective? How and when are memorials contested artifacts?

Huyssen, Andreas. 2000. "Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia." *Public Culture* 12:21-38.

Light, Duncan. 2000. "An Unwanted Past: Contemporary Tourism and the Heritage of Communism in Romania." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 6:145-60.

Phillips, Adam. 2005. "The Forgetting Museum." *Index on Censorship* 2:34-7.

Williams, Paul "The Atrocity Exhibition: Touring Cambodian Genocide Memorials" in *On Display: Essays in Cultural Tourism*, Wevers, L. & Smith, A. (eds), Victoria University Press & Fergus Barrowman, Wellington (2003), pp. 197-214.

Brower, Benjamin C. 1999. "The Preserving Machine: The 'New' Museum and Working through Trauma--*The Musée Mémorial pour la Paix of Caen.*" *Memory and History* 11:77-103.

Coombes, Annie E. 2003. "District Six: The Archaeology of Memory." Pp. 116-48 in *History After Apartheid: Visual Culture and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

November 27 – Presentations of Research in Progress (JG and AS)

We understand your projects are unfinished, tentative, and incomplete. Scheduling presentations now will enable you to revise your work before the eleventh hour!

December 4 - Trauma Culture: Are We All Victims? (AS)

Moral claims of victimhood proliferate in the US today, leading some critics to say we live in a "trauma culture". This week we consider writings of critics and defenders of our cultural attention to (and some would say obsession with) trauma.

Alexander, Jeffrey C. 2004. "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma." Pp. 1-30 in Alexander, Jeffrey C., Ron Eyerman, Bernhard Giesen, Neil J. Smelser and Piotr Sztompka, eds. *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*.

Plummer, Ken. 1995. "Recovery Tales." Pp. 97-111 in *Telling Sexual Stories*. New York: Routledge.

Berlant, Lauren. 2001. "Trauma and Ineloquence." *Cultural Values* 5:41-58.

Cvetkovich, Ann. 2003. "The Everyday Life of Queer Trauma," Pp. 15-48 in *An Archive of Feelings*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Stein, Arlene. 2006. "Whose Memories? Whose Victimhood?" Pp. 129-50 in *Shameless: Sexual Dissidence in American Culture*. New York: New York University Press.

December 11 - Truth, Reconciliation and Healing (AS and JG)

***Final papers are due in class today.

Cohen, Stanley. 2001. *States of Denial: Knowing About Atrocities and Suffering*, Pp. 222-301.

Text of the South African Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act,

<http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal/act9534.html>

Hamber, Brandon and Richard Wilson. 2000. "Symbolic Closure Through Memory, Reparation and Revenge in Post-Conflict Societies." Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation. <http://www.csvr.org.za/papers/papbhrw.html>

Bar-On, Dan and Saliba Sarsar, 2004. "Bridging the Unbridgeable: The Holocaust and Al-Nakba," *Palestine-Israel Journal* 11:63-70.

Minnow, Martha. 1998. "Truth Commissions," Pp. 52-90; and "Reparations," Pp. 91-117 in *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness*. Boston: Beacon Press.