

Syllabus - Spring 2008  
**Hiroshima - Silver 721**  
 K20-1340

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 3:30-6:00

And by Appointment: Monday, 12-3; Thursday, 12-2

**Description:**

On August 6 1945 the city of Hiroshima in Japan was leveled by the first atomic bomb. On August 9, the city of Nagasaki was leveled by the second bomb. It is estimated that between 210,000 and 270,000 people were killed, some immediately, some from the radiation days or months later. These estimates do not include more long-term impacts of the radiation, such as birth defects, or various cancers. How can we, as human beings, make sense of these events? How can we cope with, and represent unthinkable trauma? What are the politics of such representation? What processes of healing are possible through remembering? Is it important to represent such traumas, and if so, why? This course will explore a selection of historical, literary, cinematic, and other venues in which this unrepresentable trauma was, and continues to be, indeed, represented. We will aim at exploring the processes of mourning, remembering, and representing collective cultural trauma. Readings will include: Hein and Selden, *Living With the Bomb*, Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, LaCapra, *Writing History*, *Writing Trauma*, Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," and selected short fiction, poetry and photographs. We will also view documentary footage and the narrative film *Black Rain*.

**Class requirements:**

Attendance and Participation:	25%
Student Presentations	25%
Writing Assignments	25%
Paper	25%

**Required Books, for sale at Bluestockings, 172 Allen Street between Stanton and Rivington - 1 block south of Houston and 1st Avenue.**

1. Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontents* James Strachey, trans. New York: W.W. Norton, 1961.
2. Goldstein, Donald, Michael Wenger and Katherine Dillon. *Rain of Ruin: A Photographic History of Hiroshima and Nagasaki*. Washington, D.C. : Brassey's, 1995.
3. Hein, Laura and Mark Selden, eds. *Living With the Bomb: American and Japanese Cultural Conflicts in the Nuclear Age*. Armonk, NY: East Gate Book, 1997.

4. LaCapra, Dominick. *Writing History, Writing Trauma*. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 2001.
5. Minear, Richard, trans. *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.
6. Sontag, Susan. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003.
7. Tanaka Yuki. *Hidden Horrors: Japanese War Crimes in World War II*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996.

**List of Required Readings Handed out in Photocopies (in the order that we will read them)**

On Manhattan Project from:

[http://college.hmco.com/history/readerscomp/rcah/html/ah\\_056000\\_manhattanpro.htm](http://college.hmco.com/history/readerscomp/rcah/html/ah_056000_manhattanpro.htm)

On Manhattan Project from: [http://www.eh.doe.gov/ohre/roadmap/achre/intro\\_3.html](http://www.eh.doe.gov/ohre/roadmap/achre/intro_3.html)

Sáenz, Benjamin Alire, "Creation," in *Atomic Ghost*, CoffeeHouse Press; Minneapolis, MN, 1995, 3-4.

Laurence, William. "A Giant Pillar of Purple Fire," in *Reporting World War II: American Journalism*. New York: Library of America, 1995, 663-672.

Truman's Announcement of Atomic Bombing from:

[http://www.classbrain.com/artteenst/publish/article\\_99.shtml](http://www.classbrain.com/artteenst/publish/article_99.shtml)

Haiku selections. From Selden and Selden, *The Atomic Bomb, Voices From Hiroshima and Nagasaki*. New York: ME Sharpe, 1997.

Bhowmik, Davinder. "Temporal Discontinuity in the Atomic Bomb Fiction of Hayashi Kyôko," in Stephen Snyder and Philip Gabriel, eds. *Oe and Beyond: Fiction in Contemporary Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999, 58-88.

Ibuse Masuji, "The Crazy Iris," in Ôe Kenzaburô, ed. *The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath*. New York: Grove Press, 1985, 17-35.

Silver, Mark. "Representing Rupture: The Nagasaki Photographs of Yamahata Yôsuke," typescript.

Schwenger, Peter and John Treat, "America's Hiroshima, Hiroshima's America," *Boundary 2* 21:1 (1994): 233-253.

Freud, Sigmund. "Mourning and Melancholia." In James Strachey, trans. *Collected Writings* 4. New York: Basic Books, 1959, 152-172.

Victor, George, "Fundamentalism, Defilement, and Death," in Piven, ed. *The Psychology of Death in Fantasy and History*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004, 219-244.

Noriega, Chon. "Godzilla and the Japanese Nightmare: When *Them!* is U.S." in Broderick, Mike, ed. *Hibakusha Cinema: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Nuclear Image in Japanese Film*. London: Kegan Paul International, 1996, 54-74.

Nornes, Abé Mark. "The Body at the Center – The Effects of the Atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki," in Broderick, Mike, ed. *Hibakusha Cinema: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Nuclear Image in Japanese Film*. London: Kegan Paul International, 1996, 120-153.

Dorsey, John and Naomi Matsuoka, "Narrative Strategies of Understatement in Black Rain as a Novel and a Film." in Broderick, Mike, ed. *Hibakusha Cinema: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Nuclear Image in Japanese Film*. London: Kegan Paul International, 1996, 203-221.

Todeschini, Maya Morioka. "'Death and the Maiden': Female Hibakusha as Cultural Heroines and the Politics of A-Bomb Memory. In Broderick, Mike, ed. *Hibakusha Cinema: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Nuclear Image in Japanese Film*. London: Kegan Paul International, 1996, 222-252.

**Other:**

Documentary footage: Eric Barnouw and Akira Iwasaki, "Hiroshima – Nagasaki, August 1945"

Film: Chris Marker, "La Jetée," (1962)

Film: Imamura Shôhei, "Black Rain" (1989)

## Schedule

### 1. January 28: Introduction

**In class:** Read handouts: Truman's speech; Laurence, "A Giant Pillar of Purple Fire"; Haiku selections, from Selden, *The Atomic Bomb*; Sáenz, "Creation"; About Manhattan Project.

## Part One: Literature

### 2. Feb 4: Atomic Bomb Literature - Testimonials

**Readings Due:** Ota, *City of Corpses* plus Introductory pages in *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses*, 143-273 (book); LaCapra "Holocaust Testimonies" in *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 86-113 (book).

### 3. Feb. 11: Atomic Bomb Literature – Absence versus Loss

**Readings:** Hara, *Summer Flowers* plus Introductory pages in *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses*, 3-113; LaCapra "Trauma, Absence, Loss," in *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 43-85.

**Feb. 18 No Class (President's Day)**

### 4. Feb. 25: Atomic Bomb Literature – Issues of Time

**Readings:** Hayashi, "Two Grave Markers," in Selden, *The Atomic Bomb, Voices*, 24 - 54; (photocopy); Ibuse, "The Crazy Iris," 17-35 (photocopy); Bhowmik, "Temporal Discontinuity in the Atomic Bomb Fiction of Hayashi," (photocopy).

**Writing Assignment One Due**

## Part Two: Visuals/Histories

### 5. Mar. 3: Photos and Aesthetics - Watch Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945

**Readings:** Silver, "Representing Rupture: The Nagasaki Photographs of Yamahata Yôsuke" (photocopy); Goldstein et al, *Rain of Ruin* (Book: photo history).

### 6. Mar. 10: Regarding Others

**Readings:** Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (Whole book).

**No Class Mar. 17 – Spring Break**

### 7. Mar. 24: Comparing Histories

**Readings:** Schwenger and Treat, "America's Hiroshima, Hiroshima's America," (photocopy); Hein and Selden, eds., *Living with the Bomb*, 37-100, 173-201 (book).

### 8. Mar. 31: Victimhood and War Crimes

**Readings:** LaCapra, “Perpetrators and Victims,” in *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 114-140; Tanaka, *Hidden Horrors*, 1-43, 79-165, 197-215.

### **Part Three: Human Nature**

#### **9. April 7: Freud’s Theses**

**Readings:** Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Cornyetz, typescript handout

#### **10. April 14: Memory, Mourning, and Scapegoats**

In Class: Watch Marker, “La Jetee”

**Readings:** Victor, “Fundamentalism, Defilement, and Death,” 219-244 (photocopy); Freud, “Mourning and Melancholia” (photocopy) Cornyetz, typescript handout on Freud, “Screen Memories.”

**Writing Assignment Two Due**

### **Part Four: Narrative Films**

#### **11. April 21: Godzilla**

In class: Watch “Godzilla.”

**Readings:** Noriega, “Godzilla and the Japanese Nightmare” (photocopy); Nornes, “The Body at the Center,” (photocopy).

#### **12. April 28: Black Rain and the Maiden as Victim**

In class: Watch “Black Rain.”

**Readings:** Dorsey and Matsuoka, “Narrative Strategies of Understatement in Black Rain as a Novel and a Film,” (photocopy); Todeschini, “‘Death and the Maiden’,” (photocopy).

#### **13. May 5: Wrapping it Up**

In Class: Watch Dower: “The Cultures of War: Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima, 9/11.”

**No New Readings.**

**Final Paper Due.**