

# HUMN 4H: HONORS TRAUMA & THE ARTS

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Fall 2020
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Not open to students with credit in HUMN 4.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area I: Humanities
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade Only
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

## Student Learning Outcomes

- Synthesize critical thinking, imaginative, cooperative and empathetic abilities as whole persons in order to contextualize knowledge and make meaning.
- Discuss three different strategies with which film makers aestheticize the representation of violence.

## Description

This course applies theories of trauma to representations of trauma and violence in the visual arts, literature, film and music with an emphasis on the transformative potential of the creative process. Topics include the representation of war, genocide and racism. Students will gain acuity to identify, understand, empathize, and respond to traumatic subjectivity, its images and artistic as well as social intent. As an honors course, it is a full seminar with advanced teaching methods focusing on major writing, reading and research assignments, student class presentations, group discussions and interactions.

## Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Identify diverse cultural and historical origins of values and ideas as related to violence and trauma.
- Distinguish the subtlety and complexity with which cultural ideas and values related to violence and trauma are disseminated, encoded and reinforced through literature and visual representation.
- Develop correlations between historical, philosophical and cultural contexts and artistic mediums in representing violence and trauma.
- Apply criteria of cultural and aesthetic (philosophical) analysis to art works depicting violence and trauma from various historical and cultural backgrounds.
- Trace how aesthetic representation of violence and trauma reflects and shapes national discourse.
- Identify and evaluate aesthetic experiences of violence and trauma and formulate reactions to these experiences.
- Demonstrate via discussion and in writing an awareness of the ways in which ideological and cultural viewpoints shape the representation and reception of art depicting violence and trauma.

## Course Content

- Introduction to the Field of Trauma Studies
  - Excerpts, Judith Herman's *Trauma and Recovery*
    - Terror
    - Disassociation
    - Stages of Recovery
  - Sigmund Freud and Bessel van der Kolk
    - Screen Memories
    - Consequences of Overwhelming Life Experiences
  - Excerpts, Cathy Caruth, "Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History" and/or Dominick La Capra's "Writing History, Writing Trauma"
    - Construction of Trauma
    - Construction of History
- Analysis of Visual Art Representing Trauma, for example:
  - Picasso's *Guernica*
  - Art Spiegelman's *Maus I + II*
  - Vietnam Memorial
- Analysis of Literary Representations of Trauma
  - Excerpts: Sophocles' *Antigone* or Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*
  - Excerpts: Shakespeare's *Macbeth*
  - Depictions of War
  - Depictions of Racism
  - Holocaust Representation
- Analysis of Cinematic Representation of Trauma
  - Depictions of War, for example:
    - Excerpts from Christian Carion's "Joyeux Noel" (2005) or Alain Renais' "Hiroshima Mon Amour" (1959)
    - Depictions of Racism, for example:
      - Excerpts from Jonathan Demme's "Beloved" (1998) or Norman Jewison's "In the Heat of the Night" (1967)
      - Holocaust Representation, for example:
        - Excerpts from Roberto Benigni's "Life is Beautiful" (1997) or "Jan Hrebejk's *Divided We Fall*" (2000)
  - Analysis of Music as a Universal Means to Transcend Trauma
    - Mozart's *Requiem*
    - Mourning Songs, Dirges and/or Chants
    - Lullabies from Various Cultures
    - Spirituals
    - Songs of Struggle

## Lab Content

Not applicable.

## Special Facilities and/or Equipment

Multi-media equipment, LCD projector.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

- Systematic and continuous participation in the course
- Exams
- Development of research project in the representation of trauma
- Demonstration of critical, analytical research and writing skills
- Presentation of assigned research paper to class

## Method(s) of Instruction

- Lecture presentations
- In-class discussions

## Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Aeschylus. Agamemnon. Translated by Philip de May. New York: Classic Books America, 2009.

Shakespeare. Macbeth. New York: Washington Square Press, 1992.

Spiegelman, Art. Maus: A Survivor's Tale: Part I, My Father Bleeds History, Part II, Here My Troubles Began. New York: Pantheon Books, 1985.

Auslander, Shalom. Hope: A Tragedy. New York: Riverhead Books, 2012.

Freud, Sigmund. "Screen Memories in Peter Gay." The Freud Reader. New York: W.W. Norton, 1995. 117-126.

La Capra, Dominick. Writing History, Writing Trauma. Parallax: Re-Visions of Culture and Society (series). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014.

Reserved articles and studies in Library.

## Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

A. Weekly assigned readings from 5-50 pages drawn from both primary and secondary sources.

B. Philosophical and literary critical readings (15-50 pages) designed to familiarize students with ongoing debates and perspectives in trauma theory and the aesthetics of violence.

C. Bi-weekly one to three-page essays requiring summary, interpretation, analysis, and synthesis of both original and secondary texts.

## Discipline(s)

Humanities