



**SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**HISTORY PROGRAMME
HIST 425: A TOPIC IN EUROPEAN HISTORY 3
2 March to 16 October 2009
CRN 7709**

Course Coordinator: Dr. Simone Gigliotti
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Seminars: Seminars begin in Week 1, beginning March 2.
Times and Locations: Thursday, 10am-12pm, KK 204
Office Hours: Thursday 12-1pm

The **History Disability Liaison Person** is Glyn Parry and he can be contacted on 463 6776 or email glyn.parry@vuw.ac.nz His office is located in OK504.

Course Delivery

HIST 425 is delivered through two-hour seminars throughout Trimester 1 and 2. These seminars aim to meet fortnightly, and the total number of seminars will not exceed twelve. The enclosed meeting schedule may be varied throughout the year, and students will be advised of changes to it via Blackboard and/or an email message sent to all students.

Communication of additional information

In terms of communication, HIST 425 has been added to Blackboard. I will make this available in the week beginning March 2. Readings for Seminars will be available one week in advance and can be collected from the History Office bench in a folder HIST 425. I will advise students via Blackboard and/or email when these readings are available at the History Office. Please ensure that you send me email addresses that you use and check regularly. Important information about the course, such as the course guide, will be uploaded into Blackboard.

Course content

This paper considers the historical and social utility of the witness in modern European history. It examines how the witness has developed as a philosophical, evidentiary and truth-telling subject, and explores various contributions that documented tumultuous historical events, traumas and revolutions in the making and destabilizing of Europe. HIST 425 considers a range of witness positions from individual perpetrators of historical injustices to victims as “bearers of history” and “professional testifiers”, and “secondary” witnessing occupations such as photographers. It also examines how witness reports are mediated by temporal, spatial and technological interventions that reflect the fragmented history of Europe in the modern period. These witness reports include autobiography, life narratives, testimony given at war crimes trials, survivor memoirs, photography, and virtual outputs. Finally, the seminar addresses the critical yet contested role of witnessing in social memory practices, and the representational issues involved in offering a “witnessing history” of Europe from intimate and corporeal experiences.

Learning objectives

Students passing the course should be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical aptitude in relation to the sources and impacts of witnesses in history;
- Be able to conduct independent research on topics of relevance to a witnessing history of Europe;
- Be familiar with the methodological debates about the social and epistemological utility of the witness in European history and more generally;
- Develop a sophisticated level of oral articulation of historical concepts, and be able to engage in intelligent, informed discussion of them;
- Demonstrate their analytical and interpretive skills through the completion of set writing assessment tasks.

Graduate attributes

As with all HIST courses, learning objectives of this course contribute to the attainment of specific attributes:

Critical Thinking

- 1: Assess conflicting or different arguments
- 2: Develop understanding of historical events, context and change
- 3: Use appropriate methodologies to evaluate evidence

Creative Thinking

- 1: Synthesise information in a clear, logical and lively way
- 2: Create well-documented interpretations of historical events
- 3: Search for patterns in historical processes over time and space

Communication

- 1: Develop lucid historical arguments through writing and oral discussion
- 2: Use library print and online resources efficiently and constructively
- 3: Strengthen learning through collegial interchange

Leadership

- 1: Pursue and manage independent research
- 2: Develop critical citizenship
- 3: Develop confidence through public speaking
- 4: Strengthen decision-making capabilities

Related

- 1: Understand the development of the historical discipline

Expected workload

In accordance with Faculty Guidelines, students are expected to devote 20 hours per fortnight to HIST 425. This workload includes attendance at seminars, of which you must attend at least 75% in order to meet attendance requirements.

Group work

While there is no assessed group work for HIST 425, it is expected that students can work in groups in seminar, and perform reading and writing tasks as requested by the coordinator. There is also the possibility that we will attend films of relevance to HIST 425 outside of normal contact hours. Attendance is voluntary and payment for attendance is the responsibility of students. I will advise of such films in advance in seminars and via Blackboard.

Recommended Reading

There is no Book of Readings available in advance for HIST 425. The readings for seminar themes are compiled by the coordinator and distributed in advance of the seminar via methods as outlined in "Communication of additional information" as outlined above. Students are asked to pay a nominal fee to the History Office for the provision of these readings, and should contact the History Programme Administrator to ascertain the final cost. Students will find the following texts useful, and they have been placed on three-day loan, alongside others of interest. Please consult the HIST 425 Course Reserve list on the VUW library catalogue for additional reading. Most books are available on three-day loan. Please contact me if you would like a book placed on closed or three-day reserve.

Recommended texts

Sarah Barber and Corinna Penniston-Bird (eds.,) *History Beyond the Text: a Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources* (London, New York: Routledge, 2009)

Kelly Oliver, *Witnessing: beyond recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001)

Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: the making and unmaking of the world* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985)

Jerold Seigel, *The Idea of the Self: Thought and Experience in Western Europe since the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

Annette Wieviorka, *The Era of the Witness* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006)

Other reading

Textbooks can be purchased from Vicbooks located on the top floor of the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. Books of Reading are distributed from the Student Notes Shop on the ground floor of the Student Union Building. Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from the shop the day after placing an order online. Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays) and 10.00 am – 1.00 pm Saturdays. Phone: 463 5515

Assessment requirements

This course is 100% internally assessed, and is outlined as follows:

Assessment Task	Due date:
1. The Witness in European History (Historiography Review)	27 April 20% of the final grade (min/max 1500 words)
2. Event as Witness History (Research Essay)	10 August 50% of the final grade (min/max 4000 words)
3. Genre in the Witness Event (Focus Essay)	28 September 30% of the final grade (min/max 2500 words)

Assessed work is to be submitted to the History Office, OK 405, by no later than 5pm on the due date. Please attach a cover sheet to your work and keep a backup print and e-copy of all submitted. Information on each assessment task including reference to learning objectives and marking criteria follows later in the guide (p. 18)

Word limits: All word limits are EXCLUSIVE of footnotes/endnotes and bibliography. Please ensure that you have copies of your work stored in different locations/drives to minimise possible loss of data due to file corruption. Data loss can

frequently occur when USB sticks are used in public/student computers in the university. Lecturers cannot extend special extensions for assessable work due to data loss. It is your responsibility to ensure you maintain uncorrupted and updated files of your work.

NB: I reserve the right to ask for electronic copies of your essays for assessment tasks for plagiarism checks in www.turnitin.com See statement of use below.

Statement on the use of Turnitin

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

Return of assessed work:

In HIST 425, assignments will be returned in the following manner:

- Principal point of return is during seminars. The lecturer will retain graded essays up to a maximum of three weeks. Thereafter, these essays will be available at the History Office for collection up until the final teaching week (16 October).

Communication about graded essays: The course coordinator will advise students through Blackboard when submitted assignments have been marked and due for return. Ideally, lecturers aim to return work that is submitted on time to students no later than two weeks (in exceptional circumstances this may increase to three weeks). In any case, lecturers endeavour to give students a reasonable amount to interpret and improve on their graded work before the next assessment is due.

Penalties

Students will be penalised for late submission of essays—a deduction of 5% for the first day late, and 3% per day thereafter, up to a maximum of 5 working days. Work that is more than 14 days late can be accepted for mandatory course requirements but will not be marked. Penalties will be applied unless arrangement has been made with the Course Co-ordinator for an extension. Penalties may be waived if there are valid grounds, e.g., illness (presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary) or similar other contingencies. In such cases prior information will be necessary (percentages and days will vary from Programme to Programme)

Mandatory course requirements

To gain a pass in this course each student must:

- a) Submit the written work specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work);
- b) Attend at least 75% of the scheduled seminars;
- c) The Final Date for submission of all written work is **Friday 23 October 2009**.

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

General university policies and statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

Seminar Presentations on their Research Essay:

Students will be expected to make a presentation on the topic of their Research Essay (Event as Witness History). All presentations will be held during the seminar of August 6. Your presentations are not assessed but should aim to address the following:

- The topic you chose
- Justification for selection – relate the topic to witness history of Europe
- Methodology and sources used
- Argument

Student Presentations on Readings:

Students will be expected to select one week of seminar readings that they would like to introduce to the class. This is a non-assessed presentation. They are expected to present on the readings distributed in advance, although they can elect to add to the set readings and offer supplementary material, preferably a primary source. Once the presentations have been agreed on, the student should notify the coordinator if they intend to present an additional source and supply it to the coordinator for distribution two weeks in advance of the seminar.

Seminar Schedule

2 March – 16 October, 2009

KK 204

Theme I: Contexts and Subject Positions

Topic 1, March 5:
Introduction

At this seminar we will:

- Seminar hour 1: Discuss course, students' research interests, seminar presentations on research, and allocate presentations on seminar reading.
- Seminar hour 2: Discussion of the set reading, "Introduction" from Sarah Barber and Corinna M. Penniston-Bird, *History Beyond the text* (London; New York: Routledge, 2009): 1-14.

Topic 2, March 19:
Contexts, Evidence and Sources

This week's readings consider theoretical questions about interpretation of testimony and evidence and the way in which evidence can be "placed".

Guiding Questions:

- What are the main arguments of the articles?
- In what ways does the witness offer a micro-historical view of the past?
- In what ways is history as a time concept undermined by Ethington's proposition of space and place?

Essential Readings:

Carlo Ginzburg, "Checking the Evidence: The Judge and the Historian", *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Autumn 1991), pp. 79-92

Thomas Weitin, "Testimony and the Rhetoric of Persuasion", *MLN* 119 (2004): 525-540.

Philip J. Ethington, "Placing the past: 'Groundwork' for a spatial theory of history", *Rethinking History*, Vol. 11, No. 4, December 2007, pp. 465-493

Topic 3, April 3:**Life telling and the "I" of History**

This week's readings consider personal reports of wartime, terror, and migration with origins in Europe, and the kinds of witnessing produced by different modes of telling, when the "I" is the centre of the text, as narrative and historical subject. The readings are retrospective, contemporaneous and reflective. There is also much to consider in relation to the public/private divide and dichotomy.

Guiding Questions:

- How are historical events represented?
- What is the author's relationship to these events?
- What themes are foregrounded or discussed?
- How personal or intimate are the texts?
- Who is the intended audience? This might affect the "historicity" and ambition of the work.

Essential Readings:

Jacobo Timerman, *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number*, trans. Tony Talbot. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981): ix-xv; 3-41.

Mihail Sebastian, *Journal 1935-1944: the Fascist Years*, Trans. Patrick Camiller, (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000): Year 1940: vii-xxv, 261-299.

Jay Prosser, "Sim Koh-wei, my Jewish grandmother," *Biography*, Vol. 28, No. 1. (Winter 2005): 130-137.

Easter and Mid-Trimester Break: April 10-26
NO CLASSES

Theme II: Event as Witness History

Topic 4, April 30:

War Crimes Trials and Biography as Witness History

This week's readings consider war crimes trials as "biography" of crimes and wrongdoing with particular respect to the Nuremberg trials in postwar Germany. We pay attention to Hermann Goering, quite possibly one of the most notorious and unrepentant Nazis on trial.

Guiding Questions:

- In what ways may we view testimony as history? What difficulties arise when considering such testimony?
- Do you agree with the statement that "In many circles, it is taken as a given that the preservation of Holocaust memories requires some type of legal intervention and that some symmetry needs to exist between the "judicial memory" and the "collective memory" of these catastrophic events. In theory, the more legal memory that we have about Nazi extermination policies that were perpetrated during the Holocaust, the better." (Marouf Hasian)
- How did the practices of those who conducted the trial affect the portrayal of the acts of the tried through the medium of the courtroom? E.g. the trial as a "political act" rather than an exercise in law. Allied organizers aimed to educate the world community about Nazi atrocities by providing not only a lasting record of Nazi Criminality but a testament showing that justice had been done.
- How are we to understand Nuremberg? The arguments employed in favour of the trials in 1945 may be divided into two general categories: punishment/deterrent, and education. In what ways did the trial fail to do realise these aspirations?

Essential Readings:

James Owen, "March-June 1946: the case for the defendants," *Nuremberg: Evil on Trial* (London: Headline Review, 2007), 129-173.

"Judgment: Goering," *Avalon Project at Yale Law School*:

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/imt/proc/judgoeri.htm>

The Indictment (and four counts) can be read at:

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/imt/proc/count.htm>

Richard Overy, "The Unrepentant Goering," *Interrogations: the Nazi Elite in Allied Hands, 1945* (New York: Viking, 2001), 144-153.

Bernard D. Meltzer, "A Note on Some Aspects of the Nuremberg Debate," *The University of Chicago Law Review*, Vol. 14, No.3, (Apr., 1947): 455-469.

Telford Taylor, "The Nuremberg War Crimes Trials: An Appraisal," *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, Vol. 23, No.3, The United States and the Atlantic Community, (May, 1949): 19-34.

Marouf Hasian, *Rhetorical Vectors of Memory in National and International Holocaust Trials* (East Lansing, Mich: Michigan State University Press), chs. 1-2, 1-47. and notes, 169-188.

Although the seminar will focus on the set readings, you may want to look at these additional visual sources: *Hitler's henchmen*. Vol. 1; Reference [DVD 1729/1](#) (Tells the story of the 6 men who formed the inner circle of the Nazi regime. Disc one: Himmler, the executioner (52 min.); Hess, the deputy (54 min.); Speer, the architect (55 min.). Disc two: Göring, the marshall (55 min.); Dönitz, the successor (54 min.); Goebbels, the firebrand (55 min.).

Further Reference:

International Criminal Tribunals and Special Courts:
<http://www.globalpolicy.org/intljustice/tribindx.htm>

Topic 5: May 7:

1956 in Hungary: The Power of Dissent and Political Witness

This seminar provides an opportunity to reflect on how one momentous event, the uprising in Hungary in 1956, was represented and documented at the time and in recently released declassified documents. The purpose is to allow for an analysis of constructions of the political witness (the nation, the individual, the community) through intelligence and security reports in the context of "East" and "West" in the Cold War.

Guiding Questions:

- What paradigms and contexts for witnessing and protest were available in 1956 in Hungary?
- How do websites such as "Freedom Fighter" construct witnesses and the authenticity of one's place in history?
- Why was Hungary a threat to Communism and US interests in the region?

Essential Reading:

Study Prepared for U.S. Army Intelligence, "Hungary: Resistance Activities and Potentials," January 1956," Document 1, Accessed from Malcolm Byrne (ed), *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: a History in Documents: A National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book*.

<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB76/doc1.pdf>

"Report from Anastas Mikoyan on the Situation in the Hungarian Workers' Party", July 14, 1956, Document 3, Accessed from Malcolm Byrne (ed), *The 1956 Hungarian*

Revolution: a History in Documents: A National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book

<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB76/doc3.pdf>

Freedom Fighter 56: Read some of the Adult Eyewitness accounts on this site:

http://www.freedomfighter56.com/en_stories_1adult.html

Csaba Bekes, "The 1956 Hungarian Revolution and World

Politics," Accessed from <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/ACFB4E.pdf>

In the seminar, we will also look at photos of the uprising from Magnum Photos:
www.magnumphotos.com

Further Internet Browsing:

Read through some of the documents listed at the end of the page:

<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB76/>

See also:

<http://www.hungary1956.com/>

http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/november/4/newsid_2739000/2739039.stm

<http://www.hoover.org/publications/digest/3475896.html>

Further Reading:

Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth (eds), *1968 in Europe: a history of protest and activism, 1956-1977* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

Topic 6, May 21:

1989: The Fall of the Berlin Wall: Unification and Re-presentation

This seminar examines the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and how it has been represented in debates on memory, identity, and the politics of representing the communist past in Berlin's urban landscapes. The readings and websites look at places of contest and protest including memorial sites, museums, and urban spaces of ethnic tension. We look at different types of witness texts that are now being produced to archive this changing scene.

Guiding Questions:

- In what ways has the politics of unification impacted on Berlin's urban design and civic spaces?
- What are some of the main issues surrounding the "reconstruction" of Berlin and how do they reflect or undermine political aspirations of unification?
- In what ways is civic community and citizenship expressed in some of these public sites and memorials to the past?
- In what ways do local, collective and ethnically-sited memories conflict in some of these spaces?

For this seminar, you are expected to do some browse internet sites about Berlin's landscapes and complete the reading.

Essential Browsing:

- Walk the Wall: <http://www.mauerguide.com/?m=&s=&lang=eng>
- "The Wall Inside the City"
<http://www.berlin.de/mauer/verlauf/index/index.en.php>

Memorials:

- Holocaust Memorial, Berlin (in German):
 - o <http://www.holocaust-denkmal-berlin.de/index.php?id=38>
- "Berlin Holocaust Memorial takes shape":
 - o <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,949359,00.html>

Museums:

- Checkpoint Charlie (Museum Haus am Checkpoint Charlie):
 - o <http://www.mauermuseum.de/english/frame-index-mauer.html>
- Topography of Terror: <http://www.topographie.de/en/index.htm>

Reconstructions:

- The Berlin Wall: the East Side Gallery
 - o <http://www.german-way.com/east-side-gallery-berlin.html>

Essential Reading:

Luise Heidenreich, "Collective memory, Identity and place making", Accessed from:
[http://www.irmgard-coninx-](http://www.irmgard-coninx-stiftung.de/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/urbanplanet/identities/ws2/082%20Heidenreich.pdf)

[stiftung.de/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/urbanplanet/identities/ws2/082%20Heidenreich.pdf](http://www.irmgard-coninx-stiftung.de/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/urbanplanet/identities/ws2/082%20Heidenreich.pdf)

Götz Aly, "The woes of Berlin's memorials", *Sign and Sight*, 18 March 2005:

<http://www.signandsight.com/features/67.html>

Joachim Schlor, "Memory in Berlin: a short walk" *Urban History*, 34, 3 (2007): 427-430.

Further Reading:

Jennifer A. Jordan, *Structures of Memory: Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and beyond* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006)

Karen E. Till, *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2005)

Mid Year Break: 8 June – 12 July

Theme III: Genre as Witness: Visual Culture

Topic 7 and 8, July 16 and July 23:

Graphic narratives

NB: Two seminars are devoted to this topic.

The two seminars examine the genre of graphic narrative in a historical and comparative perspective. The graphic narrative has origins in comic books, cartoons and popular culture, yet historians remain reluctant to truly embrace its potential as witness text, regarding it as a rather controversial, “low art” source. This seminar aims to think about graphic narrative, such as the long-format autobiographic novel and memoir, as cultural and historical sources, and as a hybrid form of life *writing* and life *illustrating*. The aim of the seminar is to consider ways of interpreting these graphic narratives as cultural memory, generational witness, and representations of atrocity and exile.

Guiding Questions:

- What are the main themes conveyed in each of the graphic narratives? In what ways are graphic narratives “hybrid compositions”?
- Apart from attention to Spiegelman’s *Maus*, Hillary Chute and Marianne DeKoven suggest that, “there does not yet exist an established critical apparatus for graphic narrative.” Why is this so?
- Chute and DeKoven suggest that: “In comics, the images are not illustrative of the text, but comprise a separate narrative thread that moves forward in time in a different way than the prose text, which also moves the reader forward in time.” (p. 769, Introduction, *MFS*). In what ways do illustrations in graphic narratives become their own representation independent of the accompanying text?
- How do exaggeration, humour and caricature shape the different graphic narratives? Does their use trivialize the extreme stories represented?

Essential Reading: Graphic Narratives

Joe Sacco

Raw Profile: www.readyourselfraw.com/profiles/sacco/profile_sacco.htm

Joe Sacco, *War’s End: Profiles from Bosnia, 1995-96* (Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly, 2005)

Marjane Satrapi

Raw Profile: www.readyourselfraw.com/profiles/satrapi/profile_satrapi.htm

Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis* (New York: Pantheon, 2003), 1-87.

Simon Hattenstone, "Confessions of Miss Mischief," *The Guardian Weekly*, 11 April 2008, 32-33. URL:

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/departments/biography/story/0,,2268725,00.html>

Art Spiegelman

Raw Profile: www.readyourselfraw.com/profiles/spiegelman/profile_spiegelman.htm

Art Spiegelman, *Maus II: And here my troubles began* (New York: Pantheon, 1991): 41-74.

Essential Reading: Criticism

*NB: While I encourage you to read all of the articles, those marked with * are the most relevant to the graphic narratives you will read.*

Hillary Chute and Marianne DeKoven, "Graphic Narrative," *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, Vol. 52, no. 4 (Winter 2006): 767-782.

*Gillian Whitlock, "autographics: the seeing "i" of the comics," *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, Vol. 52, no. 4 (Winter 2006): 965-979.

*Thomas Doherty, "Art Spiegelman's *Maus*: Graphic Art and the Holocaust," *American Literature*, Vol. 68, no. 1, (Mar., 1996): 69-84.

Bart Beaty, "The Shifting Terrain of the Comic Book," *Unpopular Culture: Transforming the European Comic Book in the 1990s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 44-69, 253-254.

Further Reading:

Library of Congress Comic Book Collections:

http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/awhhtml/awser2/comic_books.html

Paul Gravett, "The Long Shadow," *Graphic novels: stories to change your life* (London: Aurum, 2005).

Art Spiegelman, *Maus I*, *Maus II*, and *In the Shadow of No Towers*

Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis II: the story of a return* (New York: Pantheon, 2005):

<http://www.randomhouse.com/pantheon/graphicnovels/satrapi2.html>

<http://www.randomhouse.com/pantheon/graphicnovels/persepolis.html>

Joe Sacco, *Palestine* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2003):

Joe Sacco, *Safe Area Gorazde* (Seattle: Fantagraphics, 2000)

Interview with Joe Sacco: http://www.tcj.com/aa02ws/i_sacco.html

Review of *War's End*: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/08/03/AR2005080301969.html?sub=AR>

Further Viewing:

Persepolis and *Waltz with Bashir*

Topic 9: August 6:

Student Presentations on Research Essays for HIST 425

Topic 10: August 20:**Photography and the Ethics of Looking**

This presentation focuses on the photography of war and conflict in a comparative perspective. The images are from theatres of conflict in Europe, and where relevant, other regions. Images from these conflicts and the literature on them will further the understanding of photography's work in forming our memory and especially post memory. The readings for this week focus on issues of ethics, documentation and limits. Below are some archives to look at before the seminar:

GROUP TASK:

With another student, you should experience your own process of selection of photos and be aware of your own "looking." Choose at least two photos to bring to class and discuss. Your photos should be sourced from a European event or conflict, although other sources might be acceptable if they are discussed with the coordinator. You should endeavour to browse through several photo archives online, choosing a theme, conflict or event that interests you.

Photo Sites:

Magnum Photos: www.magnumphotos.com

US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Photo Archives: www.ushmm.org

Other links:

<http://www.fotophile.com/links/photojournalism.htm>

Guiding Questions:

- Where does photography stand in our understanding of, or tolerance for, atrocity?
- Do we need to "see to believe"? Why?
- To what extent do photographers need or abuse ethics in relation to documenting the image, the atrocity, the victim?
- To what extent do photographs suppress or express the "truth" of events? What kinds of truth are conveyed through visual imaging of war and suffering?

Essential Reading:

Luc Boltanski, *Distant Suffering: Morality, Media and Politics*, trans. Graham Burchell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999): ch. 3., "The Moral Spectator", 35-54.

Susan Crane, "Choosing not to look: Representation, Repatriation and Holocaust Atrocity Photography," *History and Theory* 47 (October 2008): 309-330.

Ariella Azoulay, *Death's Showcase: the Power of Image in Contemporary Democracy*, trans. Ruvik Daniell, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001): Ch 10: the Picture of the Battlefield: 218-263.

Mid Trimester break: 24 August – 6 September

Theme IV: Reflection

Topic 11, September 10:

False Witnessing

The final seminar deals with complicated issues about witnessing and authenticity. Since most of the seminars have dealt with affirmations and interpretations of different historical witnesses, this week considers witnessing as a crisis, and in particular debates about the motivations for false witnessing. The idea of a “false witness” engenders many associations, not least in literature, memoir and the production of a fabricated identity, in trauma cases of abuse and violence, in claims of medical illness, and in legal realms. The objective of this seminar is to consider the impact of false witnessing on representations of authenticity in testimony and literature, and the credibility of contested memoirs in the representation of historical traumas. The articles focus on the following contested memoirs:

Helen Demidenko, *The Hand that Signed the Paper* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1995)
(available in the VUW library under real name, “Darville, Helen”)

Binjamin Wilkomirski, *Fragments: Memories of a Wartime Childhood* (New York: Schocken, 1997) (not available in the VUW library)

Norma Khouri, *Forbidden Love* (Sydney: Bantam, 2003) (not available in the VUW library)

Rigoberta Menchu, *I, Rigoberta Menchú. An Indian Woman in Guatemala* (New York: Verso, 1987) (available in the VUW library)

Essential Questions:

- What comes to mind in the phrase “false witness”?
- What are the motivations for writing a memoir and presenting it as truth?
- What events were being witnessed to as traumatic or historically significant?
- How were the writer’s literary fabrications discovered or disclosed?
- How do the various critics view the authors’ transgressions? What is at stake in a false witness memoir or claim?
- What other genres or forums are especially vulnerable to false witnessing?

Essential Readings:

Kelly Oliver, "False Witnesses," *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001): 107-132.

Lynn Walford, "Truth, Lies, and Politics in the Debate over Testimonial Writing," *The Comparatist*, 30, 2006: 113-121.

Susan Rubin Suleiman, "Problems of Memory and Facticity in Recent Holocaust Memoirs: Wilkomirski/Wiesel," *Poetics Today*, 21: 3 (Fall 2000): 543-559

Robert Manne, The Strange Case of Helen Demidenko, *Australian Humanities Review*, <http://www.australianhumanitiesreview.org/archive/demidenko/manne.1.html>

Rebecca Abrams, "Mistaken Identities," *New Statesman*, 28 June 1999, <http://www.newstatesman.com/199906280030.htm>

Malcolm Knox, "How a 'forbidden' memoir twisted the truth," *The Age Online*, July 24, 2004: <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2004/07/23/1090464860184.html#>

Essential Viewing (in the seminar):

Forbidden Lies

Topic 12, September 17:

Discussion and Review

No readings.

ASSESSMENT: OUTLINES

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. The Witness in European History (Historiography Review) | 27 April
20% of the final grade
(min/max 1500 words) |
| 2. Event as Witness History (Research Essay) | 10 August
50% of the final grade
(min/max 4000 words) |
| 3. Genre in the Witness Event (Focus Essay) | 28 September
30% of the final grade
(min/max 2500 words) |

HIST 425: Assessment I

Assessment Theme: The Witness in European History (Historiographical Review)

Choose ONE of the following questions:

- 1/. Philip Ethington claims that, "History is not an account of 'change over time'...but rather, change through space" (Ethington, "Placing the past: 'Groundwork' for a spatial theory of history", p. 466). In what ways is the notion of "place" underscored in witness accounts of unrest and conflict in nineteenth OR twentieth century Europe?
- 2/. What kinds of truths do witnesses impart that objective histories of the past do not?
- 3/. Annette Wieviorka has claimed that the twentieth century is the "era of the witness". Why is this so?
- 4/. Why have victims-as-witnesses become a source of moral authority in public life?
- 5/. Historians are often skeptical about the evidentiary reliability of eyewitness testimonies produced many years after the event. Why is "time" important for historians in their analyses of witness testimony?

Guidelines:

- The length of this assessment piece is short in comparison to other assessments, so extensive primary research is not required. You are expected to engage with secondary sources.
- The assessment is designed as a “thought” piece, that is, reflective and informed of the historical evolution of “the witness” which requires evidence of critical engagement with sources. It still requires footnotes and a bibliography.
- Please submit it with a completed essay cover sheet.

Marking Criteria:

- Ability to respond critically to the question.
- Ability to integrate a diversity of historians’ opinions on the topic.
- Evidence of informed analysis, coherent structure and integration of sources into the essay as relevant to the question.
- Ability to engage with debates about interpretation and history, such as methods, theories, and sources of, the past.
- Ability to think widely about your question (that is, to include but not restrict yourself to historical sources).

HIST 425: Assessment II**Assessment Theme:** Research Essay; Event Study

There are no set questions for this assessment piece. You are to propose a question about ONE event in modern European history that you have chosen to examine.

Research Task Guidelines:

- You are to choose one event of witnessing from 1850 to 2000 in European history, and design a question you would like to investigate about the importance of witnessing in that event. These events include world wars, European regional wars, uprisings and protest movements, and war crimes trials.
- You might want to consider how some events impacted more profoundly and comprehensively on the possibility of witnessing;
- You could also consider the media or forms of representation in one event.
- You can also pursue theoretical or philosophical questions in relation to your chosen witness event.

For example, if you choose World War I as an event of witnessing, your question might be:

To what extent did witness texts from World War I provide the basis for anti-war movements of the postwar period?

- *Link to Focus Essay:* Remember that the research essay provides the groundwork for your focus essay (Assessment III) where you will critically appraise ONE genre of witnessing from the historical event you have chosen. If you chose World War I for your research (EVENT) essay, your focus essay could consider photographic coverage of that event, or letters, diaries, and war reports. You must also develop a QUESTION for the focus essay, rather than produce a summary or survey narrative.

Technical Guidelines:

- The research essay is the longest piece you will write for HIST 425. Primary and secondary source research is required.
- The essay requires footnotes and a bibliography.
- Please submit it with a completed essay cover sheet by the due date.

NB: Please discuss your chosen event with me and then submit a proposed question for approval by no later than 1 June.

Marking Criteria:

- Ability to articulate a plausible research question;
- Ability to reply critically to the question, developing an argument, and using a range of primary and secondary sources;
- Capacity to critically appraise the development of your chosen genre in its historical and social contexts;
- Evidence of critical thinking about structure and methodology for your essay (appearance of coherence, sound argument and use of different sources as support and context);
- Evidence of mature and sound writing practices, including clear structure, and adherence to history style guide.

HIST 425: Assessment III

Assessment Theme: Focus Essay; Genre Essay

This essay aims to take one of the **GENRES** you considered in your research essay/EVENT essay and build a research question about forms of witnessing. For example, if you focused on war crimes trials in the twentieth century, you might wish to study the Auschwitz trial of 1964, or genocide cases at the ICTY. You should be able to develop a plausible research question based on your selected genre. Please submit a topic/question with bibliography to me by no later than 17 August.

Marking criteria:

- Ability to articulate a plausible focus question that flows from your research essay;
- Ability to reply critically to the question, developing an argument, and using a range of primary and secondary sources;
- Capacity to critically appraise the historical and social work of the witness genre in one particular event or discrete time frame;
- Evidence of critical thinking about structure and methodology for your essay (appearance of coherence, sound argument and use of different sources as support and context);
- Evidence of mature and sound writing practices, including clear structure, and adherence to history writing style guide.