SYLLABUS – THEATRE TOPICS: REPRESENTING WAR AND VIOLENCE

Instructor: Dr. Inga Meier
Email: meieri@sfasu.edu
Office Hours: T, TH 3:00-5:30 + By Appointment
Office Location: GFA 223
Mailbox: GFA 212B (M-F, 8 am- 5 pm)

Semester: Spring 2016
Course Number: 471.001 (22096)
Meeting Time: MWF 9:00-9:50 AM
Meeting Room: GFA 300

I. Course Description

This course will study cinematic and theatrical representations of U.S. war and violence following the Holocaust to the current day. In examining how the unrepresentable is represented, we will study and explore the connections between collective memory, visual culture, news media, memorialization, spectatorship, history, violence, and trauma.

II. Course Objectives

Program Learning Outcomes: Students who successfully complete this course will have achieved mastery of the following Program Learning Outcomes as identified by the School of Theatre:

- The student will be able to analyze a script in ways that are necessary to a theatre practitioner or scholar/critic. (All degree plans.)
- The student will be able to form and articulate a critical analysis and evaluation of a work of theatre. (BA, BA with Teacher Certification.)
- The student will demonstrate an understanding of the component areas of theatrical creation, process, production, performance, and study, and their interrelationships. (All degree plans.)

Student Learning Outcomes: Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Identify and discuss the salient differences and relationships between various modes of cultural production including film, theatre, news media, and architecture.
- Articulate the concepts of collective memory, memorialization, spectatorship, history, violence, and trauma in relation to these various modes of production, both individually and in relation to one another.

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1 You may refer to me as “Inga,” “Dr. Meier,” or “Ms. Meier.” You may not refer to me as “Prof,” “Professor Inga,” or “Doctor Inga.” If you insist on doing so, you are required to follow this wording with an acceptable title (e.g. “Yellow-Haired Warrior” or “Mother of Dragons”).
2 Emails are not an instantaneous form of communication. In other words, please do not send me an email 20 minutes before class and then approach me in class, asking if I received your email. On average, expect a 24 hour turnaround time. Also, emails sent through D2L will not be answered. Please use only the SFA address.
3 “By appointment” means that if you are not available during my regular office hours, but need to meet with me, we can schedule an appointment. In other words, please don’t tell me, “I didn’t meet with you because I had class during your office hours.”
Discuss in detail at least one moment of historical trauma and its relation to issues of historiography, visual culture, and performance in theoretical and practical terms.

III. Texts + Materials

- The Vietnam Plays: Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel; Sticks and Bones and by David Rabe (Grove Press, 1994) ISBN: 978-0802133137
- Additional readings will be provided as PDFs at least one week prior to the date by which the reading must be completed.

These books are available at the campus Barnes and Noble in the student center. You may procure the book however you choose (campus bookstore, online, textbook rental, locally owned bookstores, sharing with a friend, etc.). However, it is your responsibility to have completed the required reading by the due date.

IV. Class Procedures and Policies

School of Theatre Attendance Policy: A career in the fine arts demands dedication and discipline; preparation for this career requires conscientious development of effective work habits. To this end, regular and punctual attendance is expected for all classes, laboratories and other activities for which a student is registered or assigned.

Further:

- It is University policy to excuse students from class attendance for certain reasons related to health, family emergencies, or student participation in approved university-sponsored events. Excused absences from theatre classes will only be granted upon presentation of written documentation from the teacher, sponsor, or physician involved upon the first day of the student’s return. In the case of absences caused by university-sponsored events, inclusion in the university's public listing of such absences will constitute an official excuse. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor that he/she has scheduled the planned official absence, in advance when possible.
• Students missing classes, other than university-sponsored trips, may contact the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) and request that an absence notification be sent to the instructor(s). The notification is not an excuse, and is not evaluated by OSRR. The notification is only provided as a courtesy to the student and the student's instructor(s). Students remain responsible for providing documentation in a timely manner to the instructor for each absence. The instructor determines whether such documentation is satisfactory.

• In the case of missed classes, you will be held responsible for the successful completion of assigned work and/or projects. It is your responsibility to seek out the materials and information you missed, including lecture notes, screenings, and announcements. “I didn’t know” will not be considered an excuse.

• A total of ten excused and/or unexcused absences will automatically result in a failing grade.

• Unexcused absences above 3 will result in a deduction of 10 points each off the participation grade (1% each off the final grade).

• Arriving to class after attendance has been completed or leaving prior to the end of class will be considered ½ an absence (which counts towards the maximum allowed of 9) and will be deducted from your grade accordingly.

• If at any point in the semester, you wish to know where you are at in terms of attendance, please approach me before or after class, during office hours, or email me.

• It is your responsibility to be aware of both the attendance policy and your attendance count.

V. Requirements

This is an upper level university course, taken mostly by theatre majors. It involves a good deal of reading. Expect to spend 2-3 hours of work outside class for every hour in class. Part of the expectation of this course is that your writing level be appropriate to a university-level course in the humanities. If you are not confident regarding your writing ability, make arrangements now to take advantage of the university’s various writing assistance programs. Start with the Academic Assistance and Resource Center (AARC) on the first floor of Steen Library.

Research Paper: The central project for the duration of the semester will be a 15 page research paper on a topic of your choosing related to material covered in class. The actual writing process will be divided into multiple steps with separate due dates: topic / proposal, abstract, initial bibliography, annotated bibliography, rough draft and final draft. Your final grade for the paper will not be based solely on your final draft, but rather be determined by the accumulation of points via successful completion of the individual portions. The breakdown of these portions is as follows:

• topic / proposal: 25 points
• abstract: 50 points
• initial bibliography: 75 points
• annotated bibliography: 75 points
• rough draft: 100 points
• final draft: 175 points
In other words, you will be working on this project for the entirety of the semester and its grading will be calculated accordingly. (In other words, you won’t be able to pull an all-nighter the day before the paper is due.) Due dates are final dates by which you may hand in the necessary portion of the paper. A late penalty of 10 points will be applied for every day that a component is late. (Exceptions may be made in particular cases in accordance with the attendance policy.) You may however, hand in any portions earlier (and I encourage you to do so.) Further, you may hand in a revision of any portion (with the exception of the final draft, for which a revision will not be allowed) with the necessary adjustments at any point prior to the due date for the next portion or ask for additional feedback at any point during the process. Please note that if one of the components you hand in does not meet the minimum requirements for that component, you will forfeit the right to improve your grade through revision for that component. (For example, if your abstract is required to be 350 words and you hand in 100 words, you will not only receive a low grade for that component, but you will also not be allowed to improve upon that grade for revision.) Should you perform a revision, and should your revision reflect actual improvement, I will re-grade that particular portion.

500 points

Blog: For this class, you will be expected to actively contribute to the class blog on a weekly basis, totaling 11 blog contributions, of which the lowest grade will be dropped. Each week, you will need to a) write a blog post consisting of at least 500 words addressing the preceding week’s screenings and/or readings and b) write 4 responses (2 of which may, but do not have to be, in response to other people’s comments on your own blog) consisting of at least 100 words each.

10 contributions x 40 points each = 400 points

Participation / Effort: You are expected to come to class prepared and to be fully engaged during class discussions. This means that you are both physically and mentally present. As long as you meet both of these conditions, you will receive the full 100 points. However, absences (as outlined under the attendance policy) and disruptive behavior will lead to deductions.

100 points

Acceptable Student Behavior: Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

Please note: Cell phone use during class is highly distracting, both to me, and the classmates seated behind you. It is also rude. I have teacher eyes and can see you, even when you think you are staging a covert operation by placing the phone on your lap. I will ask you once to put your cell phone away. If I have to ask you a second time in the same class period, you will be marked as absent, though you are welcome to stay. (Exceptions to this rule are disability related use of cell phones, and emergencies, which require the monitoring of text messages or email. Both of these must be discussed with me beforehand.)
VI. Grading Policies

Grading Scale:

Final Grades are assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>900-1000</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>800-899</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>700-799</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>600-699</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>less than 600</td>
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Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54): Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

VII. Diversity

This class engages material covering a diverse range of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, and disability. While I encourage you to formulate and express your thoughts and opinions throughout the semester, discriminatory remarks will not be tolerated.

VIII. Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student_academic_dishonesty.pdf.

You are expected to be in full compliance with both the SFA policy and the School of Theatre policy:

SFA policy: Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.
School of Theatre policy: The School of Theatre expects students to maintain the highest standards of academic conduct. Misrepresenting someone else's work as your own or knowingly allowing someone else to represent your work as his/hers constitutes academic dishonesty. Such behavior is antithetical to our work as scholars, as artists, and as members of a community founded on trust and mutual respect. It is an insult to faculty and an affront to honest students. Penalties for academic dishonesty may range from failure of a specific project to failure of the course, suspension from the production season for up to one year, and referral to university authorities for further action, which may include suspension or expulsion from the university.

Please Note: You are expected to be familiar with and able to demonstrate proper procedures for citations, following either MLA or Chicago Style guidelines, both of which are available online. Failure to cite sources is a form of academic dishonesty and will be treated accordingly. I will trust that you are invested in your own education and will not cheat. However, this trust should not be confused for a lack of vigilance on my part. If you are caught, I will consider it a violation of personal trust and will not hesitate to penalize you to the fullest extent possible. I guarantee that the penalty you may incur for a late assignment will be less than the penalty for academic dishonesty.

IX. Additional Information

If you have a disability: To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities MUST contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Religious observance: If your observance of a religious holiday will prevent you from attending class, please contact me immediately so we can make appropriate arrangements.

X. Course Outline (Subject to Change!)^4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>CLASS TOPIC</th>
<th>READING DUE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WED, 1/20</td>
<td>Introduction and Syllabus</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>THE HOLOCAUST</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>FRI 1/22</td>
<td><strong>Screening:</strong> Excerpts from Night Will Fall (Singer, 2014)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MON 1/25</td>
<td><strong>Discussion:</strong> Night Will Fall (Singer, 2014)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>WED 1/25</td>
<td><strong>Discussion:</strong> Hiroshima by John Hersey</td>
<td>Hiroshima by John Hersey</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRI 1/29</td>
<td><em><strong>No Class</strong></em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>At Home Screening:</strong> Hannah Arendt (von Trotta, 2012)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(currently available on Netflix streaming or for rental</td>
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^4 Due to a variety of circumstances, the course outline may change. This may include changes to the screening titles and changes to dates on which certain topics are covered or reading is due. It is your responsibility to remain abreast of any changes to the course outline.
on Amazon streaming for $3.99)

***BLOG POST #1 DUE***

MON 2/1  Discussion: Hannah Arendt (von Trotta, 2012) +
Eichmann in Jerusalem by Hannah Arendt

WED 2/3  Screening: Excerpts from Theater of War
(Walter, 2008)

FRI 2/5  Discussion: Mother Courage by Bertolt Brecht +
Theater of War (Walter, 2008)

M, 2/8  Discussion: “Cultural Criticism + Society” by Theodor Adorno

***TOPIC/PROPOSAL DUE***

COMMEMORATION I: THE HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

WED 2/10  Discussion: The Holocaust Museum

FRI 2/12  Discussion: Preserving Memory by Edward T.
Linenthal

THE KOREAN WAR

MON, 2/15  Discussion: Humor and Conflict

WED, 2/17  Screening: Excerpts from M*A*S*H (Altman, 1970)

FRI, 2/19  Discussion: M*A*S*H (Altman, 1970)

THE VIETNAM WAR

MON, 2/22  Screening: The Fog of War (Morris, 2003)

WED, 2/24  Screening: The Fog of War (Morris, 2003) (cont’d)

FRI, 2/26  Discussion: The Fog of War (Morris, 2003)

MON, 2/29  ***NO CLASS*** (1-Act Play Festival)
WED, 3/2  Discussion: The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel by David Rabe

FRI, 3/4  Screening and Discussion: Excerpts from The Brig by The Living Theatre
***BLOG POST #6 DUE***

COMMEMORATION II: THE VIETNAM WALL

MON, 3/7  Screening: Excerpts from Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision (Mock, 1994)

Wed, 3/9  Discussion: The Vietnam Wall

THE COLD WAR

FRI, 3/11  Screening: Excerpts from X-Men First Class (Vaughn, 2011)
***BLOG POST #7 DUE***
***ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE***

MON, 3/14  **NO CLASS** (Spring Break)

WED, 3/16  **NO CLASS** (Spring Break)

FRI, 3/18  **NO CLASS** (Spring Break)

MON, 3/21  Screening: Excerpts from Watchmen (Snyder, 2009)

WED, 3/23  Discussion: Comic Books, Superheroes, and the Cold War

FRI, 3/25  **NO CLASS** (Easter Break)

MON, 3/28  **NO CLASS** (Easter Break)

THE GULF WAR

WED, 4/30  Discussion: The Gulf War Did Not Take Place
By Jean Baudrillard

FRI, 3/11  Screening: Excerpts from X-Men First Class (Vaughn, 2011)

***BLOG POST #7 DUE***

***ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE***

WED, 3/23  Discussion: Comic Books, Superheroes, and the Cold War

FRI, 3/25  **NO CLASS** (Easter Break)

MON, 3/28  **NO CLASS** (Easter Break)

THE GULF WAR

WED, 4/30  Discussion: The Gulf War Did Not Take Place
By Jean Baudrillard
FRI, 4/1  **NO CLASS**
At Home Screening: Three Kings (Russell, 1999)
(currently available for rental on Amazon streaming
for $3.99)
***BLOG POST #8 DUE***

MON, 4/4  Discussion: Three Kings (Russell, 1999)

*9/11 + “THE WAR ON TERROR”*

WED, 4/11  
Screening: 9/11 News Footage
Discussion: Regarding the Pain of Others by Susan +
9/11 News Footage

FRI, 4/13  Discussion: Omnium Gatherum by Theresa Rebeck +
Alexandra Gersten-Vasillaros
***BLOG POST #9 DUE***

MON, 4/18  Screening: Shut Up and Sing (Kopple + Peck, 2006)

WED, 4/20  Screening: Shut Up and Sing (Kopple + Peck, 2006)
(cont’d)

FRI, 4/22  Discussion: Shut Up and Sing (Kopple + Peck, 2006) +
The Brig at “Ground Zero”
***ROUGH DRAFT DUE***

*COMMEMORATION III: 9/11 MEMORIALS*

MON, 4/25  Discussion: 9/11 Museums and Memorials

*WITNESSING AND WAR PHOTOGRAPHY*

WED, 4/27  Discussion: Witnessing and War Photography

FRI, 4/29  Screening: Which Way is the Front Line From Here?
(Junger, 2013)
***BLOG POST #11 DUE***

WED, 5/2  Screening: Which Way is the Front Line From Here?
(Junger, 2013) (cont’d)

FRI, 5/4  Discussion: Which Way is the Font Line From Here?
(Junger, 2013)

WED, 5/6  Wrap-Up

WED, 5/11  8 am: ***FINAL PAPER DUE IN MY MAILBOX***