

Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Beyond
EALC 27605
Human Rights (HMRT) 25400
T/Th 3:00-4:20

Instructor: Norma Field (n-field@uchicago.edu); Office Hours: Fri 12:30-2:30, sign-up on door, Wieboldt 301

Week One: Early representations and reactions

Tuesday, April 1

Introduction; film clips from the 60-year history of the nuclear age

Thursday, April 3

John Hersey, *Hiroshima*

31 August 1946 *New Yorker* selections (Chalk)

Mary McCarthy, "The 'Hiroshima' *New Yorker*," Norman Cousins, "The Literacy of Survival" (1946; Bird and Lifschultz, 303-306) **ereserve**

Lane Fenrich, "Mass Death in Miniature: How Americans Became Victims of the Bomb" (Hein and Selden, 122-133)

Introduction to using Special Collections materials at JRL with David Palevich

Week Two: Early responses and representations (non-fictional)

Tuesday, April 8

Mahatma Gandhi, "The Atom Bomb & Ahimsa" (1946), Albert Camus, "Between Hell and Reason" (1945), Dwight Macdonald, "The Decline to Barbarism" (1945), and Reinhold Niebuhr, "Our Relations to Japan" (1945); (Bird and Lifschultz, 258-68; 275-77) **ereserve**

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Mandarins* (1956; 239-41) **ereserve**

Henry L. Stimson, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb" (1947; Bird and Lifschultz, 197-210) **ereserve**

Citizens' Memoirs, Pictures by Atomic Bomb Survivors, Children's Voices (Kyoko & Mark Selden, 173-242)

Photographs (1945 [one 1973] Kyoko & Mark Selden, 114-24); photographs from Joe O'Donnell, *Japan 1945: A U.S. Marine's Photographs from Ground Zero* (Nashville: Vanderbilt UP, 2005) (Chalk)

Domon Ken, "The Boy Who Was a Fetus: The Death of Kajiyama Kenji" (1958; Kyoko & Mark Selden, 157-69)

In-class screening: *White Light/Black Rain* (2007)

Thursday, April 10

Hara Tamiki, "Summer Flower" (1947; Oe, *The Crazy Iris*, 37-54)

Agawa Hiroyuki, "August 6" (1946; Kyoko & Mark Selden, 3-23)

Ota Yoko, "Residues of Squalor" (1947; Kyoko & Mark Selden, 55-85)

_____, "Fireflies" (1953; *The Crazy Iris*, 85-111)

Week Four : Beyond the nation state: The diversity of the target

Tuesday, April 15

Sodei Rinjirô, "Were We the Enemy? American Hibakusha" (1997; Hein and Selden, 232-59)

Toyonaga Keisaburô, "Colonialism and Atom Bombs: About Survivors of Hiroshima Living in Korea" (1995; Fujitani, White, Yoneyama, 378-94) **ereserve**

Lee Gi-sang, "The Unknown Victims" (1979; *Hibakusha: Survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki*, 120-35) **ereserve**

Sharing interview/dialogue I

Thursday, April 17

Carole Gallagher, *American Ground Zero* (1993; selections; Chalk)

Subcommittee on Energy Conservation and Power, U.S. House of Representatives, *American Nuclear Guinea Pigs: Three Decades of Radiation Experiments on US Citizens* (1986; 1-7) **ereserve**
 Assorted documents on ABCC (Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission) and DU (depleted uranium) (Chalk)

Sharing interview/dialogue I

Week Four: Atomic bomb literature (1) (possible visit by **M.T. Silvia** and screening of parts of her film-in-making, **Atomic Mom**)

Tuesday, April 22

Inoue Mitsuharu, "The House of Hands" (1960; *The Crazy Iris*, 145-68)
 Sata Ineko, "The Colorless Paintings" (1961; *The Crazy Iris*, 113-25)
 Hiroko Takenishi, "The Rite" (1963; *The Crazy Iris*, 169-200)

Thursday, April 24

John Treat, "Preface," "Introduction," "Atrocity into Words," "Genre and Post-Hiroshima Representation," "The Three Debates" (1995; *Writing Ground Zero*, ix-120)

Week Five: Atomic bomb literature (2)

Tuesday, April 29

John Treat, "Hara Tamiki and the Documentary Fallacy" (125-53); "Nagasaki and the Human Future" ()

Thursday, May 1

Hayashi Kyoko, "Two Grave Markers" (1975; Kyoko & Mark Selden, 24-54)
 _____, "The Empty Can" (1978; *The Crazy Iris*, 127-43)

Week Six: Newer representations and connections

Tuesday, May 6

Dr. Shuntaro Hida, "The Day Hiroshima Disappeared" (1982; Bird and Lifschultz, 415-32) **ereserve**
 Keiji Nakazawa, *Barefoot Gen* (1972-73)

Thursday, May 8

Yuki Tanaka, "Nuclear Power Plant Gypsies in High-Tech Society" (1985; Joe Moore, *The Other Japan: Conflict, Compromise, and Resistance Since 1945*, 251-71) **ereserve**
 Arundhati Roy, "The End of Imagination" (1999; Chalk)
 Fumiyo Kouno, *Town of Evening Calm, Country of Cherry Blossoms* (2004, 2006)

Week Seven: Commemoration struggles (1)

Tuesday, May 13

John Dower, "Unconditional Surrender at the Smithsonian" (1995; Bird and Lifschultz, 338-42) **ereserve**
 Barton Bernstein, "A Postwar Myth: 500,00 U.S. Lives Saved" (1986; Bird and Lifschultz, 130-34) **ereserve**
 Paul Fussell, "Thank God for the Atomic Bomb" (1988; Bird and Lifschultz, 211-22) **ereserve**
 Goldstein, Dillon, and Wenger, "Introduction" (1995; *Rain of Ruin: A Photographic History of Hiroshima and Nagasaki*, xi-xiii) **ereserve**

Thursday, May 15

William Lanouette, "Three Attempts to Stop the Bomb" (1992; Bird and Lifschultz, 99-118) **ereserve**
 George Roeder, "Making Things Visible: Learning from the Censors" (1997; Hein and Selden, 73-99)
 Paul Boyer, "Victory for What?--The Voice of the Minority" (1984; Bird and Lifschultz, 239-52) **ereserve**

In-class film: *Hiroshima: Why the Bomb Was Dropped* (1995)

Week Eight: Commemoration Struggles (2)

Tuesday, May 20

Monica Braw, "Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Voluntary Silence" (1997, Hein and Selden, 155-72)
 Ellen Hammond, "Commemoration Controversies: The War, the Peace, and Democracy in Japan" (1997, Hein and Selden, 100-21)

Lisa Yoneyama, "Memory Matters: Hiroshima's Korean Atom Bomb Memorial and the Politics of Identity" (1997; Hein and Selden, 202-231)

Thursday, May 22

Sharing archival research

Week Nine: The Burden of Proof and History's Ethical Challenges

Tuesday, May 27

Akira Tashiro, *Discounted Casualties: The Human Cost of Depleted Uranium*

In-class screening: *Hibakusha at the End of the World* (2003)

Thursday, May 29

John Rawls, "Fifty Years after Hiroshima" (1995; Bird and Lifschultz, 474-79) e

Gar Alperovitz, "Afterword: Questions, Issues, and Major Theories Concerning the Use of the Atomic Bomb" (1995; *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, 643-68) **ereserve**

Leo Szilard and Colleagues, "The July 17th Petition of the Manhattan Scientists" (1945) and William Lanouette, "A Note on the July 17th Petition" (Bird and Lifschultz, 552-60) e

Carol Cohn, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals" (1987) **ereserve**

Hugh Gusterson, "Remembering Hiroshima at a Nuclear Weapons Laboratory" (1997; Hein and Selden, 260-76)

Week Ten: Where Are We Now?

Tuesday, June 3

Sharing (interview/dialogue)

Thursday, June 5

Reading period

Some of the Why of This Course

The sixtieth anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki has come and gone. Many survivors began speaking out for the first time, pressed by the sense that they would not be around for the seventieth anniversary. The seventh review of the Treaty on Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) convened in May 2005 in New York concluded without substantive agreement on the many crucial issues facing the flawed but crucial treaty hammered out in 1968. The *Enola Gay* is on display at the Smithsonian in restored splendor. The decades since the bombings have seen nuclear power plant accidents, nuclear waste storage crises, and most recently, the proliferation of depleted uranium (DU) in combat and training sites. The familiar image of the mushroom cloud can no longer capture the multifarious dimensions of nuclear threat. And with shifting degrees of proclaimed urgency, North Korean and Iranian nuclear programs have been represented as preeminent threats to world stability. Global warming itself has occasioned the alluring declaration of a "nuclear renaissance" in response to energy needs.

In this course, we will consider the history of Hiroshima and Nagasaki through literature, film, photo essays, and nonfiction writing. While mindful of the different effects of these genres of representation (e.g., how do photos, drawings by adults, drawings by children, poems, fiction, or documentary records differ in their desire and capacity to convey horror?) we will grapple with the shifting understanding of the bomb both within and without Japan during the Cold War and beyond. The Smithsonian controversy of 1995 constitutes a major threshold in the history of U.S. consciousness. There, the exhibit organizers tried but failed to introduce artifacts and images portraying the bombs as experienced on the ground. This conflict and its outcome suggested the extent to which Americans had failed to inform themselves and reflect seriously upon the bombings in the postwar decades. If anything, levels of understanding seem to have declined. US veterans' claims that making room for the view from the ground in a national museum dishonored the sacrifice of US soldiers interestingly mirrored the view of Japanese veterans and their rightist sponsors who found the demand for acknowledgment and apology for Japanese war crimes offensive to the spirits of their martyred comrades. The latter phenomenon is also a reflection of how Japanese examination of atomic history has, with the growing demand for the acknowledgment of Japanese colonial history, moved beyond a singular focus on the United States to painful recognition of the liberatory status accorded the bombs in the former Asian empire.

Not only in spite of, but because our focus is on Japan, we will be considering the growing diversity of the population to whom the term "hibakusha" has been extended—the victims of radiation exposure, from nuclear bombing *and* other sources. Japanese have often been criticized for a "victim consciousness" with respect to the bombings, but Japanese peace and antinuclear activists have also acted on their knowledge of that history to concern themselves with the victims of Chernobyl, the impact of French nuclear testing in the South Pacific, of Indian and Pakistani testing, of uranium mining on Native American populations in the southwest, and now, most of all, the proliferation of depleted uranium (DU) in the sites of armed conflict as well as testing, especially since the Persian Gulf War.

The toxicity (metallurgical but especially radiological) of DU is a hotly contested issue. Long-term scientific investigation is obviously necessary, but many contend that the dramatic health problems exhibited by U.S. and NATO veterans as well as civilian populations in Iraq or the former Yugoslavia warrant banning the use of DU now. The US government at present denies the harmful health effects of DU. As we bring our study of the nuclear age to this moment, we will necessarily be confronting and reconsidering what has been the common last word in America, of the millions of lives saved by the Bomb.

Course projects

(a) We'll be reading texts, looking at pictures, watching films, and talking and listening to each other. All the readings except selections from books for purchase (see below) will be on Chalk. How we process this varied and contested material constitutes the substance of the course. To this end, each of you will choose an interlocutor outside the course with whom you will conduct a combined interview/dialogue. Your interlocutor may be a family member or a friend or a willing acquaintance. The first criterion of selection must be willingness to engage with you throughout the quarter. Our governing assumption is that the interview process affects the interviewer as well as the interviewee; in that sense, this is a combination of interview and dialogue. You will be thinking of how to draw on your own experience of examining the course materials—whether of horror, sorrow, confusion, or indifference, in formulating the questions you pose your interlocutors (without expecting them to read everything, or much of, our syllabus!). Your dialogue will also be affected by your life experiences prior to this course. Ideally, at the end, you will have an account of a journey undertaken by both of you.

Of course, you will want to be thinking about what kind of interlocutor you want. Someone considerably older, maybe with combat experience in WWII? a grandmother or neighbor who stayed on the "home front"? someone with childhood memories of the Bomb and its aftermath? a person from or living outside the U.S.? someone with strong convictions with which you agree? or disagree? a friend with a similar or contrasting background? Be thinking about how you would handle intense disagreement, or the expression of views you find offensive. Of course, we will all need to explore ways to discuss controversial topics in this course. Keep in mind that your interview/dialogue isn't a one-shot encounter. You may want, for whatever reason, to keep your interlocutor anonymous and assign a nickname. (We will discuss this more in class.) If your interlocutor is not an English speaker, you'll be dealing with (invaluable) translation issues. Keep in mind that we are not here to judge your interlocutors' knowledge and claims.

Your interviews can be conducted by email, telephone, or in person. Give the question of format some thought in choosing your interlocutor. Email leaves a written record, and some people are freer in writing than in speech. On the other hand, you don't get the information that voice can offer—hesitation, excitement, agitation. You should conduct a minimum of three distinct sessions, spaced through the quarter as much as possible.

You do not need verbatim transcripts, but you must keep a record of the questions you formulate in advance. You will undoubtedly not be using all of these questions, and you will assuredly be posing some unanticipated questions, depending on where the conversation takes you. Each week, by 10 p.m. on **Monday** and **Wednesday**, you will post to Chalk, on the discussion board for that week, two questions (one each night) derived from readings and discussion. Think about what the readings are trying to do, how they support or contest each other. Think about the effect of different media. Please also post second thoughts about any topic after we've had a discussion. The Chalk postings give us both a starting point for class discussion and a pool of questions for you to consider using in your interviews. Be sure to write up each conversation as soon as possible (even if you're using email, write up a quick analysis) after it takes place. You will be giving interim reports to the class, sharing successes, failures, and impasses.

As a final project, you will be writing up a 2500-4000 word account of your interview/dialogue. Again, this is a chance to take stock of your own learning process as well as to explore your interlocutor's understanding. How do the questions you deemed important in early April look by the end of May? Did your style of engagement change? your interlocutor's? Do you think your interlocutor's views changed? As you can see, through this interview/dialogue, you are also producing an informal oral history of the present, of ways of thinking about nuclear

history. Let's hope that your differences and the diversity of your interlocutors will stretch all our minds. Indeed, how could they not?

(b) We will also take advantage of our peculiar good fortune, namely, that we are at an institution intimately tied to the history we are studying. As the inscription to Henry Moore's sculpture *Nuclear Energy* puts it, "On December 2, 1942, man achieved here the first self-sustaining chain reaction and thereby initiated the controlled release of nuclear energy." Special Collections in Regenstein is a treasure trove of documents relating to the "atomic scientists" who lived and worked here. We will get an introduction to parts of the collection at the beginning of the course. You will work in small groups to produce a short report on a particular aspect of the nuclear era as it developed here at the University of Chicago, such as how Henry Moore's sculpture came to reside next to Regenstein Library, or what President Robert Maynard Hutchins thought of the Manhattan Project before, during, and afterwards, or how the Doomsday Clock got started and what effect it's had.

This material, too, can be part of your conversation with your interviewee.

(c) Let's start off each class meeting with a contribution by anyone of nuclear-related news. Please also post to the "Current Events" discussion board. We'll try to think about how these news sightings relate to the main thread of our course, the historic use of nuclear weapons and the continued use of nuclear weapons and nuclear energy.

(d) Please be sure to check Chalk messages for schedule changes.

Grading

Participation, through Chalk and in class, is crucial: 35%; archival (teamed) project, 25%; interview-dialogue, 40%.

Readings

Titles for purchase at Seminar Co-op:

Hersey, John. *Hiroshima*. Vintage Books, 1989.

Nakazawa, Keiji. *Barefoot Gen*, Vol. 1 Last Gasp, 2004 [1972-3].

Hein, Laura and Mark Selden, eds. *Living with the Bomb: American and Japanese Cultural Conflicts in the Nuclear Age*.

Kouno, Fumio. *Town of Evening Calm, Country of Cherry Blossoms*. Last Gasp, 2006.

Oe Kenzaburo, ed. *The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath* (N.Y.: Grove Press, 1985

Selden, Kyoko and Mark Selden, eds. *The Atomic Bomb: Voices from Hiroshima and Nagasaki*. M.E. Sharpe, 1991.

Title for purchase from instructor:

Akira Tashiro. *Discounted Casualties: The Human Cost of Depleted Uranium*. Chugoku Shimbun, 2001. (approx. \$12 + shipping)

Titles with excerpts on Chalk

Gar Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb and the Architecture of an American Myth* (N.Y.: Knopf, 1995)

- Kai Bird and Lawrence Lifschultz, eds. *Hiroshima's Shadow: Writings on the Denial of History and the Smithsonian Controversy* (Stony Creek, Ct.: Pamphleteer's Press, 1998)
- Carol Cohn, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 1987, Vol. 12, No. 4
- Hibakusha: Survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki* (Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Co., 1986)
- Simone de Beauvoir, *The Mandarins* (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1956)
- T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama, eds. *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*. (Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 2001)
- Donald M. Goldstein, Katherine V. Dillon, and J. Michael Wenger, *Rain of Ruin: A Photographic History of Hiroshima & Nagasaki* (Dulles, Va.: Prange Enterprises, Inc., 1995)
- Joe Moore, ed. *The Other Japan: Conflict, Compromise, and Resistance since 1945* (N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1997)
- Subcommittee on Energy Conservation and Power, U.S. House of Representatives, *American Nuclear Guinea Pigs: Three Decades of Radiation Experiments on US Citizens* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986)
- Treat, John. *Writing Ground Zero: Japanese Literature and the Atomic Bomb*. U. of Chicago Press, 1996.