

Beginning After the End: Reconstruction in Post-Catastrophic Societies
 History 28502
 Winter Quarter: History

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*After every war
 Someone has to tidy up.
 Things won't pick themselves up, after all.
 --Wisława Szymborska, "The End and the Beginning"*

In the twentieth century, political violence has led to mass disasters with increasing frequency, leaving societies in physical, economic, medical and spiritual rubble: "shatter zones," as some scholars have termed these kinds of places. This course examines how people "clean up" (metaphorically): how they rebuild and reorganize families, communities, and nations after disasters which decimated their societies beyond recognition; how and if they bind up the wounds; how (and if) victims and perpetrators come to live with each other and how outsiders—aid workers, relief organizations, armies, observers—can help and how they can hinder. We will focus on Cambodia and Rwanda; and bring to bear the literature of other catastrophes, large and small, beginning with the Holocaust.

This is an intensive reading/discussion course. Assignments are: excellent preparation for each week's discussion; weekly short quizzes (5 questions) to test your knowledge of basic facts the readings present; and one final paper (8-10 pp.) on a topic related to post-catastrophic societies. I will distribute a list of suggested topics the 3rd week of class.

All essays, book excerpts, and poems are on e-reserve. I've marked them with an asterisk *

Assigned books (available at Seminary Co-op)

Elizabeth Becker, When the War Was Over
 James Dawes, That the World May Know
 Philip Gourevitch, We Wish to Inform You...

Jan Gross, Neighbors
 Jean Hatzfeld, Machete Season
 Peter Maguire, Facing Death in Cambodia
 Samantha Power, A Problem from Hell

Seminar 1 (January 6) Introduction

Seminar 2 (January 13) . *After the War: Bad things happen; more bad things happen*

Jan Gross, Neighbors
 *Jean Amery, “Resentments,” from At the Mind’s Limits

*Czelaw Milosz, “Campo dei Fiori”

Seminar 3 (January 20) *After the War: the determination to forestall catastrophe. Human rights and the disposition toward violence*

*Kenneth Cmiel, “Recent History of Human Rights,” American Historical Review 109 (February, 2004), 117-35. [available on J-STOR ; e-reserve]
 Samantha Power, “A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide,”
 Preface and pp. 1-85
 *Hannah Arendt, “War and Terror” (1953)

Seminar 4 (January 27) *Cambodia: the catastrophe*

Elizabeth Becker, When the War Was Over preface, chs. 1, 4-8

film: The Khmer Rouge Ricefields: the Story of Rape Survivor Tang Kim, dir. Rachana Phat (2004) in class

Seminar 5 (February 3) *Cambodia: the response from the international community*

Power, “Cambodia,” and “Speaking Loudly,” chs. 6-7 in “A Problem from Hell”
 Peter Maguire, Facing Death in Cambodia, chs 1-4.

Seminar Six (February 10) *Cambodia: catastrophe in the long aftermath*

Peter Maguire, Facing Death in Cambodia. Chs. 5-end

*Lindsey French, "The Political Economy of injustice and compassion: amputees on the Thai-Cambodia border," in Embodiment and Experience: the existential ground of culture and self, ed. Csordas

*Stansell, "Torment and Justice in Cambodia," Dissent (2005)

film: Socheata Poeuv, New Year Baby (2006) (in class)

Week Seven (February 17) *Rwanda: the catastrophe*

Philip Gourevitch, We Wish to Inform You..., Part One
Power, "Rwanda, " in "A Problem from Hell"

*Hatzfeld, Life Laid Bare, excerpts

Film: Hotel Rwanda, dir. Terry George (2004) (outside class)

Short assignment: is the film historically accurate?

Week Eight (February 24) *Rwanda: explaining the genocide, rebuilding after genocide*

Gourevitch, We Wish to Inform You, Part Two

Hatzfeld, Machete Season

Film: Ghosts of Rwanda, dir. Greg Barker (2004)

Week Nine (March 3) *Aid and relief workers : what aid, what relief? Listening to anguish*

--*Dori Laub. " Bearing Witness or the Vicissitudes of Listening," in Testimony: Crises of Witnessing, ed. Laub and Shoshana Felman

James Dawes, That the World May Know

Week Ten: (March 10) *Is there Reconciliation after Catastrophe?: Justice, Forgiveness, Apologies*

Minow, Between Vengeance and Forgiveness, Introduction, 2-3, 6

*Stansell, "I was Sick During the Genocide," Dissent (2007)

*Lars Waldorf , "Mass Justice for Mass Atrocities"

And bones....

--*Seth Mydans, "Skulls Haunt Cambodia," New York Times

--*"Ex-King Urges Cremation of Khmer Rouge Victims"

Film: In Rwanda We Say , dir. Anne Aghlon