

The University of Toronto
Writing Memory
German 326H / Fall 2011

Instructor:	John Noyes	Dept:	German
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Hours:	X 0-0 (& by app.)	Tel.:	416-926-2344

Class meets on Wednesdays **4-6** at *venue tba*

Description

The six decades since the fall of Nazi Germany in 1945 have created a society with a complex and many-layered relationship with the past. As the public gained insight into the atrocities of the Nazi's, a number of authors began to ask what the horrors of the past might mean for an understanding of German identity in the present. As the years passed and a new generation emerged, the collective memory of Nazi Germany began to take on a new meaning, merging with the generation conflicts and the struggles for social justice in the post-war decades. And then, when the political order of Europe changed with the fall of the Berlin wall, the German past acquired a new level of complexity. In this course we will examine the struggles for collective memory in Germany in these decades. In particular, we will read literary texts in which memory of the past becomes a story, or a set of conflicting stories, and where language becomes a tool for reshaping the past.

Course Goals

Students will gain a closer understanding of the unique struggles for consensus on the past in Germany. This will be done through a combination of close reading, together with analysis of select critical works. Students will also be given insight into the historical and social background to the literature of Germany from 1945 to the present. Classes will combine lectures on the texts with open seminar-style discussions, giving students the opportunity to practice their active and passive knowledge of German.

Requirements / Evaluation

Attendance and active participation	10 %
Journal	20 %
Two short papers	30 %

Term paper

40 %

Materials

Hans Erich Nossack: Der Untergang, Suhrkamp, 3518015230

Peter Weiss: Die Ermittlung, Suhrkamp, 3518188658

Paul Celan: Die Niemandsrose, Fischer, 3596222230

Hartmut Lange, Das Konzert, Diogenes, 3257216459

W. G. Sebald: Austerlitz, Fischer, 3596148642

Calendar

Note: The purpose of this calendar is to provide a general idea of how this course is structured. It may be subject to change. A binding course syllabus will be provided at the first class session.

- Week 1 What is memory?
- Week 2 Jaspers: Die Schuldfrage (1946)
- Week 3 Nossack: Der Untergang (1948)
- Week 4 Celan: Die Niemandsrose (1963)
- Week 5 Weiss: Die Ermittlung (1965)
- Week 6 Lange: Das Konzert (1985)
- Week 7 Der Historikerstreit (1986)
- Week 8 Grünbein: Nach den Satiren (1999)
- Week 9 Sebald: Austerlitz (2001)
- Week 10 Sebald: Austerlitz (2001)
- Week 11 Das Leben der Anderen
- Week 12 Das Leben der Anderen