

Conference Abstracts (of Regular Session)

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Session 1A-1

Adina Balint-Babos, PhD (University of Winnipeg)

The Writing of Herta Müller: Poetics of Resistance

Belonging to the last generation of Romanian-born writers of German language, Herta Müller (born 1953) has spent her childhood and youth in a minority community in the Communist Transylvania. By drawing on two of her latest novels translated into French – *La bascule du souffle* (2010) and *Animal du coeur* (2012) – I will analyze aspects of the “poetics of resistance” in her writing, both thematically and at the level of the literary discourse. Certain events and characters will lead me to reflect upon such questions as daily life under a dictatorial regime, ambiguity as resistance to submission, as well as the transmission and representation of a collective traumatic event. Drawing on Jacques Derrida’s ideas about “the politics of the language” and its subverting power, I question the political and aesthetic value of Müller’s writing “beyond the regime” while attempting to illustrate the complexity and perversion of the human being caught in the dictatorial machine.

Session 1A-2

Michael Zimmermann (University of Regina)

Fragmentation by Trauma in Works by Herta Müller

Notions of Germanness associated with the principle of *jus sanguinis* are being tested in a modern-day, globalising Germany. Entitlement through *Volkszugehörigkeit* (ethnicity) is an oft criticised right guaranteed in Germany's Basic Law. Minority populations of displaced ethnic Germans (re-)adapted their identities to Germany following WWII. Settled in the late 18th century to frontier regions of the Austrian empire, Banat Germans are one such group of ethnic Germans. Waves of emigration in the 1960s and especially following Ceausescu's demise in 1989 have seen the near decimation of the German ethnic population in Romania.

The theme of Banat German co-ethnic identity finds continued inclusion in German media. One such example is Martin Enlen's television film *Das Geheimnis in Siebenbürgen / The Secret in Transylvania* (ZDF 2011), a movie that shows the overcoming of repressed trauma and a reconciliation of Romanian-German differences through the confrontation with the past.

Perhaps the best known literary treatment of the trauma of the Banat population is that by Herta Müller. In her work, suicidal ideation is a constant part of the identity of those who suffered under Ceausescu. For those in Romania's German minority, trauma and oppression find their sources not just in the Soviet-imposed totalitarian regime, but also in the connection to a Nazi past, the memory of which is formed indirectly: "... my father's life began at a time I knew best from the books of Edgar, Kurt and Georg and least from father himself: An SS-man who came back from the war, who had made graveyards and left places in a hurry..." (*Green Plums* 65). Thus, Müller's work gives testimony not only to individual and collective trauma, obtaining from the direct experience of political oppression, but also to the indirect, transgenerational burden of the *volksdeutsch* involvement in wartime ethnic cleansing. Identity, language, and the concept of *Heimat* are fragmented by trauma and those who seek affirmation of identity in Germany are met with a sense of homelessness and loss. This paper examines the causes and manifestations of trauma as depicted in Müller's works *The Land of Green Plums*, *The Passport*, and *The Hunger Angel: A Novel*.

Session 1A-3

Thyra E. Knapp (University of North Dakota)

Anne Duden and the Aesthetics of Atrocity

Anne Duden's early texts, *Übergang* (1982) and *Das Judasschaf* (1985), feature female protagonists who struggle to find voices capable of expressing unspeakable atrocities. These German women of the second generation experience a disorienting sort of double-identification in their attempts to comprehend both the condition of the marginalized outsider as well as that of the submissively complicit perpetrator.

This problematic perspective does not lend itself to a traditional linear narrative, but rather to an aesthetic experience meant to accurately convey the splintered psychological state of the protagonist-narrators. Wracked with guilt over the events of the Holocaust, these women seem to innately know that if they do not keep the horrors of Nazi Germany alive in their own consciousness—functioning as repositories of cultural memory—that the atrocities perpetrated there will be forgotten. This weighty responsibility forces them to continually shuttle between a reality too painful to face and a fictional world too elusive to grasp. The struggle to negotiate these opposing worlds, and the confusion and frustration that result, are effectively conveyed through what Margret Brüggemann and Margaret Littler have termed Duden's postmodern German feminist aesthetic.

In this paper, I will investigate the ways in which Duden creates complex texts that endeavor to represent how her characters deal with atrocity. The externalization of the protagonists' psychological sufferings (resulting from collective guilt) through *ekphrasis* and visceral corporeality creates narratives in which their experiences are cathartically transposed and transformed into what can be considered an aesthetic of atrocity.

Session 1B-1

Kathy L. Gaca (Vanderbilt University)

Death to All Enemy Sperm: Genocidal Culture since Antiquity and its Basis in Martial Power

As argued by Shaw (*), in modern society warfare has often proved conducive to genocide. However, as rightly but too briefly noted by Jones (**), warfare and genocide have not always been two discrete practices, for in classical antiquity, there was a widespread norm of populace-ravaging warfare that was expressly genocidal in its aim. As I argue in my paper, since the later Bronze Age, overlords and their martial elites forcibly recruited, developed, and drew upon specialized subordinate forces in all-male corporate units. At their discretion, they used these forces like kill dogs to exterminate, among targeted communities of people (often but hardly always of another ethnicity), either all the males adult and older, or all the males, preadolescent boys included, while seizing and socially deracinating the girls and young women as live captives to subjugate, exploit, and co-opt, partly through rape and forcible impregnation. This use of genocidal warfare was contagious because it was short-term profitable and exhilarating for those wielding temporary supremacy, but it was long-term devastating for civil culture as previously known and practiced in the *longue durée* of human civilization before the later Bronze Age.

As further argued in my paper, genocidal populace-ravaging, in active practice or wielded as a threatening capability, the 'or else' to gain compliance with oppression less devastating and ghastly than ravaging, brought about a pervasive (but not uniformly totalizing) re-engineering of emergent Western society from the late Bronze Age to late antiquity and beyond. This retooled social order can appropriately be called 'genocidal culture' because it was predicated on the grim cross-cultural principle of martial masters and their elites asserting their power unilaterally to inflict death and torments 1) on those lower in the martial hierarchy by those at its heights, such as commanders having forces killed who rebelled against orders or having the rebels' wives and daughters raped and sons killed, and 2) on the myriad peoples conquered and ravaged or overthrown and oppressed by the forces who themselves labored under multiple versions of Damocles' sword. The many cross-cultural applications of this principle in antiquity provide far-reaching insights into the martial contours of ancient genocidal culture as an expression of an unflinching warlord capability to use genocide to, say, thin the herds of his adversary's 'unwarring multitude' (*imbellis multitudo*), now known as 'non-combatants' or to do the same to his own restive forces or to the forces of his adversary.

*M. Shaw, *War & Genocide: Organized Killing in Modern Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press 2003), 5 and *passim*.

**A. Jones, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction* (New York: Routledge 2006), 326.

Session 1B-2

Catherine Gilbert (University of Nottingham)

From Surviving to Living: The Role of Testimony in Post-Genocide Rwanda

Testimony plays an essential role in the transmission of human experience, and has become an important mode of expression for survivors of trauma. During the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, acts of unspeakable violence were committed against women. Without any form of official documentation, how can their experiences be communicated? How can the horrors of genocide be expressed? This paper proposes to analyse the *prise de parole* of Rwandan women genocide survivors, focusing in particular on the published testimonies of Berthe Kayitesi (2009) and Esther Mujawayo (2004). Drawing also on fieldwork carried out in Rwanda in the month of April 2012, this paper will consider the framework in which survivors are permitted to tell their stories, and the central role of testimony in transmitting and preserving the memory of genocide.

Predominant in the testimonies are the continuing impact of trauma on women's lives and the ongoing process of survival. Critics such as Alexandre Dauge-Roth (2010) contend that survivors embody a 'disturbing presence' in post-genocide Rwanda, and their voices are too often being silenced by the dominant discourse. I will argue that, for these marginalised women, the act of bearing witness is a means of reclaiming their voice and breaking the silence imposed upon them. I intend to show how, on an individual level, the act of testimony plays a crucial role in facilitating the passage from *surviving* to *living*, in working through trauma and re-engaging with the present. Moreover, despite the many obstacles, testimony has become an essential tool in the process of reconciliation at a national level, as well as bridging the gap between Rwanda and the West and leading to a greater understanding of the 'unspeakable' events of 1994.

Session 1B-3

Shannon Scully (Clark University)

The Politics of Memory and the Display of Human Remains in Rwanda: Murambi Genocide Memorial

This paper examines the use and public display of preserved human remains in memorialization practices at the Murambi Genocide Memorial in the Southern Province of Rwanda. Murambi Genocide Memorial is a school that has been turned into a memorial site in Rwanda, where 50,000 Tutsis were massacred in April 1994 during the Genocide against the Tutsi. During the exhumations of the mass graves in 1995, 848 bodies were preserved and are now on display in 24 classrooms, lying on wooden-slat tables. I present a hitherto-unexplored academic perspective regarding memorialization in post-conflict Rwanda, specifically relating to Murambi. Contrary to other academic accounts, which argue that such displays are un-dignified, an unjustified display of atrocity, or simply a display of the victors' historical narrative, I intend to show the display of human remains plays an integral role in the preservation of the memory of the Genocide.

I explain why the bodies at Murambi serve as effective tools for education about genocide, preserving the memory of the events that occurred there – events that took place throughout Rwanda and are a reminder of the potential consequences when hatred and impunity are left to fester. It shows how they serve a purpose for future generations of Rwandese, and the world, that is greater than negative individual or political reactions. Holocaust survivor and author Primo Levi wrote that although he was witness to the Holocaust, the true witnesses were those who were killed. The bodies at Murambi, therefore, are the true witnesses to the Genocide against the Tutsi, and it is argued their existence and display should be valued and preserved, not covered and buried.

Session 1C-1

Michael Kilburn (Endicott College) & Nathalie Saltikoff (Endicott College)

Soldiers' Tales (Un)told: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Narrative and Trauma in the Consideration and Treatment of PTSD (and preTSD)

This paper examines the role of narrative in conflict, both preemptively and in the aftermath of atrocity. Drawing on an interdisciplinary roundtable discussion at the 2011 OHA conference in Denver and a presentation at *Beyond Testimony and Trauma: Oral History in the aftermath of mass violence*. at Concordia University in March 2012, this paper outlines current research and treatment of PTSD among combat veterans and other victims of conflict. It considers the role of narrative in understanding, reintegration and reconciliation from a variety of disciplinary perspectives and approaches: clinical/physiological; psychological/human services; cultural/sociological; public health/administrative; and historical/political. While the initial focus is PTSD among combat veterans, the discussion necessarily engages larger issues of trauma, memory and history: the social and political responsibilities of bearing witness to traumatic histories; the ethics and protocols of interviewing survivors; and the broad relation of narrative and storytelling to social reconciliation, restorative justice, and historical truth. Particular consideration is given the possibilities and dilemmas of applying oral history methods to the consideration and treatment of trauma. From talk therapy to Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, various narrative strategies have shown great promise for mitigating the psychological and sociological traumatic disorders of conflict and atrocity. A greater understanding of the function of narrative in healing the wounds of war may also suggest preemptive strategies to the political (meta)narratives that frame, provoke, and legitimize organized violence in the first place.

Session 1C-2

Elizabeth Pirnie (University of Calgary)

The Soldier I Was Then vs. The Soldier I Am Now: Dichotomic Identity Construction Through Winter Soldier (2008) Testimonies

In 1971, the ‘Winter Soldier Investigation’ was held in Detroit, Michigan. Its goal was to educate the public and bring an end to the U.S. occupation of Vietnam. Over 100 Vietnam veterans testified to war crimes and atrocities they claimed to have participated in or were witness to during their combat tours in Vietnam. In the same spirit, a second Winter Soldier event, ‘Winter Soldier: Iraq and Afghanistan – Eyewitness Accounts of the Occupation’, was held in Silver Spring, Michigan in March 2008. Convened over four days, recently discharged members of Iraq Veterans Against the War testified to the ‘realities’ of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and called for the withdrawal of troops from Iraq.

Adopting a post-structuralist framework for discourse analysis, this investigation treats language, not as a readable symptom of some hidden reality of the speaker, but as an interpretive, situational and interested mode of constructing ‘reality’ through talk. Consequently, this paper approaches the recalled memories of the testifying veterans, not as an accurate account of an objective history, but as an operation of identity construction whereby each soldiers’ account of the past constructs a frame through which their present identity performance can be understood. Therefore, the proposed paper does not look to the accuracy or authenticity of the soldiers’ testimonies but rather investigates the social and political function of the identities constructed through their performative effects.

Having performed a close textual analysis of the Winter Soldier (2008) testimony transcripts, this paper illustrates: first, how ‘Winter Soldier (1971)’ discursively frames the participation and identities of the 2008 testifying veterans; second, how rhetorical operations of ‘victimization’ and normative standards of soldier behavior in the ‘theatre of war’ are invoked to construct the U.S. military occupation of Iraq as a social problem; and third, how testifying veterans situate themselves as divided subjects - ‘the soldier I was then’ and ‘the soldier I am now’ – through the deployment of dichotomic identity motifs (e.g. the Naive vs. Knowing Soldier; the Powerless vs. Empowered Soldier, the Monster vs. Human Soldier).

Key Words: identity, Winter Soldier, constructionist, testimony, discourse analysis

Session 1C-3

Lori Newcomb (Wayne State College)

Double Jeopardy: Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*

Tim O'Brien, inserting himself as a character in his novel *The Things They Carried*, contemplates dodging his draft notice and breaks down in sobs on a boat floating on a river that divides the United States and Canada. This river represents the ideological struggle between the narrative of American patriotism that shames a man for fleeing the draft and the narrative of conscientious objection to war. Tim gives in to the first narrative, saying that he "would go to the war – I would kill and maybe die – because I was embarrassed not to" (62). The narrative of patriotism propels the individual into the traumatic situation yet provides no healing for the soldier's trauma upon his return to America, where the most vocalized narrative is one of objection to his participation in the war.

The message the soldier receives, then, is "you're a traitor if you don't go to war, but after you come home traumatized, you'll have to feel guilty about going in the first place." The Vietnam soldier therefore fails to cope with his trauma because of his inability to create a community of those who either can share his experience or who can listen effectively to both the "shock of the first moment" and for the "temporal delay that carries the individual beyond" it (Caruth 10).

I argue that the trauma in O'Brien's novel is rooted in and exacerbated by the narrative of American patriotism that is used to legitimize war, and I posit that the stories O'Brien's soldiers tell – stories that are not objectively true but are viscerally true or what O'Brien calls "story truth" – function as fabrications that heal. This 'story truth' functions in opposition to the media-constructed war of which Baudrillard writes: while the war that "did not take place" is presented to the masses as reality but is in fact a constructed narrative (*The Gulf War* 61-89), 'story truth' is presented as a fabricated narrative that more closely reflects the soldier's experience of war.

In this regard, a nontraditional community of soldier storytellers helps to heal the damage created by the master narrative. Victims of this damage struggle in creating this community on the home front, but it can be formed on the war front because the home-based narrative that sent soldiers to war is more easily re-created, ironically, away from home.

Session 2A-1

Stephan Jaeger (University of Manitoba)

Cultural History Approaches to War Museums. To Experience the Past and Learn for the Future?

Do war museums mainly function as attractions for military and military history enthusiasts? Do they mainly document the past? Do they glorify individual war heroes and nations as act of commemorating the past? Are they always supportive of the plight and suffering of soldiers who need to be recognized in their sacrifices? How do they represent the enemy and civilian victims?

My paper will briefly sketch out war representations in the current European museum landscape and then focus on the new exhibit (and redesigned building) of the Military History Museum of the German Federal Armed Forces in Dresden, which on the one hand, continues a German documentary tradition in recent war historiography. It bases its exhibit in particular on original objects and images and mostly avoids empathy of history in favour of historical distance. Yet, on the other hand, the museum creates a new temporalized space by combining the traditional story of German warfare in the 19th century Arsenal Building from 1300 till the present with a 'thematic course' in Daniel Libeskind's wedge (cutting through the old building). This thematic course represents the violent effects of war as universalized ideas and fields such as memory, games, language, suffering, animals, formation, destruction or technology.

The clash of a cultural history of violence and an anthropological, almost universal representation of ideas and fields of violence in the Military History Museum in Dresden creates a museum space that puts the visitor into a temporalized situation, transcending the German mode of documenting war to understand the past. The past also becomes present in its cultural impact on society, whereas the emphasis on the cultural concept of violence forces the visitor to reflect upon the relation between violence / war and his or her personal attitude and actions as well as future goals of society. The final section of the paper will briefly compare the Military History Museum in Dresden to the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa which chooses a very different approach to connecting the experience of the past with learning for the present by linking the military past of the Canadian nation to Canadian national identity.

Session 2A-2

Jennifer Carter (Université du Québec à Montréal)

Beyond Pedagogy: The Imperative to Perform in Museums of Human Rights

A globalized human rights movement that has shifted dominant discourses from citizenship formation to universal human rights is also manifest in museums foregrounding a human rights and social justice agenda. Museums such as the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos in Santiago, Chile, and Liberty Osaka in Japan have taken up human rights as the subject of their mission, exhibitions, and programming initiatives, with the effect that human rights as a subject and practice are increasingly debated within museum institutions worldwide.

Human rights museums may seem to cohere through their aims to make human rights a museological phenomenon, however the nature of the institution's investiture in the subject is anything but universal. Addressing genocide, civil rights, war, and slavery, in addition to peace, memory, and tolerance through the lens of a human rights framework, human rights museums are growing in number and diversity of approaches. Their discourses interrogate these subjects widely, varying from the celebration or protection of rights, to community experiences of fundamental rights transgressed.

One of the ways that museums are engaging in the work of human rights borrows from contemporary human rights practices and discourses themselves. This paper analyses the evolving phenomenon of human rights museology within several case study institutions, arguing that the pedagogies of human rights organizations can be useful to museum work. A human rights education perspective instructs on methods of advocacy, public outreach, and mobilization, in addition to capacity building, facilitating, and conflict prevention and resolution. These skills provide models for thinking through how other institutions approach the field of human rights advocacy in society.

Session 2A-3

Jennifer A. Orange (University of Toronto)

The Museum As An Agent of Social Change

The last two decades have brought a new global trend in museology. Museums on six continents have demonstrated new approaches to human rights. While human rights have always been at the museum's core function of knowledge preservation and sharing, this recent focus is different. Museums are no longer representing human rights violations and achievements as past instances. Instead, museums are developing tools to proactively change social practices to enhance the future realization of human rights. By developing new practices, the museum is changing from a mirror of society to an active agent of social change.

This paper will identify the shift in museum practice from preservation, education and memorialization to advocacy and activism within sites of social conflict. It will discuss the potential for museums, as institutions with unique positions in our society, to promote human rights and enhance social justice. It will then critically analyze the challenges brought by public and private funders, audiences, affected communities and museum professionals and question whether the museum is actually in a position to advocate effectively for human rights.

As an example of the extraordinary potential of a museum and its accompanying challenges, the paper will then investigate the case of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights by discussing its mandate, the work method with which it is creating its content, and its funding challenges. It will also note the community outcry about the gallery formation and the political hurdles that the museum has faced.

The paper will conclude with an assessment of whether the CMHR is meeting the potential of a human rights museology and what might be done differently to further its success.

Session 2B-1

Sara Matthews (Wilfrid Laurier University)

Teaching and Learning from Narratives of Violence: Photography as Witness

Abstract: This paper reports on a research project that explores the use of witnessing portfolios in teaching and learning from narratives of violence. A witnessing portfolio is an assemblage of photographs and text that respond to the student's engagement with the curriculum, including readings, visual resources and classroom discussions. In the portfolio, students record their impressions and reactions to the curriculum using photography and text. These reactions then form the basis for a meta-analysis that culminates in the articulation of an ethics of witnessing. The approach was developed by the primary researcher as the final assignment for a fourth year undergraduate seminar entitled "Narratives of/about Violence". The project explores the following questions: how do witnessing portfolios symbolize and/or represent the work of learning from narratives of social violence? How do witnessing portfolios contain the student's experience of learning? And, what are the possibilities and limits of witnessing portfolios in classroom learning? The research methodology draws on the psychoanalytic concepts of free association and interpretation to understand the work of symbolizing "difficult knowledge" (Pitt and Britzman 1998) in the context of learning from narratives of social conflict, violence and war.

Session 2B-2

Angela Failer (University of Winnipeg)

Memorial Witnessing: Public Sites Dedicated to the Victims of the 1985 Air India Bombings

This paper offers observations from an in-progress multi-case study of Canadian government-sponsored public memorial sites dedicated to the victims of the 1985 Air India Bombings. I consider the development, location and design of the memorial structures and how, as aesthetic objects, they represent the Air India bombing history. I explore how remembrance of the bombings is framed at these sites through official unveiling and commemorative ceremonies, and how memorial-goers and everyday park visitors experience and engage with these sites. I pay particular attention to instances of memorial-going that might be considered counterpublic witnessing, in other words, instances that resist official framings by making visible memories that unsettle tacit readings of the memorials and their official narratives as incontestable truths, thereby challenging the dynamics of power that underpin dominant public discourses on histories of terror and violence. This paper is also concerned with how the Air India memorials function pedagogically since, for the broader public, these sites potentially serve to educate in the absence of 'first-hand' memories or other available narratives of the bombings. In the broadest sense, I am interested in whether and/or how these sites contribute to public memory and/or social forgetting; whether and/or how these sites render this particular past meaningful in and for the present.

Session 2B-3

Dina Georgis (University of Toronto)

Queer Residues of War in Akram Zaatari's *Red Chewing Gum*

Abstract: This paper takes up Akram Zaatari's video *Red Chewing Gum* (2000) to think about the relationship between aesthetic representation and remembering the Lebanese civil war. Zaatari is among the Lebanese artists who have publicly criticized Lebanese war amnesia. Their work offers an aesthetic archive of war that challenges a public culture that has been defined by moving forward rather than looking back at the wreckage. Unique to Zaatari's work is his interest in sexuality, and, in particular, queer sexuality. In *Red Chewing Gum*, the 15-year-old war is revisited *vis-à-vis* an account of the separation of lovers. The video is in the form of a 'video love letter.' The narrator poetically recounts his last encounter with his lover in Hamra, a commercial and tourist centre in Beirut that was changed by the war. Against the sounds of gunshot and the gritty streets of Hamra, the narrator returns to a frozen moment in time when he and his lover are mesmerized by a young street vendor sitting in an alley chewing all the contents of the Chiclets gum packets he is supposed to be selling. Among the heap of chewed white gum, a single red one stands out. Choosing pleasure over survival, love over war, the boy and his red gum stand for the site of love and eros in the context of war and conflict. Here, passion and pleasure are not distractions from conflict but the affective and enigmatic residues of war.

Session 2C-1

Nedzmina Vukovic (University of Manitoba)

The Silent Scream of the War

Silence is the most common expression after one has lived through a war or genocide. Artwork is the best way to communicate the trauma, which is only possible through the victims. Trauma, silence, and no communication between the individual and reality is the best way to distance oneself, and is a safe way to try to forget and not remember all the atrocities. How else could one represent a war? Movies give us an interpretation and pictures, books give us words and explanations, but the war cannot speak and the war is not a picture. The expression of trauma in art is strong. The art represents the war through its victims, which is the only way to speak up for them, through the silence of art. The war and genocides should never be forgotten throughout newer generations. However, the most difficult part is to explain and to represent something, when there is no expression for it. The victims are the only ones who can tell the true story and they represent the reality through artwork, its simplicity and emptiness.

The victims, the quiet ones, are the only ones who can tell the true story. The story is being told by 11,541 lives that have been lost in Sarajevo (1992-1996) during the longest siege of a capital city in the history of the modern warfare. "Thousands of civilians were killed and wounded. During the war, people in Bosnia and Herzegovina witnessed every conceivable human rights violation or abuse – ranging from ethnic cleansing and rape to mass executions and starvation." (Kaletovic*). Two decades later 11,541 red chairs on the main street in Sarajevo symbolize the lives lost and the freedoms that have been taken away. Sarajevo was never quieter, containing a louder message.

The artwork, the red chairs, won't go by unnoticed, because whoever goes down main street Sarajevo sees the chairs and is reminded of all the atrocities that had happened in the country. Newer generations cannot forget, because they have no choice as in noticing the artwork and learning about the past. The expression of trauma in art is different in comparison to other forms of memory. One can remember and learn about the war through movies, books and other media, however, these forms are optional. People have a choice as to watching a movie or reading a book. The artwork, the red chairs are the reality and are directly speaking of the war and the atrocities through the emptiness and silence of the chairs which represent the victims, the only ones who can tell the true story. The feelings of emptiness and silence make people vulnerable and they won't allow memories to fade.

* Kaletovic , Bedrana. "Two decades later, war scars Sarajevo (SETimes.com)." *Today (SETimes.com)*. N.p., 5 Apr. 2012. Web. 3 May 2012.
<http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2012/04/05/feature-02>.

Session 2C-2

Ana Laura Pauchulo, Ph.D (University of Alberta)

Possibilities in the Impossibility of Representation: Present Absences in the *Siluetazo* and the REDress Project

This paper examines how victims of ‘disappearance’ have been represented as simultaneously present and absent in memorial street art - namely, the ‘*Siluetazo*’ which calls us to remember the 30,000 *desaparecidos* in Argentina and the REDress Project which commands our attention of the disappeared Aboriginal women across Canada. In recognizing the similarities and differences between these two memorial practices and the contexts in which they have occurred, my aim is to explore the numerous and varied ways in which the present absence of disappeared persons instructs the formation of a public committed to the construction of a more just society.

Both the *Siluetazo* and the REDress Project move beyond a ‘remembrance-learning’ structured through the coherency of an ‘evidentiary-narrative’ that implores its audience to master the past, so as to master the future (Di Paolantonio & Brushwood Rose, 2010). Through their representation of victims of disappearance as simultaneously present and absent these memorial practices not only tell us about what happened in the past, they also ask us to consider how the past remains present and, in turn, how we engage today with those both past and present. As such, I argue that such remembrance practices move beyond creating awareness of past and present violence to a command to live responsibly in the present. Rather than presenting us with a prescribed definition of responsibility, the simultaneous coherency and incoherency of the present absences in the ‘*Siluetazo*’ and the REDress Project create a space for their audiences to think through what it might mean to live ‘in relation’ (Simon, Rosenberg, & Eppert, 2000) with each other, past and present, thus leaving the future open for ‘us’ to construct.

Session 2C-3

Cynthia Milton (Université de Montréal)

Artistic Representations of Human Rights Violations: Peru in a Comparative Perspective

This paper focuses on art in post-Shining Path Peru in order to develop a theory and methodology about artistic representations in the aftermath of violence in a comparative analysis. The principal theoretical argument underlying this study is that art, as a form of communication that witnesses and recounts, may help us understand historical narratives of experience in 'limit events,' a phrase that refers to extreme societal violence. By expanding the historian's scope of inquiry to include artistic representations as a form of 'truth-telling' in the aftermath of violence, this paper presents an innovative analytical model for the study of memory, truth, and violence, and tries to address some of the silences left in the wake of more official forms of inquiry, such as truth commissions and trials, and more 'traditional' methodologies, such as textual analysis and oral history. Thus, this paper calls for an expansion of the archive to include other repositories of memory and history (LaCapra, 1998; Milton, 2007a; Stern, 2004; Taylor, 2003). Furthermore, this paper questions how art may witness and represent human rights violations, and how this art may contribute to the curation of difficult pasts in exhibitions and regional museums (Lehrer, Milton, and Patterson, 2011). Artistic representations further our understanding of violent histories by offering a diverse means for recounting the past. This study is based on several artistic media. By choosing to focus on artistic/visual memory in Peru, with an eye to comparisons from other world regions, I hope to illuminate the ways in which art can recount the past, and indeed how venues of art can have an impact upon memory discourses in the public sphere, that is, the memory battles that take place within the cultural domain.

Session 3A-1

Désirée Lamoureux (University of Western Ontario)

‘True’ novel or cliché? Normalising the Survivor’s Experience in Gilbert Sinoué’s *Erevan*

Despite the fact that the term ‘genocide’ was only coined in 1943 by Raphaël Lemkin in reference to Nazi crimes, the organised extermination of people by governmental forces already existed during the First World War : the ‘deportation’ of Armenians by the Young Turks. Unlike the victims of Nazi concentration camps or the Tutsi genocide, Armenian victims did not commit their experiences to paper. Due to this absence, there are but a few testimonies from the Armenian genocide and the event remains widely underrepresented in XXth century histories.

In response to this, Gilbert Sinoué published *Erevan* in 2009. A ‘true’ novel according to the author, *Erevan* doubles as a realistic and historically verifiable representation of the Armenian experience in Turkey and as a vector through which the reader can hear the victim’s and the perpetrator’s voices. This latter ambition, difficult due to the absence of testimonies from the Armenians themselves, becomes problematic in that it seems to be rooted in the experiences of concentration camp survivors from the Second World War. Influenced by his largely Western culture, Sinoué utilizes widely recognised tropes from the concentration camp narratives to represent the Armenian genocide. We will first show how stereotyped scenes from the Jewish genocide are recycled in *Erevan* through an intertextual analysis. Then, we will reflect on the consequences of this type of narrative, which normalise victim’s experiences.

Session 3A-2

Anna Fournier (University of Manitoba)

The Banality of Horror: Language and Meaning in Western Accounts of Violence in the Balkans

This paper explores representations of ethnic violence in the Balkans in textbooks and in the media as they are deployed by political scientists, historians, and anthropologists. It looks at a repertoire or cluster of metaphors (e.g., “ancient hatreds,” “the virus of nationalism,” “butchery,” and “barbarism”) that is almost invariably reproduced in texts about the Balkans and asks how linguistic form (in this case, the banal) affects the content of the message delivered.

My argument is that banal or overused metaphors do not simply reflect laziness in expression or linguistic carelessness, but rather are sense-making and coding devices that “make the Orient visible” (Edward Said) but also *legible* to Western audiences. The result is that even those readers who may not know the Balkans’ exact location on the world map can immediately locate the region on the ‘civilizational’ scale.

The paper aims at showing how the region is constructed as liminal both geographically and geopolitically through descriptions that emphasize 1) a ‘dangerous’ diversity/tribalism, 2) the supposedly unique politics of memory in the region (i.e. people ‘never forget’), and 3) the threat to civilized Europe posed by the ‘virus’ of nationalist excess. The trope of horror, seen as both necessary and sufficient in these accounts, becomes a device that substitutes for a genuine theoretical engagement with violence. In fact, the Balkans are described as a space of conflict ‘outside of’ modernity, thus obscuring what we know to be the entanglement of violence and modernity. Aimed at containment through stereotyping, the discourse about the Balkans emerges itself as “a violence we do to things” (Michel Foucault).

Session 3A-3

Jacqueline McLeod Rogers (University of Winnipeg) & Tracy Whalen (University of Winnipeg)

The Material Messages of an Ethereal Project: Storying The Canadian Museum for Human Rights

The notion of liminality or interstitial space (Turner 1967; 1969) is useful for studying The Canadian Museum for Human Rights, since the structure and the identity of the Museum are still very much in process. As researchers, we find ourselves at a particularly compelling moment to study the dynamics of a structure that is still under construction and somewhat of a mystery to the citizens of the city it is transforming, day by day. As the museum puts up billboards to explain the development, the building looms larger, the exhibit halls are still empty, and public attitude ranges from curiosity to disgruntlement.

Theorists who study spatial rhetoric of museums (Saindon, 2012; Zappen, 2010; Ragsdale, 2007; Gross, 2005), point to the liminal, fluid, and flexible dynamics that arise in the everyday practices that constitute them. This previous research, however, centres on finished and functional structures with programming already in place, not museums still under construction. A museum in progress is a particularly vibrant and shifting site of juxtaposition and dialogue: between the architectural structure itself and its urban surroundings; between the various signs and messages authorized and posted by museum administration and the imagined public who would read them; between the story these signs attempt to tell and their various interpretations. In our presentation, we will explore how the Museum makes itself present not only in the geographical landscape but also in the linguistic landscape of the surrounding area. We use linguistic landscape analysis and rhetorical theory to study the material messages of an ethereal project. Linguistic landscape analysis, which has been developing rapidly over the last few years, argues that the linguistic landscape, made up of more than official text-based signs, also includes visual images, unauthorized words and images, and social discourses, embracing spoken as well as written language (Shohamy et al. 2010). Rhetorical criticism, which studies how symbols construct and deflect versions of reality for fellow symbol-users, offers resources to examine the symbolic play of presence and absence in the Museum's various texts. In their canonical book, *The New Rhetoric* (1969), Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca theorize presence as an argumentative strategy that gives some messages a "standing-out-ness" or figural salience (and makes other elements absent), and these strategies cultivate a public that is receptive to particular arguments and interpretations.

Using such theories, we will examine the signs on the Museum site, informational brochures, and the dedicated website to see how the emerging project represents itself to the public—how it is attempting to shape public ideas, opinions and expectations about what a museum dedicated to human rights might be. There is so much about this Museum that is immaterial, absent, and postponed; we are fascinated by the attempts to create a positive sense of museum presence when so much is uncertain, undeveloped, and absent.

Session 3B-1

Alexandra Heberger (University of Manitoba)

„Ich bin ein Lebender, kein Ueberlebender“ – I am a Human Being, Not a Survivor. Edgar Hilsenrath's Sarcastic Fight against Being a Living Memorial.

There is no law that Holocaust survivors have to talk about their experiences, not in Israel, Germany or in the rest of the world. But we expect it. Concentration camp survivors have only one function: They are living memorials for the crimes of the National Socialists. They became identified and characterized as victims, who are to share their unimaginable sufferings with the world. Edgar Hilsenrath refuses to be automatized as a victim and to represent this role. He refuses to give us the heroes and helpless victims, black and white, good and bad, suppressors and suppressed, we so desperately want to read about, in order to make sense of things and to be able to categorize them. Concentration camps are grotesque to him, so how could he write any other way about them than grotesque and with a dark, bitter sense of sarcastic humor? Hilsenrath deals with the topic of National Socialism on several contextual levels. His satirical, cynic, and grotesque style reflects a humorous yet critical medium, which has not been widely received in Germany, or the rest of the world, as an acceptable approach to writing literature about the National Socialist period.

Hilsenrath's black humor and his use of sarcasm and the grotesque to describe the indescribable, provoke the reader. Texts depicting the obscenity of a ghetto are as frowned upon by the reader as much as satires about the German perpetrators. Because of his derisive and macabre depiction of the Jewish fate, Hilsenrath gets consistently attacked, misjudged and ignored. He provokes the reader and violates taboos. With a clear and direct language Hilsenrath polarizes the reader, provokes emotions, and makes the reader think, by sending him on a roller coaster ride of emotions. Edgar Hilsenrath deals with the topic of fascism on a linguistic level. What is fascinating about Hilsenrath's work is the versatility he uses to infiltrate the criticism of fascism into all contextual and linguistic levels of his texts. Through his texts he deciphers the ideological sedimentation of power structures in our language. The *Lingua tertia imperii* represents for him the most extreme form of a cultural myth. A predetermined fascistic language and the ideology it still implies penetrate all of Hilsenrath's texts. For him it becomes questionable that, if language can become the carrier and the power-tool of such a monstrous mentality, how can it then still be considered as objective media. Accordingly the author deconstructs the myth of 'historical innocence' and the misguided conception of history, by infiltrating the denied ideology back into our everyday language.

By focusing on a range of selected texts by Hilsenrath, this paper will demonstrate how Hilsenrath provokes, through his use of language, sarcastically the moral consciousness of the reader. By using grotesque images and dark humor and sarcasm, he finds an alternative way to deal with his past, without fulfilling the clichés that he is expected to represent by society. The provocative and powerful tools of humor and sarcasm to demonstrate the unthinkable and indescribable, have been underrated and set aside as inappropriate, but they allow Hilsenrath to critically analyse the past and to find enough distance, to not produce stereotypes, or to decipher them. "Against the assault of laughter nothing can stand" (Mark Twain).

Session 3B-2

Salvadoran Voices of Manitoba; Contact Alexander Freund (University of Winnipeg)

Fragmentation, Silences, Oral History, and Community Healing: Salvadoran Voices of Manitoba

The Salvadoran Voices of Manitoba is a university-community collaborative research project that pursues two objectives: first, to create an archive of oral histories and life stories of Salvadoran refugees and immigrants and their children who have settled in Manitoba; second, to disseminate research findings through diverse media and forums such as publications, plays, and exhibits. This SSHRC-funded four-year project, which began in 2011, is based on two of oral history's most important principles: first, the principle of sharing authority, in our case through the use of participatory action research; and second, the principle of democratizing history by writing marginalized peoples into mainstream history, thus fundamentally changing this history (rather than simply adding to it), and by making community members into historians, thus dissolving the hierarchical power relations between history-producing professionals and history-consuming publics. The project partners are members of Manitoba's Salvadoran community and of the University of Winnipeg's Oral History Centre.

In this paper, community researchers and university researchers will present some of the challenges and benefits in creating a project that seeks to document experiences and memories of civil war and state violence, displacement and migration. We have tentatively identified some of the challenges as a fragmentation of the community and as experiences of intra-communal and inter-generational silences about the civil war in El Salvador, about the multiple migrations in the Americas, and about the settlement and integration processes in Manitoba. As a group, we believe that this project will generate a dialogue among community members and between parents and their children that may heal some of the wounds that currently make communication about the past difficult and sometimes impossible.

In addition to a paper, we also propose to present an exhibit with photographs and interview excerpts that may be shown in an appropriate space within the conference venue and that will allow conference participants to learn more about the Salvadoran Voices of Manitoba project and its researchers.

Session 3B-3

Michaela Zoehrer (University of Augsburg) & Julika Bake (University of Augsburg)

The Performance of Authenticity in Human Rights Reporting and Comic Journalism

In our paper we take a look at the role of witnesses as authentic storytellers in two very different genres in which distant sufferings, violent conflicts and human rights violations are represented: human rights reports and “comic journalism.” We presume that in the course of these representations authenticity is a performative act. Authenticity then serves to substantiate the factuality of statements (“It was really like this!”) and to present the described events not only as plausible, but as “true stories.” At the same time authenticity supposedly makes the experience comprehensible and the “story” emotionally persuasive. In this regard, “those affected” as well as the fact-finders respectively comic journalists are considered to be witnesses and potentially authentic storytellers.

Understanding both “the affected” and the authors as witnesses is inspired by a linguistic perspective on the notion of “the witness.” The Latin roots of the term “witness” refer to two different meanings of the word: The first is *superstes* – the survivor that has personally experienced an event and “lives on beyond.” The second is *testis* – an observer co-present but not personally involved who is deemed neutral and objective. Contrary to intuitive assumptions, nowadays not only the *superstes* speak about their experiences in the first person. Even those who can (or want to) be considered *testis*, refer to their own (!) experiences and impressions and thus become visible as authentic storytellers.

Grounded in empirical examples we want to answer the question how authenticity is performatively produced through the visualization of witnesses (*superstes* or *testis*) in two specific genres in order to generate factuality and/or the option of emotionality.

Session 3C-1

Maria Konstantinov (University of Victoria)

Representing and Interpreting Experiences of the Romani (Gypsy) Holocaust

The representation of the Romani Holocaust experience – of *Porraimos* – within literature and film is minimal in scope and is usually presented from the perspective of non-Romani individuals. These accounts have been constructed through their interpretations by outsider cultures that often understood them from their own biases and cultural identity. As the Romani are a culture that heavily rely on oral history as a means of containing and sharing their experiences, very little has been written or documented with the purposes of being shared with non-Romani cultures from the perspective of Roma or Sinti survivors. Consequently, the literary works that share these experiences have been created through the initiation of researchers interested in sharing these accounts. This information is usually gathered through interviews and is then presented in a manner that omits the researcher's voice. The accounts are presented as if they have been written by the Romani individuals themselves; sharing their experiences of the Holocaust in their own words. However, the inclusion (or exclusion) of information gathered from interviews is ultimately at the discretion of the researcher. In such, the memoirs and biographical documentaries that exist in dissemination have come to fruition through the work of historians, writers, cultural anthropologists and filmmakers, who are all non-Romani individuals. As such, the validity of the Romani 'voice' within these accounts is questionable.

This paper will analyze the ways in which narratives of the Romani Holocaust are portrayed and interpreted by non-Romani cultures, and will also question and address reasons for why survivors (including second and third generation) have been unable to – and even resisted – sharing experiences of *Porraimos* with outsider cultures.

Session 3C-2

Vassiliki Flenga (Ramapo College of New Jersey)

Genet's Aporia

Jean Genet's text "Quatre heures à Chatila," a testimony on the massacres that took place in the Palestinian camps of Sabra and Shatila, is considered by Albert Dichy as Genet's most remarkable political text because it exceeds both the political and the literary.

As "Quatre heures à Chatila" unravels, it discloses the promise of its own composition and offers itself as testimony that is already haunted by doubt and questioning. Genet retraces his steps in the camp of Shatila a few days after the events. As he stumbles over the numerous cadavers that block the passage, his snapshots of the poses of the dead stress what every representation of that experience will fail to reproduce: the step that trips over the bodies, the flies that fill the air and the orifices of the dead, the smell of the decomposing bodies. Genet describes what he sees and invents what remains invisible. He evokes this "invisible vision" of the torturers that went unnoticed while the massacres were taking place. Furthermore, the description of the bodies drowns in the memory of a previous visit with the Palestinian revolutionaries. The images of putrefaction are interrupted by the reminiscence of the beauty of the revolutionaries. Genet's course puts into motion a dizzying oscillation between the life that has been and the dead that remain, between the presence of death encountered in the camps and the recounting of this experience that will substitute the stench of death with innocuous signifiers. Laura Oswald has noted the kind of vertigo or existential nausea that Genet experiences because of the slippery relation of representation to reality.

Finally, "Quatre heures à Chatila" traces Blanchot's "Pas," the step/not caught in an aporia, an impasse, as it reports its failure to report. Genet's text insists on what one will never know, on what the witness will never experience, on the world that has become absent in the eyes of the dead. Death as well as the exposition of the slaughtered bodies becomes ob-scene. The stacked corpses push against the walls; they cannot be contained nor explained. How and will their image persist in the mind of the reader? Will the report remain or will it be buried with the bodies?

Session 3C-3

Mustapha Hamil (University of Windsor)

Plotting Terror in North African Literature

It is true that terrorism has been a favourite theme for many American and European novels, yet its emergence in postcolonial North African literature makes of the theme an anomalous and intriguing object of study. There are many questions that one would ask about the terrorist novel: In what genre and style do writers represent terrorism? To what end? How do writers thread the line between condemnation and sympathy? What does a terrorist novel tell us about history, culture, and the psychology of an individual, of a group, if not of a whole society? But what is exactly this “object,” this narrative thing? What does terrorism do in novels? How does it affect the politics and strategies of representation, and how does it operate symbolically, in the context of the formal properties of novels and in the experiences of writing and reading the texts?

Through a close discussion of Mahi Binebine’s novel, *Les Etoiles de Sidi Moumen* (2010), I will investigate how the novel both responds to the reality of terrorism (the 2003 Casablanca terrorist attacks) and contributes to it, adding its own coloration to the mythic identity of terrorism. How does its first-person narrative voice (that of a dead terrorist) challenge the construction and dissemination of global terrorism attributed to Islamic extremists? What does a terrorist novel such as *Les Etoiles* tell us about society and history, individual and group psychology? What kind of reception does it have among its readers? These are some of the questions I will address in my presentation.

Session 4A-1

Natasha Reid (Concordia University)

Social Justice Art Education: The Contemporary Art Museum as a Location for Dialogue

A great number of contemporary artists are exploring social justice issues and aim to promote critical dialogues through their art. Art is a natural staging ground for such dialogues as it can be a particularly powerful site for developing empathic understanding (Bresler, 2006). As such, contemporary art museums are natural sites for developing dialogues related to social justice. Many contemporary art museums are aware of this potential and are activating their spaces by offering advanced educational programming that focuses on social justice and critical discourses. The New Museum in New York City is an exceptional example of a contemporary art museum working with such educational programming (Joo, Keehn, & Ham-Roberts, 2011). This paper will examine contemporary art museums as rich sites for social justice and human rights dialogues and will explore how educational programming can promote these conversations. The New Museum's high school program, G:Class, will be used as a remarkable example of a contemporary art museum education program that is initiating such discussions and practices. An examination of the turn towards social justice and other issues-based approaches in art education will be examined. The role contemporary art is playing in this effort will be looked at examples of contemporary artists engaging with social justice issues, particularly relating to race, culture, diversity, and multiculturalism, who have worked with or exhibited in the New Museum will be explored. Following this, examples of educational programming developed for the New Museum's G:Class program in response to these artists' work will be studied. Methods for and issues related to employing contemporary art as a tool for initiating social justice dialogues will be investigated.

Session 4A-2

Joanna Black (University of Manitoba), Orest Cap (University of Manitoba) & Denis Hlynka (University of Manitoba)

Learning through Representation of Human Rights Issues Using Digital Technologies in an Art Education Research Study

Case study research on human rights education will be presented within the context of a pre-service curriculum project entitled, “*digiART and Human Rights: A New Media, Arts Integrated Project*”. This research was conducted during the fall-winter 2011/2012. The authors drew upon work during a previous 2011 Summer Graduate Institute and incorporated these concepts into developing meaningful curricula using contemporary technologies. Preproduction to postproduction processes are described and artworks examined.

This presentation is a description of a case study research project in Art Education on human rights education within the context of a pre-service classroom curriculum project entitled, “*digiART and Human Rights: A New Media, Arts Integrated Project*”. The course, taught at the University of Manitoba, is specifically for Art Education students learning to teach in high schools. The research lasted over a five-month period during the fall, 2011 to the winter, 2012. The authors of the paper report on how, via an Art Education senior year class, held at the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba, pre-service students had an opportunity to examine ways of learning about human rights issues. The authors drew upon work done during a previous 2011 Summer Institute held at the University of Manitoba for graduate students and incorporated these concepts into developing meaningful curricula using contemporary digital technologies. Students were taught about the rich art historical movement regarding the representation of human rights and human rights violations. They then examined curricula possibilities based on the theme of social justice. From this successful experience Art Education students designed artworks using digital technologies and learned through representation about such issues as the recent London riots, and Manitoban Aboriginal issues expressing through visual art individual and collective traumas. *The major research objective of this study is to explore meaningful ways in which to teach “cultures of conflicts and atrocities” using multimodal forms of communication through the use of digital technologies in the visual art making processes.* The results of this “authentic” project provided interactive, independent, creative art about key human rights issues.

Session 4B-1

Rachel Erickson (University of London)

Multiple Mediations: Issues of Identification and Representation in Holocaust Education at the Wiener Library

The Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide in London, England is the world's oldest Holocaust memorial institution. With a collection dating back to 1933, the Library figures as one of the most comprehensive collections of evidence, documentary materials, and publications on the subject. In September 2011 the Library reopened in its more central, and more accessible, Russell Square location, a move that has initiated an important change for the future of the Library. A £475,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund has been awarded specifically for development of the outreach programme; the Library is re-shaping its education strategies in order to reach a wider, more diverse audience, speaking to the numerous identities represented in the city of London. This paper will investigate the various pedagogical strategies underway at the Wiener Library in relation to its new temporary exhibition space, currently hosting short-term exhibits on different aspects of the Library's rich resources.

The Wiener Library's eclectic public outreach initiatives encourage one to question to what extent the subject of the Holocaust may provide a framework for a broader human rights dialogue, and whether the extrapolation of these issues is an appropriate "memorialization" of the Holocaust. As a Holocaust memorial institution, the Wiener Library is embracing the multiple points of entry through which one may engage with the subject of the Holocaust, genocide, war, and human rights. The Library is re-imagining its own identity and place within the community, presenting diverse themes such as homophobic bullying in schools, and the plight of refugee academics in Britain. Through these efforts, the Wiener Library is re-establishing itself as a centre for dialogue and action, opening its doors to a contemporary understanding of how one may represent and remember past conflict.

Session 4B-2

Deborah Schnitzer (University of Winnipeg)

Holocaust Fact as/and Fiction: Reckoning the Irreconcilable in the Writing of the *woman who swallowed West Hawk Lake*

My focus in this presentation is on the research for and writing of a Holocaust novel, *the woman who swallowed West Hawk Lake*, the story of two children who are the unwitting and yet uncanny inheritors of German Aryanization policies and practices. Their seemingly contaminated blood lines, inherited objects, and family rites initiate processes of disintegration and damnation. My research works with various frames of reckoning—compassionate listening and German-Jewish reconciliation; disputed histories and Holocaust denial; archival, oral, and life writing products—as contexts within which I assess those legacies of silence, guilt, fear, and failure which haunt and distort contemporary settings whose present complexities we are required to acknowledge and carry.

The novel has engaged my search for official Nazi documents at the International Tracing Centre in Bad Arolsen, Germany which could have recorded the murder of my family members at Auschwitz, as well as an exploration of the developing memories and memorialized remains/reminders of my family's murdered children in Last Pictures and rituals of remembrance and ceremonies of continuance within the creative and critical events which have formed parts of the family's lament. These dimensions inform the novel's design and those "irresolvable paradox[es]"* which Susie Linfield observes characterize Holocaust fiction as both impossible and necessary (*). My presentation explores the separate and separated forms and voices these paradoxes demanded as centres in the novel's construction.

*Susie Linfield, "Ruth Franklin's *A Thousand Darknesses*," on Holocaust Fiction." Book Review *Washington Post* 24 Nov. 2010. *Washington Post Online*. Web. 5 May 2012.

Session 5A

A Virtual Exhibit “The Salvadoran Voices of Manitoba” with members of the Salvadoran community (cf. session 3B-2 for academic presentation)

Session 5B-1

Ron Fischer (Minot State University)

The Medicine in Louise Erdrich's *Love Medicine*."

Both psychology classes and sociology classes at my university have used Louise Erdrich's novel *Love Medicine* to examine how trauma induced by war, abuse, relationships, abandonment, and alcohol affect people's lives, or to explore the trauma of cultural dislocation and its multigenerational effects for Native Americans. Lissa Schnieder in her article “*Love Medicine: A Metaphor for Forgiveness*” describes the psychological dynamics between the wounded who die in this novel and the wounded who survive and concludes that “Erdrich repeatedly shows how storytelling--characters sharing their troubles or their ‘stories’ with one another—becomes a spiritual act, a means of achieving transformation, transcendence, forgiveness [. . .] forgiveness is the true ‘love medicine’”(1). I agree with Schneider's psychological representation of this novel and the metaphor of love medicine to represent healing through forgiveness. Erdrich's characters do seek medicine, some finding medicines that don't cure, others finding through storytelling, a healing “love medicine.” However, I believe that there is more to “love medicine” than metaphor. The “love medicine” in this novel is deeply connected to the Medicine Wheel, which in Native culture is a symbol for the Native non-linear way of understanding the world, experiencing life, and relating to others. Yes, Schneider's psychological insights and her explanation of the “love medicine” metaphor are quite valid for this novel; however, that same concept becomes an invitation for cultural exploration, which will deepen our understanding of the non-linear dynamics in Native Culture and in the lives of Native Americans. That cultural awareness will better help us see how the characters in this novel find the stories they tell and how that becomes “love medicine,” or healing for them.

Session 5B-2

Heather Allen (University of Manitoba)

Bridging the Gap of Apathy: Representations of History through Fiction in the Works of Tomson Highway

The systemic cultural genocide of the Native Canadians reaches through history and affects current Canadian society on every level in a profound way. Despite extensive coverage of these historical events in schools, universities and government policies, there is wide-spread apathy and ignorance concerning this chapter of Canadian history among the general populace. This paper attempts to address this troubling phenomenon from both a neurological and a theoretical literary perspective. The neurological processes and effects of reading historical and fiction literature are initially explained to provide a basis from which the novel “Kiss of the Fir Queen” (1998) by Native Canadian author Tomson Highway is explored for its potential in prompting both learning and empathy within the reader. The novel follows the lives of two Cree brothers whose language and identities are destroyed by the Catholic residential school system.

Texts and the narrative elements from which they are composed are the interface through which the reader can gain access to and interact with the information being represented in text form. (Dehaene, Pinker). Neural activities and states (such as mirror neurons and default state networks) in the reader’s brain may be mobilized by words and narrative elements embedded in the text (Damasio, Iacoboni). The development of empathy and the mental processes involved in the act of learning are examples of the possible emotional and physical interactions with a text that a reader’s mind experiences in response to such neuronal triggers. The probable relationship between a reader’s mind and the textual elements in Tomson’s novel, such as characters and their experiences, is initially analysed based on an understanding of the neurological process of reading. The potential creation of empathy in the reader, not only in an inter-textual context, but also for extra-textual historical events and the people affected by them is then discussed.

Session 5B-3

Evan Bowness (University of Manitoba) & Amelia Curran (Carleton University)

Racialized Policing in Winnipeg: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Online Comments

The tension in the already strained relationship between members of racialized groups and the police in Winnipeg increased during the summer of 2008 with the tasing death of Michael Langan, a young Métis. Garnering significant media attention, a flurry of online items reporting this event and space for readers to voice their reactions, emerged. This paper critically examines the ways public commentaries construct the events, the police, racialized groups and their members, and the nature of the relationship between them and state institutions such as policing. Using discourse analysis, we explore subtleties in the dynamics of racism, racial privilege, and other pervasive inequities. As such, our main research questions are: 1) what characterizes these discourses? 2) how do posters engage in racialization, or the social construction of 'race,' and other forms of 'Othering' and social exclusion? and 3) what can these discourses tell us about power relations in society? In addressing these questions, we analyze how these discourses are being used to secure positions of dominance in the complex social struggle between racialized groups, and explore how Langan becomes constructed as both a criminalized and racialized subject.

Session 5C-1

Reeta Kangas, MA, MPhil (University of Turku)

Hitler's Dogs: Animal Symbolism in Soviet Political Cartoons of the "Great Patriotic War", 1941–1945

This paper seeks to illuminate how the enemy was represented in Soviet visual propaganda. In wartime propaganda enemies are often dehumanised by representing them as animals in order to negate the moral inhibitions about killing. During the "Great Patriotic War," as the war between Germany and the Soviet Union in 1941–1945 is called in Russian, Soviet political cartoons depicted the Axis in animal disguise. Looking at animal symbolism in wartime Soviet political cartoons helps us to understand how by portraying the enemy as an animal, the Soviet propaganda machine framed the conflict and communicated the Soviet view on it to the population. The animal symbols in use sprung from the cultural context in which the cartoons were produced. In this they reference to the Russian language, literary tradition, and history.

This paper uses the Soviet cartoonist trio Kukryniksy's work published in the Communist newspaper Pravda during 1941–1945 to examine the ways in which animal symbolism was used to dehumanise and belittle the enemy in order to create a semblance of an unworthy enemy and a war that the Soviet Union was winning. More specifically it analyses how animal symbolism was used to depict different characteristics of the enemy, and how these symbols echoed the artists' cultural background. For example, Kukryniksy made references to Krylov's fables, Gogol's stories, Russian proverbs, and even religious allusions. More generally, the purpose of this paper is to map out how animal symbolism and political cartoons are used as wartime propaganda.

Session 5C-2

Elena Baraban (University of Manitoba)

The Film Front: The First Soviet Films of the Cold War

In the past two decades, scholars have used increased access to archival sources in Eastern and Central Europe to re-evaluate the Cold War. Much of this material concerns history of Soviet film-making. In my paper, I consider how the Cold War has changed the nature of the relationship between Soviet cinema and Hollywood from that of cooperation to antagonism and shaped the representation of the former allies in Soviet war films of 1945-1953. I am particularly interested in examining how representation of WWII changed during the Cold War and how it intersected with categories such as class, race, ethnicity, and ideology. Specifically, one of the research questions in my analysis of Soviet war films of the end of the 1940s and early 1950s concerns how representations of the Nazi, the British, and the Americans change in comparison to those found in wartime films. The material for this paper includes films such as Grigory Alexandrov's *Meeting on the Elbe River* (1949), *They Have Motherland* (1949) directed by Vladimir Legoshin and Alexander Mikhailovich, and Mikhail Romm's *Secret Mission* (1950). Drawing on archival research, the proposed examination of the aforementioned films is informed by cultural studies theoretical framework. The paper is part of ongoing research project on representations of WWII in Soviet cinema.

Session 5C-3

Tatjana Schell (North Dakota State University)

A Ball Game: On Bouncing Between Accuracy and Fluency in Translation

This presentation is focused on my experience translating taped interviews from German into English for an on-going volunteer project for the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (AHSGR). The tapes represent a great historic value because of the first-hand information provided by interviewees about their life experience as members of the ethnic German community in Soviet Union around World War II when they were persecuted against because of their ethnic heritage. The tapes, recorded in the early 1990s in Germany, feature personal accounts and information that would otherwise be unknown to the large public outside of the former Soviet Union, and are therefore important to be granted access to through English translation which can then be made available through the means of AHSGR.

I focus on discussing the considerations of the audience and the fluency during the translation work. What makes a more successful translation of such historic accounts? Does it depend on how accurate the translated text is in reflecting the content of the original one? Or, is it more important that your target audience will have a better understanding of it? Furthermore, I will discuss my understanding of my role in this project. Besides being a translator, I am also an active mediator between two distinctly different cultures -- the one of the interviewees and the one of the U.S. American readers of the translated text. Therefore, this notion has to be taken into consideration when determining the progress and the outcomes of the translation work.

Session 6A-1

Mark Meuwese (University of Winnipeg)

Trans-Atlantic and Local Memories of Dutch Colonial Violence: Remembering Kieft's War in New Netherland

From 1640 until 1645 a bloody conflict raged between European colonists and Algonquian-speaking Indigenous peoples in the Dutch colony of New Netherland in North America. This conflict has come to be known as Kieft's War, after the Dutch governor who most historians have held responsible for the outbreak of the frontier war. Because New Netherland was a Dutch colony, Kieft's War has mostly been ignored in the Anglo-centric historiography of colonial North America. At the same time, Kieft's War has been remembered in various ways on both sides of the Atlantic. In the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, Kieft's War was presented as an unnecessary conflict brought on by the authoritarian governor that devastated the lives and possessions of many Dutch colonists. After the English conquest of New Netherland in 1664, Kieft's War was conveniently forgotten in the Netherlands until historians re-discovered the Dutch colony in North America in the second half of the twentieth century. In the context of Dutch decolonization Kieft's War was depicted as a shameful episode that demonstrated the moral shortcomings of Dutch colonial officials. Meanwhile in North America, Kieft's War was remembered as an intensely local frontier conflict. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, local histories and legends were constructed that highlighted the victimization of European settlers, especially women and children. During the late twentieth century, as New Netherland was imagined inside and outside academic circles as a multicultural and religiously tolerant colony in opposition to the repressive Puritan New England colonies, Kieft's War became the unusual setting for several works of historical fiction. By comparing the trans-Atlantic and local memories of Kieft's War this paper demonstrates that almost all stories are concerned about the fate of the European settlers. The memories of Kieft's War remain remarkably silent on the impact of Dutch colonial violence on the Algonquian peoples of New Netherland.

Session 6A-2

Myroslav Shkandrij (University of Manitoba)

Unrepenting Hearts: Ukrainian Nationalism in the 1930s.

The paper will examine how the cult of strength was expressed in both the political writings and literature produced by major cultural figures close to the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). It will offer an explanation of why this cult developed and how it evolved.

The paper makes the wider argument that within the typology of nationalisms the OUN represented only one particular version. The paper also links the ideology of the OUN with the myth of rebirth or renewal (*palingenesis*) that was a typical feature of modernism in the first half of the twentieth century.

The presentation is based on a study of the OUN's politics and literature that I am completing and which examines the underlying myths that drove the movement and made it attractive to a wide public. The subject of the OUN is now hotly debated in some scholarly circles. Some of these discussants show little awareness of the context in which the movement arose. Very few scholars draw on the movement's literature, which played an important role in mobilizing support. My approach represents an attempt to contextualize the movement by indicating its roots in the political and cultural atmosphere of the interwar period, and by indicating its links to broader "myths" or structures of thought and feeling.

Session 6B-1

Candida Rifkind (University of Winnipeg)

Memory and Black Visuality in Ho Che Anderson's *King*

This paper begins with the premise that long-form comics have become a privileged medium for the representation of human rights atrocities. Art Spiegelman's landmark 1986 animal fable of the Holocaust, *Maus*, opened up terrain since traveled by cartoonists dealing with historical and contemporary conflicts, such as Joe Sacco's comics journalism in *Palestine*, Marjane Satrapi's autobiographical comic of the Iranian revolution, *Persepolis*, and Jean-Philippe Stassen's *Deogratias: A Tale of Rwanda*. As a medium, comics' unique hybrid of visual-verbal representations allows cartoonists to witness, narrate, and visualize conflicts and atrocities in ways that unfold all possible meanings of the word "graphic."

In this paper, I explore the intersections between violent atrocity and peaceful resistance, distant past and more recent present in Ho Che Anderson's experimental comics biography of Martin Luther King, Jr., *King* (Complete Ed. 2010). In this landmark work of "critical Black memory" (Leigh Raiford), Anderson uses an expressionistic aesthetic to tell a realistic story, narrating the political and personal experiences of Martin Luther King, Jr. in visual sequences that echo the troubled American sensibilities of film noir. I focus here on the thirteen-page March on Washington sequence at the end of volume II, in which Anderson mixes comics sequences of King and his supporters with archival photographs of lynchings and Klansmen to reconstruct a critical memory of this historic day within the field of Black visuality.

I analyze two key representational strategies Anderson mobilizes in this sequence: the visual motif of the March on Washington political button, which serves as the "punctum" (Roland Barthes) that both punctuates and punctures the sequence; and, the verbal text of King's "I Have a Dream" speech that Anderson reproduces visually to reflect its "integrative rhetoric" (Mark Vail). I argue that this visual-verbal expressionism demonstrates the unique possibilities of comics to, on the one hand, reproduce images as documents of historic atrocities and signs of collective memory and, on the other hand, interrupt and disrupt these images in order to represent that history as a critical part of the present.

Session 6B-2

Josina Robb (University of Winnipeg)

Navigating the Architecture of Occupation in Joe Sacco's Palestine

This paper performs a close reading of Joe Sacco's nine-part comic book series *Palestine* (1993-5). The narrative follows the autographic avatar Joe during his two-month journey through Israel and the Palestinian Territories. In a growing body of paratextual material, Sacco has given the term 'comics journalism' through which to read his work. Indeed, the series forms a hybrid text that draws from journalistic practices, the conventions of alternative comics, and the generic structures of travel writing. I connect Joe's 'self-discovery' during his trip to the graphic embodiment of the Palestinian experience on which this identity depends. I argue that the dynamics of encounter and testimony call forth intra- and meta-textual interpretations of the conflict that ultimately leave the reader in a position of bearing witness.

Sacco's interrogation of whose life matters and how lives can be represented is achieved by radically shifting points of view from embodied and disembodied positions within the space Joe travels. Dense and textured drawings show a frontier scenario where makeshift boundaries and border synonyms are contested and unstable. I use research done by Eyal Weizman (2007) to interpret Sacco's graphic representation of the 'politics of verticality' and 'elastic geography.' Sacco's portrayal of life in the refugee camps of the Gaza Strip show the camp as the site of the civil – rather than its exception – in a war of separation, occupation and displacement. Here, my reading is informed by Saskia Sassen's articulation of 'citiness' as being at once the civil and the ungovernable, and thus a weak regime capable of confronting an asymmetrical power (2010).

Session 7A-1

Amy Freier (Queen's University)

Holocaust Humour: When Commemoration Meets the Comedic

In his book *Inferior Religions*, Wyndham Lewis writes that “laughter is the representative of tragedy, when tragedy is away.” I use this dictum as a jumping off point for my consideration of humorous representations that employ the Holocaust as a foundation for laughter, and these representations’ significance to the commemorative process. Owing to the inclusion of Holocaust humour in mainstream representations, we can ask ourselves: is the tragedy of the Holocaust “away”? And further, is humour ever an appropriate representative mode or laughter an appropriate response when the Holocaust is involved? Examples to be discussed include *Downfall Hitler*, a popular internet meme; “The Survivor,” an episode from *Curb Your Enthusiasm*; and the Shalom Auslander’s new book, *Hope: A Tragedy*. These examples not only call into question the forms we should use to address the Holocaust, but also how we act when confronted with its various representations. Drawing on Terrence Des Pres’ “Holocaust Laughter?” and Hayden White’s “Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth,” both of which meditate on the use of the comedic form in relation to the Holocaust, this paper will focus on the issues of laughter and the body’s posture when confronted with such humour. I consider what happens when Des Pres’ third tenet of holocaust discourse – “the Holocaust shall be approached as a solemn or even a sacred event, with a seriousness admitting no response that might obscure its enormity or dishonour its dead” - is broken. I ask: what is gained or lost when an atrocity, such as the Holocaust, is publicly satirized? And finally, what do the creation of these representations and our reactions to them signify with respect to the historical and commemorative process?

Session 7A-2

Adam Muller (University of Manitoba)

Laughter in the Face of Death: Humour and the Holocaust

This paper engages critically with a number of different representations that attempt to reframe the Holocaust comedically, and asks whether or not Hayden White was correct when he asserted that the horrific essence of the events comprising the Nazi genocide may not legitimately be given a comic employment. There is a significant difference between laughing at Nazism and laughing at genocide. In drawing it out, I will make reference to works of wartime propaganda such as Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* (1940) and the Oscar-winning cartoon *Der Fuehrer's Face* (1943), as well as later works including the television series *Hogan's Heroes* (1965-71) and Mel Brooks' *The Producers* (1968). I will argue that these relatively early representations, which laugh at Nazism and for the most part go nowhere near the Holocaust, are ritual productions whose moral and political efficacy remains crucially linked to their generation of what the anthropologist Mary Douglas has termed "symbolic pollution." Importantly distinct from these earlier comedies are more recent attempts to represent the Holocaust in ways capable of sustaining laughter. Amongst these attempts I will identify two (more and less morally pernicious) representational types, distinguishable from one another teleologically. A paradigmatic token of the latter is Roberto Benigni's 1997 film *Life is Beautiful*, a work whose failings have been generally acknowledged even as its wider ambitions remain morally legitimate.

The two wholly pernicious representations I wish to discuss are the 2009 "Germany Issue" of *Heeb*, a periodical by and for young, hip, urban Jewish readers, and the website *Hipster Hitler*. Specifically, I will examine problems inherent in *Heeb*'s article "That Oven Feelin'," which contains images of Roseanne Barr dressed as Hitler taking a tray full of charred "Jew cookies" out of the oven, as well as the issue's image and recipe for "The Final Solution German Chocolate Cake." I will also be offering criticisms of *Hipster Hitler*'s ironic reimagining (and commercial exploitation) of Hitler as a metropolitan slacker whose t-shirts bear titles such as "Death Camp for Cutie," and who possesses a love/hate relationship to "juice" (a play on "Jews"). What do such attempts to make us laugh tell us about ourselves at this particular point in our moral and social history? What do they suggest about our understanding of, and resources for dealing creatively with, the horrors of genocide.

Session 7A-3

Holly McIndoe (Queen's University)

“One who lives”: Strategic Exoticism and Subjectivity in Indra Sinha’s *Animal’s People*

Indra Sinha’s novel, *Animal’s People* (2007), is a fictionalisation of the events leading up to and following the 1984 Bhopal Disaster. I argue that, through its titular protagonist, the novel challenges and unsettles concepts of human rights based on an exclusionary logic that separates humans from animals. Using Kelly Oliver’s theory of subjectivity which posits that a subject is constituted by the tension between subject position and subjectivity, I will show how *Animal* develops an alternative to the disempowering ‘victim’ subjectivity offered by an exclusively human community which argues for the recognition of human rights from within a human/animal binary. Instead, *Animal*’s singular yet relational subjectivity emerges from his capacity to address and respond to his whole environment, while not being utterly subsumed within it. As this radical subjectivity emerges, *Animal* is able to consider the ethical qualities of a self in relation with a variety of singular beings.

The novel insists that *Animal*’s subjectivity exists in relation the reader also. Positioning the reader in this way is part of the novel’s critique of depoliticized consumers/readers’ wilful ignorance, which is sanctioned by a globalised commodity culture. Using Graham Huggan’s work on strategic exoticism, I will argue that, in order to combat both exoticist rhetoric and commodity fetishism, the novel breaks genre conventions, and elicits then thwarts a readerly desire for authenticity. Provoking sympathy and uncomfortable humour, the novel keeps us at a distance, preventing us from slipping into sentimentality and smoothing difference into sameness. It draws our attention to the way both readers and novel exist within a hierarchical environment where there are always vested interests at work, and where information is always mediated. Not only does the novel insinuate that this hierarchy is precarious, it also leaves us uncomfortable and unsure of our own complicity.

Session 7B-1

Armando Perla (Canadian Museum for Human Rights)

Language, Culture and Identity

Canada is a multicultural society, where many communities have very distinct languages. These languages are pivotal in the construction and preserving of their cultures and identities. In Canada, French and English enjoy official status at the Federal level, at the provincial level in New Brunswick and at the territorial level in Nunavut, the North West Territories and the Yukon. At the same time more than 9 aboriginal languages enjoy official status in two of the territories combined. These communities and individuals have fought against oppression and discrimination to have their rights protected in the law and to make them a practical reality. Some of them have successfully introduced legislation to protect linguistic rights or have brought their cases to courts, where they have looked at having their rights restored.

Session 7B-2

Prathna Lor (Université de Montréal)

Spatial Re-Imagination in Yvonne Vera's *The Stone Virgins*

This paper examines the relationship between the mnemonics of trauma and space in Yvonne Vera's *The Stone Virgins*. This novel recounts pre- and post-independent Zimbabwe, as represented through two sisters, Nonceba and Thenjiwe, who, at the hands of a dissident soldier, suffer rape, mutilation, and, in the case of Thenjiwe, death. This paper proposes that Vera's poetics redefines spatiality as transitional repositories of cultural memory and resistance that also fuses itself with the psyche of the individual. Vera's novel dismantles the conceptualization of space as intransient, immutable, and immovable milieus, and, alternatively, demands the reimagining of space as fluid and dynamic locales, existing in-between conventional notions of spatial demarcations. Resistance and memory locates itself at corners, under archways, and between the thresholds of doorways. Vera calls this transient space *ekoneni*. These locales become infused with cultural and collective memory which, in turn, is interwoven in the psyche. Mnemonic saturation of the individual and the phenomenal environment construct transcultural, transhistorical, and a posthuman collective consciousness. This paper constructs itself through the theoretical framework of Deleuze and Guattari in order to understand Vera's conceptualizations of space and its aesthetics. Contrary to criticisms that resistance in poetic language is minute and unsubstantial, this paper argues that Vera's reconceptualization of conventional modes of spatial thought serves a cultural, pedagogical and poetic dimension which necessarily challenges the reevaluation of received structures of social space, affecting how we negotiate the terms of the self, the other, and the phenomenal world.

Session 7B-3

Sarah Wagner (George Washington University) & Tom Matyók (University of North Carolina at Greensboro)

Walking the Mat: Ritual, Symbol, and Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (U.S)

Located in the heart of Arlington National Cemetery, the oldest and most storied of the United States' national military burial grounds, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is a monument that commands solemnity for all those who visit. Silence is required, reverence expected. More than just static sarcophagi transfixing and entombing national memory, the monument is an organic space, alive with symbolic meaning. In this paper, we examine the people who bring this space to life and give shape to the national ideals of honor and sacrifice that cut across time and space—namely the sentinels who watch over the marble tomb, members of the US Army's elite Honor Guard.

While tour guides and nearby plaques provide the historical background of the Tomb, we argue that it is the silent rites of the sentinel walking the mat before the Tomb and its four crypts (honoring the fallen of World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War) that capture the attention and shape the national imaginary of the visiting public. Here, motion transmits meaning. Drawing from ethnographic research at the Tomb and interviews with sentinels past and present, we explore how those safeguarding the Unknowns—from the exacting detail of their dress to the synchronized movements of their guard changes—enact symbolic meaning. They perform for the awaiting public the spectacle that has become the Tomb as a tourist destination, at the same time that they abide by a deeply-held ethos passed down from “generation to generation” of Honor Guard badge-holders.