

Department of Humanities and Cultural Studies  
HUM 4824.001: **Representing Trauma & Disability**  
Spring 2023 Wednesdays 5-7:45

Instructor: Dr. Maria Cizmic  
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1pm to 3pm  
Classroom: CPR 355

### **Course Description**

This course will focus on empathy, trauma, and disability with a particular focus on arts, culture, representation, and mediation. We will begin with a brief introduction to some of the ideas and questions related to empathy, especially when considering aesthetic representations of others' suffering. We will then divide the class in half: the first half of the semester will be devoted to trauma studies and the second half of the semester will be devoted to disability studies. My main focus is to introduce you to the main theoretical sources and debates in each field. Although trauma studies and disability studies are two separate worlds, there are times when trauma and disability intersect, even if we simply consider that post-traumatic stress disorder legally constitutes a disability. In focusing on representation (be it literary, visual, or auditory), there are overlapping questions, such as: How are audiences meant to relate to representations of others' bodies? For this reason, the issue of empathy will work as a frame for the work we do in this class.

### **Course Objectives**

- To read key foundational texts in both trauma studies and disability studies.
- To learn the central ideas, issues, and debates in both trauma studies and disability studies.
- To analyze examples of different media, music, film, visual art, & literature.
- To work on applying the concepts from trauma and disability studies to the analysis of culture and the arts.
- To aid graduate students to develop their independent research projects in related areas of study.

### **Readings & Materials**

Readings and other materials will be made available on Canvas.

\*I recommend you buy the following two books:

Lucy Bond and Stef Craps, *Trauma*, Routledge, 2020 (available as an ebook through the USF library)

Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*

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### **Course Outline**

**All readings need to be completed before class meetings. I will do my best to indicate in advance which sections of the readings are most important to focus on.**

Week 1

Wednesday 1/11: Introduction

Week 2

Wednesday 1/18: Defining Empathy & History of Defining Trauma

Read: Amy Coplan, "Understanding Empathy," 1-26

Bond & Craps, "The History of Trauma," 12-44

Freud, "The Aetiology of Hysteria" (1896), 96-111

Examples: Opera & Music

Week 3

Wednesday 1/25: Overview of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Read: Judith Herman, *Trauma & Recovery*

"Posttraumatic Stress Disorder," DSM-5, 271-280

Optional: Van Der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score*

Examples: Poetry

Week 4

Wednesday 2/1: Beginnings of Trauma Studies

Read: Bond & Craps, "Words for Wounds," 45-72

Adorno "Commitment," 177-95

Caruth, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, 3-12 and 151-157

Felman, "Education and Crisis, or the Vicissitudes of Teaching," 1-56

Examples: Film

Week 5 **Reading Response Paper Due**

Wednesday 2/8: Trauma, Narrative, and Cinematic Conventions

Read: Bond & Craps, "Trauma Theories," 73-102

Luckhurst, *The Trauma Question*, 79-86, and 177-208

Examples: Film

Week 6

Wednesday 2/15: Cultural Trauma & Sociological Perspectives

Read: Jeffrey Alexander, *Trauma: A Social Theory*, 1-18

Hutchinson, *Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma*, 1-28, 153-182

Examples: TBA

Week 7

Wednesday 2/22: Post-Colonialism & Trauma

Read: Bond & Craps, "The Future of Trauma," 103-131

Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing: Trauma Out of Bounds*

Mosley, "'Can I Enjoy One Award Show Without Having to Think About Black Death?':

Music, Politics, and the Trauma of Performed Reenactment," 1-13

Examples: TBA

**Week 8 Exam #1**

Wednesday 3/1: The Trauma Plot & Alternatives

Read: Seghal, "The Key to Me," 62-67

Other reading TBA

Examples: Television

**Week 9**

Wednesday 3/8: Intersections of Trauma and Disability Studies

Read: Torrell, "Interactions, Trauma, and the Autobiography," 87-103

Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy*, 1-49

Examples: TBA

**3/13-19 Spring Break!!!**

**Week 10**

Wednesday 3/22: Disability, Embodiment, and Gender

Read: Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies*, 5-51

Examples: Visual Art

**3/25 Last Day to Withdraw**

**Week 11 Paper Draft Due**

Wednesday 3/29: Disability Tropes & Narrative

Read: Sandahl & Auslander, *Bodies in Commotion*, 1-12

Mitchell & Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis*, 1-13, 47-64

Cheng, "Staging Overcoming: Narratives of Disability and Meritocracy in Reality  
Singing Competitions," 184-214

Examples: Television singing competitions

**Week 12**

Wednesday 4/5: Disability, Performance, and Self-Presentation

Read: Deutsch, "The 'Truest Copies' and the 'Mean Original': Pope, Deformity, and the  
Poetics of Self-Exposure," 1-27

Lorie Stras, "Organ of the Soul: Voice, Damage, and Affect," 173-184

Examples: Popular Music

**Week 13**

Wednesday 4/12: Disability Aesthetics

Read: Siebers, *Disability Aesthetics*, 1-56

Straus, *Extraordinary Measures: Disability in Music*, 3-14, 125-181

Examples: Visual Art & Music

**Week 14 Final Papers Due**

Wednesday 4/19: Final Reflections on Trauma & Disability

Read: Kafer, "Un/Safe Disclosures: Scenes of Disability and Trauma"

Week 15

Wednesday 4/26: **Student Presentations**

Finals Week

Wednesday 5/3: **Exam #2 Due**

### Course Evaluation and Grading Scale

- **In-class Participation: 20% of course grade.** This class will be run primarily as a discussion course. Reading before our class meetings, participating in conversation, and treating your classmates in a respectful manner are important.

Attendance is mandatory and the instructor will keep records. Each student will start the semester with 100 points & two excused absences. Starting with the third absence, I will deduct 5 points for each absence.

Participation is also required; if you have participated well and consistently throughout the semester, I will add up to 10 points to your attendance score.

- **Exams: 20% of course grade each (40% total).** There will be two take home essay exams. Typically, the exam will ask six possible essay questions, and students can choose to answer three. Students will have at least a week to complete the exam at home.
- **Reading Response Paper: 10% of course grade.** This will be a two-page paper. You will choose one of the readings from class to summarize and discuss.
- **Paper: 30% of course grade.** Choose a topic related to the course and write an approximately 8-page paper that makes an analytical argument about some form of arts, culture, or media in connection to trauma and/or disability studies. This will include a draft (worth 5%); an informal class presentation (worth 5%); and a final draft (worth 20%).

**Grading Scale:** The grading scale below will be applied to all assignments and final grades:

Grading Scale (%)			
94-100	A	74-76	C
90-93	A-	70-73	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
84-86	B	64-66	D
80-83	B-	60-63	D-
77-79	C+	0 - 59	F

**Grade Dissemination:** Graded tests and materials in this course will be returned individually only by request. You can access your scores at any time using "Grades" in Canvas.

#### **Course Policies: Grades**

**Late Work Policy:** Late assignments will only be accepted when students notify the instructor ahead of the assignment deadline. The instructor will then decide if the students' situation warrants a deadline extension. Points will be deducted for late work.

**Extra Credit Policy:** No extra credit.

**Grades of "Incomplete":** The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. An "I" grade may be awarded to a student only when a small portion of the student's work is incomplete and only when the student is otherwise earning a passing grade. The time limit for removing the "I" is to be set by the instructor of the course. For undergraduate students, this time limit may not exceed two academic semesters, whether or not the student is in residence, and/or graduation, whichever comes first. For graduate students, this time limit may not exceed one academic semester. "I" grades not removed by the end of the time limit will be changed to "IF" or "IU," whichever is appropriate.

**Rewrite Policy:** No rewrites allowed.

**Essay Commentary Policy:** Please see the Feedback & Process Writing statement above.

**Group Work Policy:** No group work.

**Final Examinations Policy:** All final exams are to be scheduled in accordance with the University's final examination policy.

#### **Course Policies: Technology and Media**

**Email:** Please include our course prefix and number in your email subject line, and please treat email as a formal method of communication.

**Canvas:** This course will be offered via USF's learning management system (LMS), Canvas. If you need help learning how to perform various tasks related to this course or other courses being offered in Canvas, please view the following videos or consult the Canvas help guides. If something on Canvas does not seem to be working correctly, please email the instructor. And you may also contact USF's IT department at (813) 974-1222 or [help@usf.edu](mailto:help@usf.edu).

**Online Proctoring:** N/A

**Panopto:** N/A

**Laptop Usage:** Do not use laptops in class.

**Classroom Devices:** N/A

**Phone Usage:** Please do not use electronic devices in class and put all mobile devices on silent mode. A student may record class discussion for personal use, but please consult the instructor before doing so. It is not permissible to sell either written or audio notes for this course.

**Classroom Response Clickers:** N/A

**Course Blog:** N/A

**Course Wiki:** N/A

### **Course Policies: Student Expectations**

**Academic Integrity of Students:** Academic integrity is the foundation of the University of South Florida System's commitment to the academic honesty and personal integrity of its university community. Academic integrity is grounded in certain fundamental values, which include honesty, respect, and fairness. Broadly defined, academic honesty is the completion of all academic endeavors and claims of scholarly knowledge as representative of one's own efforts. The final decision on an academic integrity violation and related academic sanction at any USF System institution shall affect and be applied to the academic status of the student throughout the USF System, unless otherwise determined by the independently accredited institution.

**Disruption to Academic Process:** Disruptive students in the academic setting hinder the educational process. Disruption of the academic process is defined as the act, words, or general conduct of a student in a classroom or other academic environment which in the reasonable estimation of the instructor: (a) directs attention away from the academic matters at hand, such as noisy distractions, persistent, disrespectful or abusive interruption of lecture, exam, academic discussion, or general University operations, or (b) presents a danger to the health, safety, or well-being of self or other persons.

**Student Academic Grievance Procedures:** The purpose of these procedures is to provide all undergraduate and graduate students taking courses within the University of South Florida System an opportunity for objective review of facts and events pertinent to the cause of the academic grievance. An "academic grievance" is a claim that a specific academic decision or action that affects that student's academic record or status has violated published policies and procedures, or has been applied to the grievant in a manner different from that used for other students.

**Disability Access:** Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Students with Disabilities Services (SDS) in order to receive academic accommodations. SDS encourages students to notify instructors of accommodation needs at least 5 business days prior to needing the accommodation. A letter from SDS must accompany this request.

**Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment Reporting:** USF is committed to providing an environment free from sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. The [USF Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention](#) (813) 974-5757 is a confidential resource where you can talk about incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence. This confidential resource can help you without having to report your situation to either the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) or the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity (DIEO), unless you request that they make a report. Please be aware that in compliance with Title IX and under the USF System Policy, educators must report incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and

domestic/relationship violence. If you disclose any of these situations in class, in papers, or to me personally, I am required to report it to OSRR or DCEO for investigation.

**Attendance Policy:** See above.

**Professionalism Policy:** Per university policy and classroom etiquette mobile phones, iPods, etc. **must be silenced** during all classroom lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

**End of Semester Student Evaluations:** All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

**Turnitin.com:** In this course, turnitin.com will be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system that instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>. Essays are due at turnitin.com on the due date.

**The Writing Studio:** Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit <https://www.usf.edu/undergrad/academic-success-center/writing-studio/> or email [writingstudio@usf.edu](mailto:writingstudio@usf.edu).

**Campus Emergencies:** In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USF to suspend normal operations. During this time, USF may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Canvas, Elluminate, Skype, and email messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It's the responsibility of the student to monitor the Canvas site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USF, college, and department websites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information.

**Religious Observances:** All students have a right to expect that the University will reasonably accommodate their religious observances, practices and beliefs. If you observe religious holidays, you should plan your allowed absences to include those dates. Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class due to the observation of a major religious observance must provide notice of the date(s) to the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the term.

**Some final guidelines:** It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what I or you do or should personally believe. “Objective” means that the idea presented is supported by credible research and is subject to review and debate. You may decide that certain ideas are worthy of your personal belief.

Not all ideas can be supported by objective methods or criteria. Regardless, you may decide that certain such ideas are also worthy of your personal belief. In this course, however, you will be asked to engage objectively with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding an idea does not mean that you are required to believe it or agree with it.