LIVING WITH THE BOMB:
A Comparative Study of Gender, Race and Nationalism
In Japan and The United States, 1945-Present
Fall 2006

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Office Hrs: M &W: 1:00-2:00; F: 10:00-11:00
and by appointment

"talking of the danger
as if it were not ourselves
as if we were testing anything"
Adrienne Rich

The explosion of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima is one of the pivotal moments in 20th century United States and Japanese history. Recent controversies in the United States over the Enola Gay exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution, conflicts in Japan between survivors, and media coverage of the current tensions between the U.S., North Korea, and Iraq testify to the continuing cultural and social impact of the bomb fifty years later. This course will focus on the moral, ideological and historical complexity of the explosion of the atomic bomb during World War II, and subsequent cultural responses in both the United States and Japan as people learned to live with the bomb.

We will discuss the U.S. decision to develop, deploy and test nuclear weapons during and after WWII, as well as Japan's experience as the only nation to have an atomic bomb dropped on it. Using cross-cultural approaches, we will explore nationalist and oppositional responses to the bomb. Throughout the course we will foreground questions of race and gender, especially as they are embedded in concepts of nation, in order to explore the ideological struggles to justify and live with the bomb. Most discussions of the bomb focus on military and political issues. This class instead will use feminist theories, studies of nationalism, and critical race theory in order to foreground comparative analyses of the significance of gender and race in both wartime and postwar political and social experiences, as well as cultural responses in Japan and the United States.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Bird, Kai and Lawrence Lifschultz, ed., Hiroshima's Shadow
Kurihara, Sadako, When We Say Hiroshima: Selected Poems
Masco, Joseph. Nuclear Borderlands

Articles listed on schedule can be located on ERES (Mudd Library's Electronic Reserve system).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

(A) PREPARATION, ATTENDANCE, & PARTICIPATION:
An important component of the course will be class discussions and part of your grade is based on class participation. The course requires your thoughtful and continuous participation; therefore regular
attendance is required. *Attendance in class, however, does not constitute participation.* You must come to class having carefully read all material and be prepared to discuss, question, argue, and perhaps rethink issues raised in the readings. It would be beneficial for you to take notes on any material that you find enlightening, controversial, or objectionable. *By the way, asking questions about things you do not understand does constitute class participation.*

**Blackboard Threaded assignment**
To facilitate in-class discussion and clarification of course materials, students are required to post on Blackboard at least two questions, comments, or responses in each half of the semester (4 total). You should check the discussion page weekly as there may be discussions that are helpful for your understanding of the course material. Posts will be graded credit/no credit. NOTE: we expect you to adhere to the same rules of respectful interaction and citizenship as in class.
This course will also use Blackboard for the syllabus, handouts, and assignments.

**(B) WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**
You must complete all the written requirements in order to receive credit for the course, even if you elect the P/NP or CR/NE grading system.

1) **7 Discussion Papers, 2 pages; due dates listed in the syllabus**
Over the course of the semester you will write seven short critical analyses that will explore issues raised in the readings, poems, and/or films. These analyses are meant to facilitate class discussions. Therefore, NO late papers will be accepted. The papers will receive grades of "check," "check plus," or "check minus." If you fail to hand in one paper, with a reasonable explanation, your final grade will not suffer. However, failure to submit 2 or more papers will result in reduction of the final grade by at least 1/3. *We will only accept typed papers.*

2) **Midterm Exam, October 13.**
   This in-class exam will consist of identifications and essay questions.

3) **Research Paper, 10-12 pages. DUE December 4 in class.**
   See separate assignment sheet. Topics due October 25.

4) **Final Exam, December 18, 7:00-9:00 pm**
   This will be a closed-book exam of identifications, short answers, and one essay question.

**ALL PAPERS MUST BE TYPED OR PRINTED:** no handwritten papers will be accepted. You must submit hard copies of all assignments; no email attachments will be accepted.

**Grading Policy**

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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**LATE WORK:** All assignments must be completed on time. Papers not turned in on that date will be penalized in grading and will not receive written comments.
**ACADEMIC INCOMPLETES** at the end of the semester will not be given except in the case of emergency. You must get approval from the instructors at least 48 hours before the exam.

**Honor Code:** This course adheres to the policies of the Oberlin College Honor Code which applies to all work submitted for academic credit, whether it is a creative project, a quiz, an exam or a paper. For quizzes and exams, this means you must complete the assignment independently of other students. For papers, you must cite all written sources that you consulted, whether you quote directly or paraphrase. This is true whether you are using electronic or printed materials. Incomplete or improper citations are a form of plagiarism. If you are unfamiliar with proper citation formats, or have questions please consult us, a reference librarian, a writing tutor and/or a style manual. Lack of familiarity with proper procedures is not a defense.

   At the end of each academic exercise, students shall write in full and sign the Honor Pledge: “I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment.” See Oberlin Honor Code, [http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code2.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code2.html), for more information.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you need disability-related accommodations for your work in this class, please let us know. Support is available through Student Academic Series. Contact Jane Boomer, Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities, for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs.

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**CLASS SCHEDULE**

**Week 1**

9/6  The Nuclear Present: An Introduction

   **Unit One: Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Historical Memory**

9/8  First Impressions
   Reading Hida, “The Day Hiroshima Disappeared,” 415-433 (Hiroshima’s Shadow, hereafter HS)

**Week 2**

9/11  20th Century Wars
   Reading: Poems: Lucien Stryk, “Return to Hiroshima;” Kurihara, “When We Say Hiroshima” (ERES)

9/13  Memory and History
   Dower, “Triumphal and Tragic Narratives of the War in Asia,” (ERES)

9/15  Hibakusha Memory
   Reading: Hara, “Summer Flowers,” (ERES)

**DISCUSSION PAPER #1 DUE**

**Week 3**

9/18  Hibakusha Memory
   Reading: Snider, “Hiroshima Memories,” 453-461 (HS); Ibuse, *Black Rain* (ERES)

9/20  Hibakusha Memory
   Reading: Toge, “A-bomb Poems,” (ERES); Hayashi, “Ritual of Death,” (ERES);
   Hayashi, “Empty Can” (ERES)
9/22 Commemoration and Urban Promotion
Reading: Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces* (ERES); Akiba, “2006 Peace Declaration,”
http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/declaration/English/index.html
DISCUSSION PAPER #2 DUE

Week 4
9/25 Visual Memories
Reading: Poems: Toge, "The Shadow;" Denise Levertov, "Gathered at the River" (ERES)

9/27 Commemoration Controversies: The Enola Gay Incident
Readings: Sherwin, “Memory, Myth, and History,” 223-231 (HS)

9/29 Commemoration Controversies: The Enola Gay Incident
Goldberg, “The Smithsonian Suffers from Legionnaires Disease,” 353-363 (HS);
Capaccio and Mohan, “How the U.S. Press Missed the Target” 364-375 (HS); and
excerpts from “War of the Op-Ed pages,” 377-387 (HS)
DISCUSSION PAPER #3 DUE

Unit Two: Manhattan Project, the Arms Race and the Sociology of Nuclear Weapons

Week 5
10/2 NO CLASS – YOM KIPPUR

10/4 Strategic Bombing as a Weapon of Total War and the Culture of Violence
Cruelty becomes Pleasurable,” 269-271 (HS); and “The McCloy Diary” 511-512 (HS);
The Bissell Memoir: Prospects for Japan’s Surrender, 533-537 (HS); Forrestal Diary,
Japanese Peace Feelers, 517-520 (HS); United States Strategic Bombing Survey, 1 July
1946, 501-502 (HS); Sherwin, History and Modern Memory, 223-231 (HS).

10/5 Film showing: *The Day After Trinity* (88 mins.)
7:00
Wilder 101

10/6 Manhattan Project
Readings: Goldberg, “Racing to the Finish,” 119-129 (HS); Makhijani and Saleska, “The
Production of Nuclear Weapons and Environmental Hazards”(ERES); Blackett, “The
Decision to Use the Bombs,” 78-89 (HS)
Poems: Antonia Quintana Pigno, "Oppenheimer," Barbara La Morticella, "A Liturgy for
Trinity" (ERES)
DISCUSSION PAPER #4 DUE
**HAND OUT MIDTERM EXAM STUDY GUIDE**

Week 6
10/9 Science and Moral Responsibility
Reading: Schweber, S.S. *In the Shadow of the Bomb: Bethe* (ERES); Lanouette, “Three
Attempts to Stop the Bomb,” 99-118; “Rotblatt, Leaving the Bomb Project,” 253-257;
“The July 17th Petition of the Manhattan Scientists” (HS, 552-560).
10/11 Scientific Hubris and Nuclear Power
Readings: O'Neill, “Alaska and the Firecracker Boys: The Story of Project Chariot,” (ERES); Rogers, “From a Boon,” (ERES); Mumford, “Gentleman, You are Mad” 284-287 (HS)

10/13 MIDTERM

10/16-10/20 ****FALL BREAK****

Unit Three: Duck and Cover: Fear and Anxiety in Cold War Culture

Week 7
10/23 Domesticity and Nationalism

10/25 Cold War Cultures: Hiroshima Maidens
Reading: Simpson, “An Absent Presence” (ERES)
DISCUSSION PAPER #5 DUE

10/27 Library Instruction
Meet in the Computer Room, Science Library
Poems: Denise Levertov, "Watching 'Dark Circle;" June Jordan, "Directions for Carrying Explosive Nuclear Wastes through Metropolitan New York;" Lyubov Sirota, "Radiophobia" (ERES)

Week 8
10/30 Cold War Cultures
PAPER TOPICS DUE IN CLASS

11/1 Psychic Numbing
Readings: Hersey, Hiroshima (ERES); Poems: David Romtvedt, "Eating Dinner at My Sisters;" Gregory Corso, "Bomb" (ERES).

11/2 Film Showing: Godzilla (80 minutes)
7:00
Wilder 101

11/3 Monsters and Mutants
Reading: Igarashi, Bodies of Memory (ERES).

Week 9
11/6 The Politics and Fantasy of Mutual Assured Destruction

11/8 Nuclear Technoaesthetics: Atmospheric Testing, Virtual Testing
Reading: Masco, Ch. 2, 43-98; Gusterson, “People of the Bomb.”
11/9  Film Showing: Kurosawa, *I Live in Fear* (105 mins.)
7:00
Wilder 101

11/10  Atomic Testing--a Visual Record

**Week 10**

11/13  MAD, & Axis of Evil in East Asia
Reading: Oe, “The Unsurrendered People,” 433-442 (HS); Cumings, "Nuclear Imbalance of Terror,” (ERES).

**Unit Four: Oppositional Cultures**

11/15  Anti-Nuclear Activism: A Women’s Movement?

11/17  Peace Activism: Responding to the Threat
Readings: Kurihara, *When We Say Hiroshima* (all);
**DISCUSSION PAPER #6**

**Week 11**

11/20  Responding to Nuclear Proliferation
Readings: Masco, chap. 3; Gandhi, “The Atomic Bomb and Ahimsa,” 258-259 (HS)

11/22  The Oppositional Voice of Comic Art
Reading: Nakazawa, *Barefoot Gen*, vol. 2

11/24  NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Break

**Week 12**

11/27  Disarmament Efforts and the Nuclear Freeze

11/29  Post Cold War Activism
Reading: Masco, chap. 4 and chap. 5

11/30  Film showing: Dr. Strangelove (93 mins.)
7:00
Craig Auditorium (Science Center)

12/1  Critiquing MAD
Discussion of Strangelove
Week 13
12/4  Missile Defense – Moving the Battleground to Space
RESEARCH PAPER DUE IN CLASS.

12/6  Nukes, Nationalism and Secrecy
Reading: Masco, chap. 6

12/8  Nukes, Nationalism, and Religion
Reading: Roy, A., “The End of Imagination (ERES)
**HAND OUT FINAL EXAM STUDY GUIDE**

Week 14
12/11  Nuclear Waste and Sacred Sites
Reading: Masco, chaps. 7-8
DISCUSSION PAPER #7 DUE

12/13  Concluding Thoughts

FINAL EXAM: Monday. December 18, 7:00pm – 9:00pm
ELECTRONIC RESERVE LIST


POEMS ON ERES – all entries, except Toge, A-Bomb Poems, from:
Bradley, John, "Sailors Shielding Their Eyes During Atomic Bomb Test, Bikini, 1947" 
Corso, Gregory, "Bomb"
Dickey, William, "Armageddon"
Engman, John, "Mushroom Clouds"
Johnson, Kent, "High Altitude Photo of Hiroshima"
Jordan, June, "Directions for Carrying Explosive Nuclear Wastes through Metropolitan New York" 
Kaminsky, Marc, “Questions”
La Morticella, Barbara "A Liturgy for Trinity" 
Laux, Dorianne, "The Garden"
Levertov, Denise, "Watching Dark Circle"
Levertov, Denise, "Gathered at the River" 
Pigno, Antonia Quintana, "Oppenheimer" 
Romtvedt, David, "Black Beauty, A Praise" 
Romtvedt, David, "Eating Dinner at My Sisters" 
Sirota, Lyubov, "Radiophobia"
Stryk, Lucien, "Return to Hiroshima"
Toge, Sankichi, "August 6, 1950" 
Toge, Sankichi, "The Shadow"
MAIN RESERVE


Films on Reserve
*Dr. Strangelove*
*Godzilla*
*I Live in Fear*
*The Day After Trinity*