

## **Legacies of Perpetration: Memory, Dissociation and Collective Responsibility**

**Roger Frie, Ph.D Psy.D R.Psych**

### Overview:

This course explores how we remember and respond to legacies of perpetration and their effects on our lives. How are we implicated in historical events for which we may have no direct responsibility? Why do we shirk from our obligations to listen and act even when confronted with the reality of historical or contemporary injustices? We will examine the role of silence, avoidance, dissociation and denial when confronting histories of perpetration and examine the challenges involved in achieving a position of active witnessing that might address the suffering of others. Emphasis will be placed on the collective nature of memory and how individual responses are consciously and unconsciously shaped in relation to our social contexts. Readings are drawn from psychosocial studies, history and psychoanalysis.

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Location: William Alanson White Institute, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

Time: Tuesdays, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> – Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>, 6 – 7:15pm

### Sept. 10: **Course Introduction**

Frosh, S. (2018). Silence, Representation, Responsibility: Problems of Witnessing Amongst Those Who 'Come After'. [Used with the permission of the author]<sup>1</sup>

### Sept. 17: **Postmemory, Collective Memory and the Holocaust**

Hirsch, M. (2008). The Generation of Postmemory. *Poetics Today*, 29, 103-128 (read pp. 103-111). This article can be accessed and downloaded at:  
[https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross\\_fac/ehrc/events/memory/poetics\\_today-2008-hirsch-103-28.pdf](https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/ehrc/events/memory/poetics_today-2008-hirsch-103-28.pdf)

Freeman, M. (2012). The Narrative Unconscious. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 48, 344-366.  
Halbwachs, M. (1980). *The Collective Memory*, New York: Harper & Row. Chapter 1:  
Individual Memory and Collective Memory, pp. 44-49.

### Sept. 24: **Erich Fromm, Nazism and the Authoritarian Personality**

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<sup>1</sup> See also Frosh, S. (2019). *Those Who Come After: Postmemory, Acknowledgement and Forgiveness*. London: Palgrave Mcmillian.

- Fromm, E. (1941). *Escape from Freedom*. Chapter VI: The Psychology of Nazism, pp. 179-206.
- Funk, R. (2019). *Life Itself Is An Art: The Life and Work of Erich Fromm*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic. Chapter 2: The Individual as Social Being, pp. 45-65.

### Oct 1: **Legacies of Perpetrator Trauma**

- Frie, R. (2019). History's Ethical Demand: Memory, Denial and Responsibility in the Wake of the Holocaust. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 29, 122-142.
- Grand, S. (2019). Excitations of Vengeance: The We-Ness of History. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 29, 143-150.

Recommended:

- Frie, R. and Grand, S. (2019). Meeting Across History: A Dialogue. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 29, 151-158.

### Oct. 8: **No Class, Yom Kippur**

### Oct. 15: **No Class, Instructor Away**

### Oct. 22: **Avoidance, Acknowledgement, Engagement**

- Frie, R. (2017). *Not in My Family: German Memory and Responsibility After the Holocaust*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 3: "Shaped by History, Caught by Language," pp. 75-93.
- Fromm, G. M. (2018). National nightmare: The legacy of perpetrator trauma. In: R. Frie, (ed.), *History Flows Through Us: Germany, the Holocaust and the Importance of Empathy* (pp. 108-121). New York: Routledge.

### Oct. 29: **States of Denial and Narratives of Victimization**

- Frie, R. (2017). *Not in My Family: German Memory and Responsibility After the Holocaust*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 4: "Whose Suffering? Narratives of Trauma," pp. 95-137
- Stoll, K. (2014). The Lack of Conscious Engagement with the Reality of the Holocaust or: On the non-reception of Jan Karski in the Federal Republic of Germany. *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History*, 20, 57-82.

### Nov. 5: **Genocide of Indigenous Peoples**

- Truth and Reconciliation Committee of Canada. (2015). *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee of Canada*. The report can be accessed and downloaded at:  
[http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Final%20Reports/Executive\\_Summary\\_English\\_Web.pdf](http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Final%20Reports/Executive_Summary_English_Web.pdf)

Read: pp v-vi, 1-6 (scope of the cultural genocide); pp. 37-43 (survivor experiences); pp. 43-50 (history of colonial perpetration); pp. 135-41 (impact and legacy).

Regan, P. (2010). *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press. Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. 1-27

Recommended:

Lear, J. (2006). *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapter 1, pp. 1-54

### Nov. 12: **Racism and Responsibility 1:**

Yancy, G. (2015, December 24). Dear White America, *The New York Times*. This article can be accessed and downloaded at:  
<https://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/12/24/dear-white-america/?searchResultPosition=1>

Yancy G. (2018). *Backlash: What Happens When We Talk Honestly About Racism in America*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield. Introduction: Talking about Racism: When Honesty Feels like too Much to Bear, pp. 1-15.

Coates, T-N. (2014). The Case for Reparations. *The Atlantic*. This article can be accessed, downloaded or heard as a podcast at:  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

Freeman, M. (in press). Open Wounds: Discerning, Owning and Narrating Deep History. In: Goodman, D. M., Severson, E. R., and McDonald, H. (eds.). *Race, Rage and Resistance*. New York: Routledge. [Used with the permission of the author.]

### Nov. 19: **Racism and Responsibility 2:**

Yancy, G. (2015, December 24). Dear White America, *The New York Times*. This article can be accessed and downloaded at:  
<https://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/12/24/dear-white-america/?searchResultPosition=1>

Yancy G. (2018). *Backlash: What Happens When We Talk Honestly About Racism in America*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield. Introduction: Talking about Racism: When Honesty Feels like too Much to Bear, pp. 1-15.

Coates, T-N. (2014). The Case for Reparations. *The Atlantic*. This article can be accessed, downloaded or heard as a podcast at:  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

Freeman, M. (in press). Open Wounds: Discerning, Owning and Narrating Deep History. In: Goodman, D. M., Severson, E. R., and McDonald, H. (eds.). *Race, Rage and Resistance*. New York: Routledge. [Used with the permission of the author.]

### Nov. 26: **No class – Thanksgiving Break**

