

Collective Trauma in Post-World War II German Literature

This course focuses on literary representations of "collective trauma" as a "blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of community" (Kai Erikson). How was post World-War II German society affected by the traumas of the Second World War, the Cold War division of Germany, and the increasing dangers posed by environmental pollution and possible nuclear catastrophe? What coping mechanisms did individuals employ to facilitate their own physical and emotional survival in a damaged social organism? Authors discussed include Wolfgang Borchert, Elisabeth Langgässer, Günther Weisenborn, Gudrun Pausewang, and more. This course is taught in German. Language prerequisite: GERM 210 or GERN 202.