

Berlin Borders: Identity Formation After the Wall
1-6:20, 2 credits, Spring 2009
206 (Honors Multipurpose Room)

Julie Villegas Honors Program villegas@u.washington.edu Office: 211 Mary Gates tel: (206) 543-7172 Office Hours: Thursdays 3:30-4:30 or by appt	Shawn Wong English Department homebase@u.washington.edu Office: B423 Padelford Tel: 616-0941	Shanga Parker School of Drama shangap@u.washington.edu Office: 215 Hutchinson Hall tel: (206) 543-4220
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Course Blog: <http://honorsinberlin2009.blogspot.com/>

This preparatory seminar will provide students with an interdisciplinary introduction to the summer study abroad program "Berlin Borders: Identity Formation After the Wall". We will address the concept of borders (and walls) through the lenses of art and literature as employed by writers, filmmakers, performers and visual artists. Using the 2008 Common Book, Luis Alberto Urrea's *The Devils Highway*, as our starting point, we will explore how borders both define and divide us.

In Berlin, legacies of the Wall remain long after its fall ("the Wall in the head" phenomenon for example). At the same time, in the U.S. efforts continue to build a wall along the border with Mexico. In our inquiry, we must consider issues alive inside and outside immigrant communities, explore racial, linguistic, cultural and psychological "borders" and look at how the arts communities in Germany and the U.S. have addressed the concept of borders-and sought to create identities that transcend them, expressing a new "cultural topography" of individuals and migrant communities.

Students will also be introduced to humanities research methods and performance as related to border studies and, more specifically, cultural borderlands. Students will decide on project themes and develop proposals that will orientate them during their time in Berlin. Similar to the summer component, the spring seminar will be comprised of classroom instruction, writing assignments, guest speakers, and excursions that will inform the final project proposals.

Course Format:

Students will learn about the city of Berlin as an object of study and will choose research groups (approximately 2-3 students per group), decide on the focus of their projects, and create a proposal, which they will then use as a guide during their time in Berlin.

The 2-3 student research groups will divide into topics under the larger theme of walled cities, borderscapes, and border identity. Through collaboration within the groups and with instructors, specific topics and individual project focus will emerge. Each group member will have an opportunity to focus within the topic, but groups must decide on specific topics of study, i.e. immigration/migration group might decide to focus on Turkish immigration to Berlin, each group member will then

choose a specific focus relevant to the larger topic of Berlin Borders, i.e. a particular Turkish/German artist; a particular market place, etc. Specific research questions will emerge from the topics. Student groups will regularly report on preliminary research and will work together, collaboratively, both in Seattle, in Berlin and in Istanbul.

Course Goals:

- Identify key social issues in Berlin
- Guide students in the development of project topics
- Facilitate viewing city as art and performance (i.e. seeing as a writer and artist-- looking at metaphor and utilizing metaphors in the creative process.).
- Introduce students to topics relevant to the larger theme of the program
- Teach a variety of research/information gathering methods
- Develop team process
- Introduction to German history, culture, and politics

Student Objectives:

- Examine contemporary artistic, social and cultural issues in the urban context of Berlin
- Explore the city through the creative lens and be flexible (be open to seeing in a fresh way)
- Discover your project topic and develop research questions
- Prepare project proposals appropriate for exploration in Berlin
- Learn to work collaboratively and successfully in small groups
- Understand how an interdisciplinary approach contributes to your projects
- Learn survival German (basic phrases and linguistic nuisances)
- Present final projects in a creative and performative context

Required Reading:

--available at University Bookstore

1. Luis Alberto Urrea's , *The Devil's Highway*
2. Ladd, Brian, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape*. (selections)

--available in class (TBA)

3. Selected readings (Course Packet and/or weekly handouts, PDFs on course blog)
4. "Rethinking Thinking" (PDF)
5. Research 101 Tutorial: <http://lib.washington.edu/uwill/research101/> (tentative)

There may be additional readings as needed.

Optional Reading:

Taylor, Ronald. *Berlin and Its Culture: A historical portrait*.

Finlay, Frank and Taberner, Stuart. *Recasting German Identity: culture, politics, and literature in the Berlin Republic*.

Hannerz - culture in cities

Lynch - A Walk Around the Block

Attendance and Preparation: Any absences should be excused beforehand. You

are expected to complete all assignments prior to class on the assigned date. This includes all readings, assigned writings, blog postings (and Facebook assignments), and group presentations.

Method of Evaluation: This course has no final exam. Students are graded based on the following components:

- Class participation in-class discussion and individual blog postings (1/3)
- Writing Assignments (1/3)
- Submission of group research/project proposal (1/3)

Course Blog: You will keep an individual blog linked to the course blog where you will post assignments, share research findings, and collect resources useful to your developing research project. You will continue to use your personal blog and reference the course blog during your time in Berlin.

Blog Assignments: The blogs will facilitate our learning process in two ways: 1) as a medium to post reactions about the reading assignments and 2) an additional way to create and maintain our academic community both in Seattle and abroad. All blog posts are due before class on the day they are discussed. Note: if anyone is interested in creating a Berlin Facebook page, please take the lead!

The reading reactions are meant to provide an opportunity to discuss readings assigned for that day. Each student will use their blog to reflect on the assignments and to archive information they are gathering for their projects in Berlin.

Final Proposal and Presentation: At the end of the quarter, you will have crafted a group project proposal for the summer component of the program. The final draft of your proposal should be clear, concise and, while not carved in stone, show evidence of both significant introspection and research. The final project proposal should be between 6-10 pages per group. Proposal guidelines will be made available on the course blog (TBA).

Excursions: TBA

There may be optional excursions to museums, galleries, and performances.

Course Schedule: (In the event of a schedule change, students will be notified in class and via the class listserv.)

revised: April 27, 2009

Week 1: April 2	Introduction to Berlin Borders (reading to be assigned prior to class, Chapters 1&2 GHOSTS OF BERLIN and http://www.berlin.de/mauer/verlauf/index/index.en.php http://www.goethe.de/ges/mol/dos/ber/wan/en3137826.htm --Icebreaker (blog your discussion) --“How to be a writer: seeing the city as metaphor and playing with metaphors” --Discuss readings above
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Week 2:

April 9 Comparative look at Bordered cities/borderscapes
Guest Speaker: Jason DeLeon, Anthropology (Mexico/US Border research and comparative border studies)
Readings: *Devil's Highway*, chapters 1-3
Assignment due next week: seeing borders in Seattle (blog and report back to class)
Blog Post due: reaction to Ghosts of Berlin reading

Week 3:

April 16 -Topic: Berlin as Text/Art/Borderscape
Guest Speaker: Tamiko Thiel, Guest Artist creator /artistic director
"Virtuelle Mauer/Reconstructing the Wall"
-**Blog post due** ("seeing borders in Seattle")
Readings: "Virtuelle Mauer/Reconstructing the Wall"
www.virtuelle-mauer-berlin.de and/or suggestions per Tamiko

Week 4

April 23 Topic: Identity Politics: European/U.S. a comparative view
Cold War and Globalization
.....
Read: Francis Fukuyama's 1989 essay, "The End of History?" and his response to critics 17 years later in "After the End of History":
(see course blog for readings)
Also, focus on project topics and questions interested in exploring in Berlin –Altaar exercise
Reading Assignment: read two student blogs from Berlin Borders blog site.

Week 5:

April 30 "Topic: The Wall: a topography of the mind"--Misha Neiningger, Guest Artist
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Blog post due today: identify preferred topic, top 2- 3 choices plus altaar exercise per Shawn
Review project proposal guidelines on blog
Reading assignment: read Manuela's blog and one student blog. Write a short comment on each.

Week 6:

May 7 Focus on the Arts and Migration : "German Art and Literature in the 'Homeland'" Current topics in Berlin and artistic expression

Blog post due today: --what is happening in Berlin today? Research a current topic, arts and culture and/or news event, and post on blog

Set up Group Meetings with instructors (check in)—instructors will

send out email to schedule

Week 7:

May 14

FILM

TODAY

Shanga Parker, Professor Drama department, Berlin program co-director, "Seeing city as performance."

Blog post due today: preliminary research on your topic. What is your process and progress. What have you found out so far?
Optional Film: GOODBYE LENIN or ME BOSS, YOU SNEAKER

Week 8:

May 21

NOTE: FILM

TODAY

EDGE OF

HEAVEN

Guest Speaker: Resat Kasaba, Professor International Studies, and Tuna Kuyucu "Istanbul/Berlin: identity in context"

Reading assignment for today: TBA from list below (or selection from Kasaba and Kuyucu)

"Becoming a German, what does it mean?"

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=99189265>

"Race Culture Nation & Identity Politics in Turkey" Martin Bruinessen

Readings (tentative 1-2 from this list): 1. "Soysal, Levant "Europe and the Topography of Migrant Youth Culture in Berlin" *Without Borders: remapping territory, citizenship, and identity in a transnational age*

2. Leggewie, Claus "From Neighborhood to Citizenship: EU and Turkey"

Blog post due today: preliminary findings on your topic. What is your process and progress. What have you found out so far? What is your central question?

Also, blog short response to one of the readings and bring one question to ask of today's guest speakers.

FILM TODAY: *Edge of Heaven* (extended class time 7:00 pm)

Week 9:

May 28

1st hour: Guest Historian: Ran Hennes, History Department

2nd hour: In class -- work on proposals and schedules (research schedules for Berlin)

Discuss projects and presentations next week. Assign order of presentations

Reading due today: Chapters from *Ghosts of Berlin*.

Blog Post: short reaction to GHOSTS reading and reaction to film EDGE OF HEAVEN

Optional readings (on blog)

1) [Lynch - A Walk Around the Block](#) (tentative)

2) [Zeisel - Inquiry by Design](#) (tentative)

3) Jacobs - Looking at Cities, [part 1](#) and [part 2](#)

June 4
Week 10: Project proposals presentations today—group presentation/discussion
Week of June 11—Optional Language crash course (time TBA)
June 11—Project Proposals Due (post on your blog)
June 12—Social Gathering, p.m. (please mark your calendars!)
Possible July gathering and more language crash course (not mandatory). Also, communications via blogs and emails before departure to Berlin.

Resources (check course blog for additional materials):

- * Humboldt University - Berlin <http://www.hu-berlin.de/ueberblick-en/facts/>
- * Berlin Wall - 20th Anniversary Events http://www.germany-tourism.de/ENG/about_us/press_8908.htm
- * Berlin Wall - Timeline <http://www.dailysoft.com/berlinwall/>
- * Berlin Language and Culture <http://www.german-way.com/berlinlinks.html>
- * Berlin Visitor's Guide <http://www.berlin.de/english/>
- * ExBerliner English Language "What's Happening in Berlin" magazine <http://www.exberliner.com/>
- <http://www.goethe.de/ges/mol/dos/ber/wan/en3137826.htm>
- "Tacheles Art Cooperative"-- <http://super.tacheles.de/cms/>
- "Virtuelle Mauer/Reconstructing the Wall" www.virtuelle-mauer-berlin.de
- <http://www.berlin.de/mauer/verlauf/index/index.en.php>
- <http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/blackhistorymonth/>

Films:

Against the Wall

Edge of Heaven

Good-bye, Lenin

Me Boss, You Sneaker (Hussi Kutlucan)

Lives of Others