

CW911-30 Writing about Human Rights & Injustice

24/25

Department

SCAPVC - Warwick Writing Programme

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Maureen Freely

Credit value

30

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The module has been devised to draw on a growing inter-disciplinary relationship between the English and Law Departments. Recognising that there exists significant expertise in both departments in relation to the academic analysis of human rights related writing (from journalism to legal judgments) and the production of writing in this subject, the module intends to provide students with a unique opportunity to study the writing of human rights through a double prism: writing and law.

Module aims

The main aim of this module therefore is: to study the ethical and practical elements of writing about human rights or social injustice in varying contexts/media. The module will provide an academic basis for critiquing different forms of writing (fiction, non-fiction, legal etc) and exploring ways in which they can be produced. The key element of the module will be experiential in that students will be required to focus on the development of their own writing skills.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

After an introductory session, the module will be separated into three sections each lasting three weeks. Each section will comprise of two seminars studying literature related to specific 'moments' (or 'knots') and one writing workshop. The workshop will study writing projects of the students that relate to a particular form of writing.

The syllabus will be as follows:

Week 1: Introduction

Knot 1: State Systems of Injustice:

Week 2: South African Apartheid

Texts to be studied from:

Breyton Breytonbach, True Confessions of an Albino Terrorist

André Brink, A Dry White Season

Albie Sachs, Soft Vengeance of a Freedom Fighter

Benjamin Zephania, Too Black Too Strong

The Biko Inquest film

Week 3: The 'Camp': Gulag, Holocaust, Guantanamo

Texts to be studied from:

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, The Gulag Archipelago

Priomo Levi, If this is a Man/The Truce

Anne Applebaum, Gulag

Week 4: Workshop: Power of fiction

Student presentations

Knot 2: The 'Enemy Within': writing about terrorism/rebels/political prisoners

Week 5: Northern Ireland and the IRA

Texts to be studied from:

Kevin Toolis, Rebel Hearts

Week 6: Suppression and Public Protest: From Gandhi to Student Fees

Texts to be studied from:

Malcolm X, The Ballot or the Bullet

Mohandas Gandhi, Essential Writings

Week 7: Workshop: reporting on protest

Student presentations

Knot 3: Writing about 'Evil(s)'

Week 8: 'Evil' on trial: international tribunals and international criminal justice

Texts to be studied from:

Hannah Arendt, Eichman in Jerusalem

Philip Gourevitch, We wish to inform you...

John Hersey, Hiroshima

Week 9: The Evils of Nature: response to humanitarian disaster

Texts to be studied from:

David Kennedy, *The Dark Sides of Virtue*

Workshop: Representing the Trial

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Practise and evaluate writing about human rights and their abuse on the basis of a knowledge both of important aspects of their development and of practical issues which relate to it.
- Communicate sophisticatedly on matters relevant to the topic, both orally and in writing.
- Analyse examples of the form critically.
- Conduct research in public archives, through a range of published work and / or by oral interview (in conformity with University ethical policy).
- Demonstrate critical analysis identifying the proper roles of theory and fact; evaluating the logic and empirical claims of rival arguments; identifying assumptions; following extended trains of argument; understanding clearly the practical implications of theory.

Indicative reading list

Illustrative Bibliography:

List the core texts only. The illustrative bibliography should provide an indication of the focus and level of the reading required by this module, rather than the full range (this should not be more than half a page):

Breyten Breytenbach, *The True Confessions of an Albino Terrorist* (1994)

André Brink, *A Dry White Season* (1992)

Albie Sachs, *Soft Vengeance of a Freedom Fighter* (1990)

Benjamin Zephania, *Too Black Too Strong* (2001)

The Biko Inquest film

Kevin Toolis, *Rebel Hearts* (1997)

Seamus Deane, *Reading in the Dark* (1997)

Bernard MacLaverty, *Cal* (1998)

Malcolm X, *The Ballot or the Bullet*

Mohandas Gandhi, *Essential Writings* (2008)

Hannah Arendt, *Eichman in Jerusalem* (2006)

Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1991)

Philip Gourevitch, *We wish to inform you...* (2000)

David Kennedy, *The Dark Sides of Virtue* (2005)

John Hersey, *Hiroshima* (2002)

Subject specific skills

Transferable skills

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	10 sessions of 2 hours (7%)
Tutorials	1 session of 1 hour (0%)
Private study	279 hours (93%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

No private study requirements defined for this module.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessed portfolio	100%		Yes (extension)
50% creative work and 50% essay			

Feedback on assessment

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- TCWA-Q3P7 MA in Writing
 - Year 1 of Q3P7 Writing
 - Year 2 of Q3P7 Writing
- TENA-Q3P7 MA in Writing
 - Year 1 of Q3P7 Writing
 - Year 2 of Q3P7 Writing
- TCWA-Q3PB Postgraduate Taught Literary Translation Studies
 - Year 1 of Q3PB Literary Translation Studies
 - Year 2 of Q3PB Literary Translation Studies
- TENA-Q3PB Postgraduate Taught Literary Translation Studies
 - Year 1 of Q3PB Literary Translation Studies
 - Year 2 of Q3PB Literary Translation Studies