HIST 381 Japan and the Atomic Bomb
(Cross-listed as SISP 381, CEAS 384, DANC 384)
Monday 1:10-4:00, Tuesday 7:00 - 9:00
Freeman Center for East Asian Studies, Seminar Room
[N.B. The syllabus actively in use for this course is on Moodle and is occasionally altered so will not be exactly the same as this syllabus.]

Instructors
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Office Hours: Tues., 1:30-4:00, PAC 135, or by appointment.

Eiko Otake (eotake@wesleyan.edu, 917-405-7941.)
Office & Hours: Tues., 10:00 – 12:00, Dance Department, 160 Cross St., Room 009; or by appointment. (For more about Eiko, go to: http://www.eikoandkoma.org/)

What We Will Be Thinking About

The dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan remains one of the most controversial events of the twentieth century. People frequently ask whether they were justified. That question, however, which is philosophical and ethical and not historical, is not the main focus of this course.

We start with historical rather than ethical questions: What happened and why? How did civilians become the targets of mass bombing campaigns? How did the bomb come to be developed in the first place? How did the American government decide to drop the bombs—indeed, was there a conscious decision ever made? What policy goals made their dropping possible? How did the scientists who developed the bomb see their roles? How did scientists and politicians see the bomb and change their views in later years? How have the human experiences of the atomic bombings been represented? How have artists and survivors expressed what is essentially inexpressible? How does the use of the atomic bombs on Japan affect us today? How do we understand Fukushima in the context of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

In looking to answer these and other questions we will examine the scientific, cultural, and political origins and aftereffects of the bombs; their use in the context of aerial bombings and related issues in military history; their production in the context of breakthroughs in nuclear physics; the decisions that led to their use in the context of the war and projected postwar politics; the human cost both to those on whom they were dropped and to those who dropped them; and their place in history, culture, and identity politics to the present. Sources will include works on the history of science as
well as military, political, and cultural history; literary and other artistic interpretations; and primary source documents, mostly regarding U.S. policy questions.

**How We Will Be Doing It**

This course has two required meetings, on Monday afternoons and on Tuesday evenings. Please come prepared to do movement exercises on both days. You can change clothes at the East Asian Studies Center before class if necessary.

Also be prepared to discuss all of the assigned readings by Monday, although we will continue our discussion on Tuesday evening along with movement exercises and viewing of visual media works. Be prepared to watch really scary films such as *Godzilla*. The smuggling of popcorn into class on movie nights will not be punished although the instructors might munch.

Movement study is grounded in the concepts of Eiko's "Delicious Movement" workshop, which is emphatically noncompetitive and appropriate for all levels of ability and training. We will move to actively forget the clutter of our lives so that we can fully "taste" both body and mind. The space and time continuum in which we move is not a white canvas that stands alone and empty. The here and now is a continuous part of a larger geography (space) and history (time) and as such is dense with memories, shadows, and possibilities. It is in this body, space, and time that our learning takes place. In a mutually supportive environment, movement exercises will provide occasions for students to develop artistic and emotional rigor by asking questions such as: What is it to forget, remember, mourn, and pray? How do humans transcend violence and loss? How does art respond to violence and does art help us survive? How does being a mover, a dancer, affect our learning and creativity?

Your participation in movement exercises is essential in our course and will be graded not on talent but by willingness to experiment and help others.

**The Nitty Gritty (Requirements and Expectations)**

This is meant to be a challenging course with extensive readings and demanding homework assignments.

Students are expected to complete the reading on Sunday night before the class, and to submit a journal entry electronically via Moodle by Sunday at 11:00 p.m.; please turn in a hard copy at the end of each Monday class. On occasion, there will be readings assigned after the viewing of films on Tuesday evenings, and those readings should be discussed in the next week’s journal.
In two classes during the semester (from week 2), all participants are required to offer an oral presentation that includes a brief synopsis and critique of one assigned text or of the optional reading (when applicable), followed by a close reading of what you consider a key paragraph or passage in the assigned work. At the beginning of the class in which presentations are given, students will hand in a short (2-3 pp., double spaced) discussion paper that briefly outlines the reading’s main argument and explains how it is a strong or a weak argument. A journal entry is not required (but not discouraged if you wish to make one) on weeks when presentations are made and short papers submitted.

Each student will also produce a final project (which can take the form of an artistic project or a more traditional research paper of 10 to 12 pages, double spaced) and share it with the class. Projects will be developed in consultation with the instructors; deadlines will be determined later in the semester.

Completion of the assigned readings, class attendance, and the submission of journal entries on time are required, with one exception allowed. In other words, you may miss one class or fail to submit one journal entry (but not one of the short papers) without question or need to make excuses. Other classes may be missed only with the permission of your dean. Otherwise, each missed class will result in the lowering of the student’s final grade by one-half grade, as calculated at the end of the semester. All students are required to speak in every class. Should you miss a class you must catch up by contacting another student in the course. On week 2 we will ask that you commit to the two classes in which you wish to make a presentation. If you wish to make one on week 2, please be in touch beforehand.

**About Journal Entries**

- Every week write a journal entry reflecting on all your readings, viewing assignments, and movement exercises (for the first half of the semester and then as we have them for the rest), as well as describing your findings and questions you came up with.

- There are no exams or quizzes in this course. The only way we know you are doing the homework is by reading your responses. If you do not write about it we will assume you did not read the assignments. The only exceptions to this are when you write the two short papers. On all occasions please find a way to convince us that you are completing the readings. (It is obvious when responses are based on cherry-picking the readings as opposed to a thorough perusal.)

- There is no specific format or page allowance, but we expect your thorough response to all course materials whether assigned as homework or offered in the class (such as films or music). This may be difficult, but please be aware of all parts of the course and discuss all of them in your journal, though you should discuss some more thoroughly about others.

- That said, please be considerate about the fact we will be reading everyone’s journal every week.

- Be rigorous intellectually, artistically, and emotionally. You are encouraged to revisit something from a previous class or assignment, especially when you find it relevant to a subsequent assignment.
• Your journal entries will be graded on the completeness of the assignments, quality of writing, clarity and originality of thoughts, and thoroughness. Graded journals will not be returned and the grades will not be made available to students during most of the course, although you will receive a comprehensive evaluation of work up to fall break. The goal is not for you to write to please us as instructors; rather it is for you to strive for quality on your own. When you do all assignments, you will want to write a good journal to reflect on the assigned material. When you write a great entry, you will know it and so will we. We will let you know when your journal entries are insufficient and will often remark on your journals in class. If you are anxious about how you are doing, you can ask either of us for guidance at any time. (Although Eiko will not be on campus for the last week of class, she will be reading journal entries from afar.)

• We will share parts of your journal entries in class and sometimes ask you to read from them. However, you are welcome to write things you do not want us to share with others. Clearly mark the sections you want to be private.

• Sometimes, we will give you a personal topic that is related to our class readings and discussions. Other times just make your own judgment about how to proceed making sure your journal fulfills several of the objectives stated above.

• If for some reason you could not finish all assignments, please do not panic. You have a choice:
  1) Stop reading and write on what you have read and come back to read and write more later. Remember an incomplete journal is far better than no journal.
  2) Make rough memos and keep reading so you are ready for the class and email us notifying me that your journal submission will be late. Remember a late journal is far better no journal. You can make more than one submission to your journal entry.

• The main objectives of the journal assignments are:
  1) to engage more deeply and personally with the assignments of the week.
  2) to prove that you have read and digested all the assignments.
  3) to prepare for sharing your thoughts with your classmates.
  4) to record, review, and digest what happened in the classroom and discover relationships between the movement study, discussions, readings, music, and viewing material.
  5) to create your own record of the entire course experience and identify the areas you want to explore further and record that exploration.
  6) to report any extra activities and optional assignments you engage in and to share the reflections stemming from such learning.
  7) to develop your final projects, from initial ideas to drafts. You can include more than what is assigned in your journal, such as something you read that might be relevant to the class.

• You should proceed in your journal writing as follows:
  (At first, you will find it useful to use the following as a checklist.)

  1) First, focus on what matters to you the most and expand your thoughts upon it. You are encouraged to find relevance to other assignments (current and previous) as well as to your personal experiences and interests and what you have learned from other courses. This course is about life as a whole!

  2) Resist describing the contents of the assignments in general terms or writing summaries.
3) State your impressions, questions, related thoughts, objections and emotional reactions. In most history courses these might be marginalized but not here. They are significant to your learning.

4) Tell us what moved, puzzled, or inspired you and how. Also write what you dislike or find disagreeable and why.

5) Write your own thoughts in your own words and discover something new. Go deeper with what you find in a particular work or explore questions that come up. Go wild, be emotional, compare, contrast, argue, remember something (personal or what you learned elsewhere), relate, imagine, and discover what happens when writing=thinking. This process will bring you to a place of your own, to thoughts of your own. Be articulate, explore and push yourself further. Linger on a thought or on a question. Get stuck or discover. Push yourself so you might discover a line or two that you did not intend to write or a thought you never knew you had. Journal entries are not short papers.

6) In journal entries, describe how you experienced each exercise, so you will remember it many months later. Write down your impressions, findings, and thoughts. Be candid. Making associations to your other experiences or course assignments is encouraged but not mandatory.

7) Check to make sure you have mentioned every assignment in your journal. If there is any assignment you have not mentioned, write a few sentences about it. You should write something about every assignment so we know you have not skipped some coursework. These additional comments do not have to be worked into the main body of your journal entry.

8) When you are done with your journal entry, read it at least once, not only to fix careless mistakes, but also to choose and underline several sections you might want to read aloud in class or in group discussions.

9) If your journal entry is more than a few pages long, please highlight sections you want us to focus on or sections you particularly want to share.

10) If you find a part you do not want us to share with others, please clearly mark the sections as private.

11) Insert page numbers.

12) Make sure your full name, date of submission, and title of document are typed on the top.

13) You are welcome to give a juicy title to your entry if you feel like doing so. It will only help us to direct our attention. But please keep the file name and subject line as directed below.

14) Please use .doc or .docx format. Title your journal entry in the following order: Your first name, Last name, Journal #, Journal’s given title. e.g. Eiko Otake HIST381 Journal 1 INTRODUCTION.docx

15) Send it to both wjohnston@wesleyan.edu and eikootake@gmail.com as an
email attachment. Put the journal’s number and title in the email subject line.

16) If you write a follow up journal entry, please be clear what belongs to what. Title it: Your first name, Last name, Journal #, Journal’s given title, part #. e.g MTR Journal 1 INTRODUCTION part 2

17) Bring your printed copy or your computer with file to class.

About Final Projects

We will work with themes and ideas regarding final projects during the first half of the semester. One goal is to do something that will engage with the public with what you have learned. Some examples: publishing an op-ed piece, writing members of state or Federal legislatures, creating an exhibition, executing a musical or performance piece (which can be recorded and posted on YouTube), writing letters to the editor of local or national newspapers, starting and carrying a petition to completion, creating a website, contributing to a Wikipedia page. You are encouraged to use your imagination and try to be as effective as possible. You will develop your ideas through your journal entries, and account for the methods and thought process that leads to your projects. They will be graded based on conceptualization, clarity of goals, implementation, and possibilities of follow-through.

In some way, your project should start from something in the syllabus or something you find missing from it. By doing this it will contribute back to the syllabus and help you complete the course in a way satisfying to yourself.

Participation is required in the Final Project Sharing. If your project is a research paper, please present your findings creatively and vividly. If your project is creative work, you will perform or show your work.

• Whatever your project is, each of you will have 6 minutes to present your work. If you collaborate with a classmate, the team can have longer time but not twice as much. Please make sure your presentation is well-prepared, rehearsed, and timed.

• Written papers are required for all projects. If your project is artistic one, you will have to still write a paper articulating your motivation, process, relationship to the syllabus, intention, findings, and self evaluation. Length of this paper is not set but try to make it concise and complete. It must be polished (without grammatical or other basic mistakes) and use a standard form to cite supporting materials. All papers are due at the end of the course.

Consult us before you start your final project so we can be involved in your process. Preparation for your presentation has to be done before the class time, so you can fully participate to other people’s sharing. You need to be present for other people’s presentations. Being a supportive audience member to other people’s sharing is as important as your sharing your own work.

Disability Resources

Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with
disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Disability Resources as soon as possible.

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Dean Patey in Disability Resources, located in North College, Room 021, or call 860/685-5581 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations.

**Grading**

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**Readings**

Books available for purchase at Broad Street Books are:

J. Samuel Walker, *Prompt & Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of Atomic Bombs Against Japan* (ordered Sept. 4)

Jean-Luc Nancy, *After Fukushima* (ordered Sept. 1)

Kenzaburo Oe, ed., *The Crazy Iris*


Jim Ottaviani, *Fallout*

David Lauchbaum, Edwin Lyman, Susan Stranahan, *Fukushima: The Story of a Nuclear Disaster*

Several of these are available for Kindle reader at a lower price.

Other readings will be available online or as PDFs.

**Schedule**

**WEEK 1. Introduction: From Science Fiction to Reality**

**Monday, September 7**


This chapter in this book is the inspiration for Wells’s *The World Set Free*, which in turn was the inspiration for Leo Szilard to initiate what later became the Manhattan Project.

Read this quickly, but be able to discuss the sections about the development of energy sources, the invention of a new kind of bomb (“atomic bomb” appears here for the first time in the English language), how it was used, and the outcomes.

**Tuesday, September 8**

*New York Times* News reports of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. (PDFs on Moodle.)

Optional: Look up reports in other newspapers by using the Proquest Historical Newspapers under the Olin Library page’s link to “Articles, Journal, and Databases.” You will want to explore this page.

[http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/1945/aug/07/fromthearchive](http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/1945/aug/07/fromthearchive)
[http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/1945/aug/09/japan.fromthearchive](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/1945/aug/09/japan.fromthearchive)

President Harry S. Truman Announces Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3Ib4wTq0jY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3Ib4wTq0jY)

**Week 2. Victims’ Experiences of the Atomic Bombs**

**Monday, September 14**


Homer Bigart, “A Month After the Atomic Bomb: Hiroshima Still Cannot Believe It,”  
*New York Times*, 5 September 1945. PDF

**Photos and Books for class discussion:**
Panoramas of Hiroshima destruction  

Shogo Yamahata, Photographer’s notes in English “The Day After the Nagasaki Bombing” (Nagasaki, 10 August 1945.)  
[http://www.peace-museum.org/yamahata_frame/frames.htm](http://www.peace-museum.org/yamahata_frame/frames.htm)  
(Click on links in left column)

**Tuesday, September 15**
WEEK 3. Developing the Bomb & Military Precedents

Monday, September 21


Tuesday, September 22


Monday, September 28

Jim Ottaviani, Fallout (all).


Tuesday, September 29

Video to be seen before class:
Day after Trinity (1981)

Week 5. How the Bomb Came to Be Used, Part I: Truman’s Story

Monday, October 5


John Chase, “Unconditional Surrender Reconsidered.” PDF

Brian L. Villa, “The U.S. Army, Unconditional Surrender, and the Potsdam Declaration” PDF

Tuesday, October 6
No extra assignment.

Week 6. How the Bomb Came to Be Used, Part II: The Documentary Record

Monday, October 12

Required Readings:
“The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II: A Collection of Primary Sources,”
Selected documents (see Moodle page for PDFs)
Henry Stimson, “The Decision to Use Atomic Bomb,” Harpers Magazine. PDF

Tuesday, October 13

Video to be seen in class
(Tentative) Rain of Ruin (1995) and / or Why Atomic Bomb was Dropped

Week 7. The Atom Bombs and the Question of Japanese Surrender

Monday, October 19

Sadao Asada, “The Shock of the Atomic Bomb and Japan's Decision to Surrender: A Reconsideration.” (PDF)
Sumio Hatano, “The Atomic Bomb and Soviet Entry into the War,” in Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, ed., The End of the Pacific War, pp. 95-112. PDF
Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, “The Atomic Bombs and the Soviet Invasion,” in Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, ed., The End of the Pacific War, pp. 113-144. PDF

Tuesday, October 20

No extra assignment.
Week 8. Representations I (Expressing the Inexpressible)

Monday, November 2

John Whittier Treat. “Introduction” and “Atrocity into Words” in Writing on Ground Zero pp. 1-43. PDF
Tamaki Hara, “The Land of Heart’s Desire” in The Crazy Iris, pp. 55-62. PDF
Yōko Ōta, “Fireflies,” (1953) in The Crazy Iris, pp. 85-111. PDF

Optional Reading:

In-class reading:
Hiroshima no Pika by Iri and Toshi Maruki

Tuesday, November 3

Films to be viewed in class
Godzilla, King of the Monsters (1954)
Lucky Dragon (1954), partial viewing.

Read after the film, discuss in next journal entry:

Week 9. Representations II (Who Can Speak?)

Monday, November 9

Kenzaburô Ōe, Sheep (1958) (pp.167-177). PDF
Kenzaburô Ōe, Hiroshima Notes, (1963) “Introduction,” (pp. 7-11), Chapters 3-5 (pp. 78-132) and Epilogue (pp. 168-183). PDF


Kyoko Hayashi, “Two Grave Markers,” in Kyoko & Mark Selden, eds., The Atomic Bomb
Tuesday, November 10

Film to be viewed in class:
Hiroshima, Mon Amour

Read after the film, discuss in next journal entry:

Week 10. Representations, III (Resisting Forgetfulness)

Monday, November 16

Kyoko Hayashi, “Ritual of Death” in Nuke-Rebuke, pp. 21-57. PDF
Kyoko Hayashi, “From Trinity to Trinity” PDF
Davinder Bhomik, “Temporal Discontinuity in the Atomic Bomb Fiction of Hayashi Kyōko,” in Ōe and Beyond: Fiction in Contemporary Japan, pp. 58-88. PDF

Tuesday, November 17

Film to be viewed in class
Atomic Café

Week 11. Fukushima and Memories of the Atomic Bomb

(Be sure to include readings for both days in your journal)

Monday, November 23

Eiichirō Ochiai, “The Development of Nuclear Power Reactors and the Nuclear Industry” (PDF)
David Lauchbaum, Edwin Lyman, Susan Stranahan, Fukushima: The Story of a Nuclear Disaster (selections, pp. TBA)

Tuesday, November 24

Kenzaburo Ōe, “History repeats” The New Yorker, March 28, 2011
http://www.newyorker.com/talk/2011/03/28/110328ta_talk_oe
Jean-Luc Nancy, After Fukushima (all)
Eiichirō Ochiai, “Falsification and Suppression of the Truth” (PDF)
Week 12. Final Project Presentations

Monday, November 30
Final project presentations, day 1.

Tuesday, December 1
Final project presentations, day 2.

Week 13. The Atomic Bomb in Historical Memory

Monday, December 7

Rinjiro Sodei, “Hiroshima/Nagasaki as History and Politics” PDF
Martin J. Sherwin, “Hiroshima as Politics and History,” PDF
Barton J. Bernstein, “Introducing the Interpretive Problems of Japan’s 1945 Surrender: A Historiographical Essay on Recent Literature in the West,” in Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, ed., The End of the Pacific War, pp. 9-64. PDF
Peter Schwenger & John Whittier Treat, “America’s Hiroshima, Hiroshima’s America,” PDF

Tuesday, December 8

John Dower, War, Peace, and Beauty: The Art of Iri and Toshi Maruki. PDF
Maruki picture books. PDF

Video to be seen in class:
Hell Fire (1986)

Paintings to be seen in class:
Hiroshima Panels by Iri and Toshi Maruki