



Memory in the Disciplines

Presents

Stef Craps

*An Inconvenient Comparison:
Climate Change Through the Lens of the Holocaust*

Friday February 17 12pm Eastern Time



Despite being widely regarded as posing a new and unprecedented threat to human civilization and perhaps even human life on this planet, climate change is often culturally imagined in terms of past historical traumas. In this lecture, I will explore how the spectre of the Holocaust in particular haunts contemporary representations of the climate emergency, ranging from (frequently controversial) statements by public figures to historical accounts and literary texts. The shadow of this earlier event that looms over the current climate crisis can be productively interpreted through Marianne Hirsch's concept of postmemory and Michael Rothberg's notion of multidirectional memory. Future-oriented concepts such as pre-trauma and anticipatory memory help shed further light on these Holocaust-climate change linkages.

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Stef Craps is a professor of English literature at Ghent University in Belgium, where he directs the Cultural Memory Studies Initiative. His research interests lie in twentieth-century and contemporary literature and culture, memory and trauma studies, postcolonial theory, and ecocriticism and environmental humanities. He is the author of *Postcolonial Witnessing: Trauma Out of Bounds* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) and *Trauma and Ethics in the Novels of Graham Swift: No Short-Cuts to Salvation* (Sussex Academic Press, 2005), a co-author of *Trauma* (Routledge, 2020), and a co-editor of *Memory Unbound: Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies* (Berghahn, 2017). He has also (co-)edited special issues of journals including *American Imago*, *Studies in the Novel*, and *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts* on topics such as ecological grief, climate change fiction, and transcultural Holocaust memory.

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