HON338: ThanaTourism: Traveling the “Dark Side”

Fall 2023

**Credits: 3**

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**Professor: Justine K. Van Meter**

**Office/Office Hours:** Let’s Zoom (T 3-5 and by appointment/at your convenience)

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**Catalog Description:**

*Prerequisite: acceptance to the University Honors Program, or consent of instructor.* Using an interdisciplinary approach, we will focus on diverse travel narratives, literary works, and theoretical approaches to investigate the increasing allure of various tourist and historical sites that are associated with collective traumas, death, and disaster and that raise questions about memory, commemoration, and exploitation.

**Major Topics Covered/Course Learning Outcomes:**

* Explore historical, cultural, and literary contexts as well as diverse experiences, expressions, and definitions of identity through tourism/travel.
* Understand and apply various theoretical approaches to the study of literature and culture, including Psychoanalytic, Feminist, and Postcolonial approaches.
* Investigate the power of travel narratives and dark tourism, in particular, in the creation of notions of Self/individual/Other, community, and nation.

**Honors Program Learning Outcomes:**

* Obtain a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
* Sharpen the ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);
* Understand how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing complex challenges shaping the world;
* Develop effective communication skills, specifically in the areas of written and oral exposition and analysis.

**General Education Learning Outcomes:**

In addition to the outcomes specified above, this course also satisfies the following General Education areas:

* 7AI (Artistic Inquiry): Students compose critical or creative works that embody or analyze conceptually an artistic form at a baccalaureate/pre-professional level.
* 7SI (Social Inquiry): Students explore processes by which human beings develop social and/or historical perspectives.

**Required Texts:**

Richard Sharpley and Philip Stone, *The Darker Side of Travel: The Theory and Practice of Dark Tourism* (a PDF of this text is provided for you, but please acquire it if you prefer hard copies)

Various Handouts (posted on Canvas)

**Requirements:**

1. Readings and discussions: as you will notice on the syllabus, there are materials that will be posted on Canvas. Feel free to use your laptop to access them in class if needed, but **PLEASE only use your device for this purpose during class**; I’ll call you out and mark you absent if it’s apparent that you’re on Facebook or email! **Additionally, if it becomes clear that readings are not completed by the day they are due, quizzes will be added and they will be very difficult!** **You will be responsible for not only reading the material, but leading the discussions and presenting the material in question, so please be ready to participate each day!**
2. We will also have writing assignments at times, as seen on the syllabus, but note that unlessthese are specified as graded assignments with guidelines to follow, these are informal and can be handwritten or typed. While they’re not graded, they are an important component of your participationgrade.
3. Essay 1(200 points): Your essay needs to be submitted **by 11:00pm** on the date listed on the syllabus and must be submitted on Canvas. **No late papers accepted!**
4. Essay 2 (300 points): Your essay needs to be submitted **by 11:00pm** on the date listed on the syllabus and must be submitted on Canvas. Your presentation at the end of the semester will be based on this essay (more on this later!). **No late papers accepted!**
5. Presentation (100 points): More information will be distributed as this assignment approaches.
6. Final Exam (300 points): The final will be comprehensive. More on this later!
7. Participation/Attendance(100 points): It is more than likely that, at this point in the syllabus and at this point in your experiences in the Honors program, you are aware that your active participation in this class is necessary. We are in this together, to critically explore and examine a variety of texts, images and ideas; as such, all of our voices must be heard!

Please be aware that excessive unexcused absences (meaning absences that are not cleared with me **prior** to class and that are not legitimized by either a doctor’s/dean’s note or by other satisfactory means) or excessive tardiness will result in a reduction in your final grade according to the table shown below:

Absence #3 20 point deduction

Absence #4-5 50 point deduction

Absence #6 and beyond Failure in the class

Tardies 3 Tardies=1 Unexcused Absence

**Academic Integrity:** I am assuming that you are all extremely bright and eager students; as such, you are expected to be fully aware and respectful of Chapman’s Academic Integrity policy (as described in your Student Handbook). We will discuss guidelines regarding citation throughout the semester, but if you have any questions or doubts at any time, please put your mind (and writing) at ease and discuss them with me.

**Chapman University’s Students with Disabilities Policy:** In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the term. The University, through the Disability Services Office, will work with the appropriate faculty member who is asked to provide the accommodations for a student in determining what accommodations are suitable based on the documentation and the individual student needs. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

**Special Notes:**

\*Please be aware that this is not a hyflex/hybrid course; in other words, I’ll be zooming each class (with minimal interaction with anyone who is there), but this is to be used sparingly and only when necessary!

\*If you need to discuss accommodations, please contact Disability Services ([ds@chapman.edu](mailto:ds@chapman.edu)) right away.

\*Please do not use laptops/cell phones during class time other than to access materials! If there is an emergency or circumstance in which one or both of these is required, please let me know before class begins.

\*Dr. Richard Ruppel from the English Department has succinctly explained my own policy regarding the use of AI here, so please read his words carefully:

Chatbots or generative AI tools may offer useful information. However, students are solely responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of the material that the Chatbot generates in response to their prompt or AI query. It is the student’s responsibility to verify the accuracy of the information provided and to use that information in ethical ways that avoid academic integrity issues. Students should also be aware of the inherent bias that may be manifested in generative AI responses and need to think critically as they analyze the information provided. To stay in compliance with university policies on academic integrity, a student’s use of AI tools must be properly documented and referenced in the citation style of your chosen discipline.  
*The use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.)****is permitted****in this course for the following activities:*

* Brainstorming and refining your ideas.
* Fine-tuning your research questions.
* Finding general information about the topic.
* Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts.
* Checking grammar, writing conventions, and/or style.

*The use of generative AI tools****is not permitted****in this course for the following activities:*

* Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
* Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete class assignments.

If you have questions about whether a specific AI tool is permitted, please ask me for clarification prior to turning in classroom or research assignments. Should I determine that an assignment has used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways, I will ask you in for a conference. Repeated offences may be brought before Chapman University’s Academic Integrity Committee for final arbitration.

**Grades:** I am painfully aware of the emphasis that we all place on the grades that we receive. Although I have listed below the point values/percentages assigned to the various course requirements, I would like to remind you to please keep in mind as we proceed that *learning* is a process, one which points and percentages are very often incapable of measuring (corny, but true). Enjoy the process!

**Grade Scale:**

Essay 1 200 points A 950-1000

Essay 2 300 points A- 910-949

Final Exam 300 points B+ 880-909

B 840-879

B- 810-839

Presentation 100 points C+ 780-809

Participation 100 points C 740-779

C- 710-739

D+ 680-709

D 640-679

D- 610-639

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**TOTAL 1000 points**

**Helpful Resources:**

Current Issues in Dark Tourism Research (on Facebook)

<https://www.dark-tourism.com/>

Dark Tourist Sites, listed by nation

<http://ericzuelow.com/ModernTourism/Dark.html>

A History of Modern Tourism

**Schedule of Classes**

\*I reserve the right to alter the syllabus as needed.

**Week 1:**

T 08/29 Introduction to the Course/Review of Syllabus

Th 08/31 **Be sure to have the syllabus printed out and**

**available for your reference each day.** Informal writing **task**: write (any length, handwritten or typed) on the following (**Note:** these are suggestions, so choose the one(s) of interest or take another direction if you’d like): what does it mean to be a “tourist”? Why do people “tour”/what is the appeal of being a tourist? What do you think are the most popular tourist destinations and why do you think these sites are popular? Also note: this won’t be graded, but is for discussion purposes, so take the time to write out some thoughts!

**Week 2:**

T 09/05 Another informal writing task: Where have you been a

tourist? What were your experiences? What were you trying to be (or not be) and gain (or not gain) while a tourist? What were you interested in seeing while touring a country, a city, and/or a specific site?

Th 09/07 **Introduction to the “field”:**

Urry, “The Tourist Gaze” (PDF on Canvas)

**Week 3:**

T 09/12 “Dark Tourism/Grief Tourism/Thana Tourism,”

Sharpley/Stone (3-22) **AND** “Kitschification,” Sharpley/Stone

(118-128). Both readings are also available on Canvas.

Th 09/14 Walter, “Dark Tourism: Mediating Between the Dead and the

Living,” in Sharpley/Stone (39-55)

**Week 4:**

T 09/19 **Prosopopoeia, The Limits of Representation, and**

**Holocaust Tourism**

“Introduction to the Holocaust,” Celan’s “Todesfuge,” Plath’s “Daddy” (PDFs on Canvas)

Th 09/21 Selections from Spiegelman, *Maus I and II* (handouts on

Canvas)

**Week 5:**

T 09/26 Hollywood and the construction of ThanaTourism. *Imaginary*

*Witness: Hollywood and the Holocaust*

Th 09/28 Hodgkinson, “The Concentration Camp as a Site of ‘Dark

Tourism’” (PDF on Canvas)

**Week 6:**

T 10/03 **The Lighter Side of the Dark**

Bring in an example of “fun” dark tourism and be prepared to discuss it in class!

Th 10/05 Writing Workshop

**Essay 1 due tonight** **on** **Canvas by 11:00pm. No late papers accepted, so be careful with this and be sure to use all guidelines – provided on both the handout and on Canvas – to avoid deductions.**

**Week 7:**

T 10/10 “’It’s a Bloody Guide’: Fun, Fear and a Lighter Side of Dark

Tourism at the Dungeon Visitor Attractions,” Sharpley/Stone (165-185)

Th 10/12 “Dark Tourism: A Fascination With

Assassination,” Lennon/Foley (PDF on Canvas)

Excerpt from Sarah Vowell’s, *Assassination Vacation* (on

Canvas or use website listed on the PDF to listen to the

audio)

**Week 8:**

T 10/17 Tombstone/CemeteryTourism or Taphophilia:

Chapters 1 and 4 from Powers-Douglas, *Cemetery Walk:*

*Journey Into the Art, History and Society of the Cemetery*

*and Beyond* (PDFs on Canvas)

Th 10/19 **“Wargasm”:** Baldwin/Sharpley,“Battlefield Tourism:

Bringing Organised Violence Back to Life,” in Sharpley/Stone (186-206)

**Week 9:**

T 10/24 Excerpts from Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic:*

*Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War* (PDF on Canvas)

Th 10/26 “Rebellion” Tourism in Ireland, North and

South: “Brief History” AND “Ireland’s Rebellions” (PDFs on Canvas)

**Week 10:**

T 10/31 Ireland, Cont. Yeats, “Easter 1916” (PDF on Canvas)

Th 11/02 **Famine, Slavery, Genocide**

Ireland’s Great Hunger of the Past = Ireland’s Famine

Theme Park of Today (Read each section listed on the

website – “The History Place: The Irish Potato Famine” - on

Canvas)

**Week 11:**

T 11/07 Rice, “Museums, Memorials and Plantation Houses in the

Black Atlantic: Slavery and the Development of Dark Tourism,” in Sharpley/Stone (224-246)

Beech, “Genocide Tourism,” in Sharpley/Stone (207-

223)

Th 11/09 **What Now/What Next?**

Sharpley/Stone, “Life, Death, and Dark Tourism: Future Research Directions” (247-251) **AND**

Heavenly tourism (handouts/websites on Canvas)

**Week 12:**

T 11/14 Manfred Becker’s *Dark Tourism*

Th 11/16 Writing Workshop

**Essay 2 Due by Sunday 11/27 (no later than 11:00pm on Canvas). No late papers accepted beyond this date/time!**

**Week 13:**

T 11/21

**No Classes** (Thanksgiving)

Th 11/23

**Week 14:**

T 11/28 Presentations

Th 11/30 Presentations

**Week 15:**

T 12/05 Presentations

Th 12/07 Presentations

**Final Exam: Friday 12/15 (due on Canvas by 11:00pm – no in-class final exam**

**time). No late papers accepted beyond this date/time, so be careful!)**