Responsibility: Theoretical and Ethical Frameworks
Monday 3 Dec

10.00 am: Registration and morning tea
(Russell Room, Wharerata)

10.45 am: Mihi /welcome

11.00 am: Keynote Address
(Russell Room, Wharerata)

Prof. Susannah Radstone, University of East London
"Getting Over Trauma: Culture/Theory/Responsibility"
[Click for Abstract]

12.00 - 1.00 pm: Lunch

1.00 - 2.30 pm: PANEL: The Holocaust and Historical Trauma
(Russell Room, Wharerata)

- Dr Alan Wright, University of Canterbury, "Resistance and Resentment: JLG/Jean Améry" — [Click for Abstract]

- Dr Allen Meek, Massey University, "Cultural Trauma and the Biopolitical Imagination" — [Click for Abstract]

- Dr France Grenaudier-Klijn, Massey University, "Laurent Binet’s HHhH: Strategems of Sincerity" — [Click for Abstract]

2.30 - 3.00 pm: Afternoon Tea
3.00 - 4.30 pm: **PANEL: Levinas and Responsibility**  
(Russell Room, Wharerata)

- Sonia Tascon, Monash University, "Personal, Political, Ethical: Human Rights Films to Consider the Limits’ of Levinas’ Responsibility" — [Click for Abstract](#)

- Prof. Chung-Hsuing Lai, National Chung-King University, Taiwan, "Difficult Responsibilities: Global Ethics in Levinas and New Confucianism" — [Click for Abstract](#)

- Dr James Meffan, Victoria University, "Against Levinas: Some Reflections on Agency and Patiency" — [Click for Abstract](#)

4.30 – 5.15 pm: **Refreshments at Colombo Village**

5.15 - 6.00 pm: **Invited Speaker**  
(Colombo Village)

Prof. Grant Gillett, University of Otago, Bioethics Centre  
“The Crack’d Mirror and Post-Colonial Identity”  
[Click for Abstract](#)

6.00 – 6.30 pm: **Video Presentation**  
(Colombo Village)

- Dr Juliet Rogers, University of Melbourne, "Ambivalent Remorse: Psychoanalytic Thoughts on the Perpetrator as Witness" — [Click for Abstract](#)

Responsibility: Postcolonial and Global Contexts  
**Tuesday 4 Dec**

9.00 - 10.00 am: **Keynote Address**  
(Russell Room, Wharerata)

Dr Walescka Pino-Ojeda, University of Auckland  
“Trauma and Neoliberalism in Latin America: the ‘Periphery’ Gone Global”  
[Click for Abstract](#)

10.00 - 10.30 PM: **Morning Tea**

10.30 – 12.30 pm: **PANEL: Performing Responsibility**  
(Russell Room, Wharerata)
- Dr Liza Kharoubi, Université d'Avignon/Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle, "The Performance Imperative: An Approach to Responsibility through Theater Arts" (video presentation) — Click for Abstract

- Dr Emma Willis, Massey University, "A Thousand Hills: Responding to the Ethical Nightmare" — Click for Abstract

- Jenny Stümer, University of Auckland, "The Politics of Division and the Art of Encounter: Responding to Trauma in Jerusalem" — Click for Abstract

12.00 – 1.00 pm: Lunch

1.00 – 3.00 pm: PANEL: Literary Explorations of Responsibility
(Russell Room, Wharerata)

- Dr Kim Worthington, Massey University, "‘Is this personal?’ Confession and Narration in South Africa’s TRC and Antjie Krog’s Country of My Skull." — Click for Abstract

- Nicholas Allen, Massey University, "Understandable Crimes? Desmond Tutu, National Narrative and the Quest for Understanding" — Click for Abstract

- Dr Maria Celina Bortolotto, Massey University, “‘You won’t believe this, but…’: Affect, Responsibility and Identity in Las historias secretas de Marta Veneranda/The Forbidden Stories of Marta Veneranda (1997)” — Click for Abstract

- Dr Erin Mercer, Massey University, "‘This Unspeakable Evasion’: Saul Bellow and the Holocaust" — Click for Abstract

3.00 – 3.30 pm: Afternoon Tea

3.30 – 5.00 pm: PANEL: Responsibility, Literature and Philosophy
(Russell Room, Wharerata)

- Dr Robert Shaw, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China, "Responsibility as Metaphysics in Chinese Education" (video presentation) — Click for Abstract

- Lucy Alston, Victoria University, "Infinite Jest, Subjectivity, and Ethics" — Click for Abstract

- Dr Gerald Harrison, Massey University, "Because you Deserve It" — Click for Abstract

5.00 – 5.30 pm: Refreshments at Colombo Village

5.30 – 6.15 pm: PANEL: Responsibility of Media
(Colombo Village)

- Assoc. Prof. Wendelin Küpers, Dr Ralph Bathurst, Dr Andrew Chrystal, Massey University, "Response-ability: From Medieval Carnival to iPhone Apps and Atmospheric Media" — Click for Abstract

7.00 pm: Conference Dinner
Responsibility in New Zealand/Aotearoa (and beyond)
Wednesday 5 Dec

9.00 - 10.00 am:  **Keynote Address**  
(Russell Room, Wharerata)

Prof. Michael Belgrave, Massey University  
“The Crown takes responsibility for colonisation in New Zealand?: Treaty, claims, counterclaims and settlements since 1985.”  
[Click for Abstract]

10.00 - 10.30 am:  **Morning Tea**

10.30 – 12.00 pm:  **PANEL: Postcolonial Politics and Political Responsibility**  
(Russell Room, Wharerata)

- Sri Lestari Wahyuningroem, Australia National University, "Haunted History: The 1965 Mass Violence in Indonesia's Democratic Transition" — [Click for Abstract]
- Peter Meihana, Massey University, "Crown Responsibility and the Treaty of Waitangi" — [Click for Abstract]
- Dr Geoff Watson, Massey University, "Liberalism versus Humanitarianism? Competing Notions of Responsibility in New Zealand’s Sporting Contacts with South Africa 1960-1981" — [Click for Abstract]

12.00- 1.00 pm:  **Lunch**

1.00 - 2.30 pm:  **PANEL: Policy and Society in Aotearoa**  
(Russell Room, Wharerata)

- Prof. Margaret Tennant, Massey University, "The Responsibility of Neutrality: Historical Perspectives on Red Cross Responses in New Zealand and Beyond" — [Click for Abstract]
- Dr Eileen Oak, Massey University, "Methodological Individualism for the 21st Century: The Aotearoa New Zealand Government’s White Paper on Vulnerable Children" — [Click for Abstract]
- Dr Jennifer Lawn, Massey University, “Whose Story Counts? Patterns in the Social Novel in New Zealand Literature post 1984” — [Click for Abstract]

2.30- 3.15 pm:  **ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION**
Conference Locations

Russell Room, Wharerata
The Russell Room is located in the old homestead, now called Wharerata. All morning and afternoon sessions will be held in the Russell Room. Signs will be placed to direct guests to the conference room.

Colombo Village
Colombo Village is home to both the School of English and Media Studies, and the School of Humanities. All sessions after 5:00pm will be held at Colombo Village. Signs will be placed to direct guests to the conference room.
Desmond Tutu, National Narrative and the Quest for Understanding

Nicholas Allen
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Throughout his autobiography *No Future without Forgiveness*, Desmond Tutu stresses the importance of “understand[ing] the perpetrators” (271) of human-rights violations during the apartheid era in South Africa. Understanding the motivations and social preconditioning of perpetrators, he suggests, will enable victims to have “empathy” (271) with them, opening up the possibility of “forgiveness” and a shared national future. Similar ideas are articulated in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report and they underpinned the TRC’s desire to foster the creation of a revised national narrative that explained the “antecedents, circumstances, factors, and context” (55) leading to the violations that took place—a goal that would ostensibly lead to national reconciliation. The TRC offered the promise of “Freedom … in exchange for truth” (7) to ascertain “the context” from the ostensibly “truthful” memories of individuals.

Of course, the possibility of truthful memory – particularly memory motivated by the promise of “freedom” or amnesty – is much debated. Miroslav Volf in *The End of Memory* points out that while human memory is “vulnerable to distortion” (45), this is particularly so when there is something to gain from the recollection—desired justice or potential amnesty, for example. He posits that any recollection skewed by ulterior motives or emotions is itself unjust, serving only to “deepen” (56) existing injury and perpetuate the difficulties inhibiting reconciliation.

Beginning with Volf’s suggestion that memory, and (politically) motivated confession in particular, is an unreliable source of truth, this paper will question the notion of a reconciliatory national narrative premised on “truthful” perpetrator confession, further premised on the granting by victims of forgiveness grounded in empathetic “understanding.” I will draw on the work of Jacques Derrida and Paul Ricoeur on memory, understanding and forgiveness, to supplement my discussion.

Bio:
Nicholas Allen is an Honours student in the School of English and Media Studies at Massey University. His research focuses on Desmond Tutu’s writings and concepts of truth, forgiveness, amnesty, and national narrative.
David Foster Wallace’s *Infinite Jest* is a complex and difficult novel, but it is also a novel that engages, quite explicitly, with ideas of contemporary subjectivity. Through basing one’s subjectivity on the principles of diachrony, not synchrony, of constant choice, critical thoughtfulness, and responsibility to others, *Infinite Jest* suggests a path free from solipsism and abstraction, and, finally, free from despair. In the text, these ideas can be evinced through an analysis of the novel’s opening and closing scenes. By reading these scenes alongside the theories of Ludwig Wittgenstein, particularly the differing ethical imperatives inferred from the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* versus the *Philosophical Investigations*, a semiotic process based on the intersection between language and ontology, in which meaning is, crucially, communally determined, results. When applied to an individual subjectivity, this idea of communal meaning creation can be seen as differing markedly from the traditional Cartesian view of self. Instead, the subjectivity *Infinite Jest* suggests is similar to that of philosopher Derek Parfit’s Reductionist view, as outlined in his *Reasons and Persons*, as well as theories of the self found in non-Western traditions such as Buddhism.

Bio:
Lucy Alston is a postgraduate student in English at Victoria University of Wellington. Her main research interests lie in contemporary and experimental literature and ethics.
It is now 27 years since the Waitangi Tribunal was transformed from a critic of contemporary government policy to a reviewer of New Zealand's colonisation history. The Waitangi Tribunal is, on the face of it, a commission of enquiry aimed at investigating claims by Māori that the Treaty of Waitangi has been breached and making recommendations to resolve these breaches. But it also has a political function, changing policy to better serve Māori interest. The expansion of the tribunal's jurisdiction back to 1840 has been substantially applauded as recognition of the extent to which deep-rooted Māori grievances had not been addressed in the past and needed to be acknowledged and compensated for in the present. This paper explores the impact of this historical jurisdiction on the tribunal and the government's political agenda to resolve claims on the one hand and the influence of claims history on the historical imagination on the other.

The Waitangi Tribunal was in its early days concerned with contemporary public policy, particularly with the impact of the Muldoon National government’s grandiose energy substitution schemes, commonly known to New Zealanders as ‘think big’. Māori objected to having aluminium smelters, ammonia urea plants, petrochemicals industries and sewerage schemes built on their backyards. Not only did the tribunal provide an effective forum for airing these grievances, it also had a significant level of success in influencing government policy. After 1985, contemporary claims still dominated the tribunal’s work with landmark inquiries into determining Māori rights to sea fisheries and in the recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi in state owned enterprises legislation. Since 1990 the tribunal’s work has been overwhelmingly concentrated on historical inquiries. This paper argues that the increasing dominance of historical issues in the tribunal’s workload and the resulting determination of government to resolve historical grievances has limited the earlier effectiveness of the Waitangi Tribunal political vehicle for policy change. After 1994, when the government announced its policy for resolving Treaty grievances, it also made it clear that it rejected certain aspects of Māori claims, including environmental claims, claims involving conservation land and mineral resource claims. By concentrating on history, the tribunal has in many ways been drawn into a cul-de-sac, dealing with issues that have only marginal relevance to contemporary decision-making and often being drawn into long and complex enquiries involving extraordinarily long and complex historical issues. The marginalisation of the Treaty of Waitangi has been achieved by the allocation of the Treaty to history.

The second aspect of this paper will explore how history has moulded itself into the needs of both the judicial and political processes, developing certain strengths and weaknesses along the way. The culture of claims and counterclaims has created an
adversarial history that is fundamentally two-dimensional, drawn to explore the conflict between the Crown and Māori and ignoring the broader contextual environment in which colonisation took place and in which the consequences of colonisation continue to influence Maori history or New Zealand history generally.

Bio:
Professor Michael Belgrave is a historian who teaches history, social policy and Māori studies in Massey University’s School of Humanities. He publishes and researches in the history of social policy, customary law, Treaty of Waitangi claims, health history and social service development. He is the author of Historical Frictions: Maori Claims and Reinvented Histories (Auckland University Press, 2005) and co-editor (with Merata Kawharu and David Williams) of Waitangi Revisited: Perspectives on the Treaty of Waitangi (Oxford University Press, 2004). One of his primary concerns in the relationship between present values and attitudes on the interpretation of the past. He is currently involved in settlement negotiations between Hauraki iwi and the Crown and is working on a book on the diplomatic history of the Rohe Pōtae (the King Country) following the end of the Waikato War in 1864.
“You won’t believe this, but...” Affect, Responsibility and Identity in *Las historias secretas de Marta Veneranda/The Forbidden Stories of Marta Veneranda* (1997)

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“People predominantly prefer to construct beneficial self-images and avoid detrimental ones” (Kelly 134). Psychological research claims that “once people have committed themselves to particular identities, their peers tend to give them feedback that constrains them to being consistent with those identities” (Kelly 167). So why do the protagonists of these stories come to a literature graduate student to share their most shameful secrets with her? This analysis of Rivera-Valdéz’s collection uses insights from social psychology and psychoanalysis to explore the ramifications of different “judgements of responsibility” (Weiner) as they crystallize into manipulative accounts that aim primarily to allow for the preservation of certain self-images. Within this close group of Cubans living in New York who decide to talk to Marta, some characters seem to opt for the full acceptance of responsibility implied in confession, claiming agency and bearing its implications; while others resort to the seemingly less damaging excuse, thus avoiding full responsibility and self-questioning. Mayté’s detailed account of her active sexual role in her first lesbian relationship, for example, clearly contrasts with neat Rodolfo’s account of an “uncontrollable” sexual frenzy that repeatedly draws him to his obese and smelly neighbour. Both narrative tactics for “reducing inferences of responsibility” (Weiner) – confession and excuse- are humorously exposed and complicated in their fictional recreation in these stories, showing some of the deep connections between commitment to particular identities and the social feedback that this demands for validation. This also ultimately prompts a reflection on the close relationship between affect, responsibility, identity and social values.

Bio:
María Celina Bortolotto is a Lecturer in Spanish in the School of Humanities, Massey University. Her research explores the interrelation between cultural values and individual emotions as it is represented in literary fiction, using an interdisciplinary approach to read and analyse contemporary fiction from the Caribbean, Latin America and the U.S.
Wittgenstein’s claim that logic is “a mirror image of the world” (Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus 613) resonates with the idea of literature and culture as the mirror world that which constitutes the layers of connection and engendering of things. Together with Lacan’s analysis of human identity and self-conception in terms of “the mirror phase,” the idea of a fracture in the mirror in which we see the image of the human exposes the plight of those who belong to a colonised culture and their ways of knowing themselves and speaking their being into an articulate reality. Colonisation disconnects the signs of meaning, myths of origin and destiny, and cultural icons from the discourses in which they have life by displacing them. The colonisation of the mirror world is therefore potentially destructive to identity, self-worth, and the nourishment of the soul of the colonised because the connections between self, worth, and the roots of being that are not expressive in language have been disrupted in unspeakable ways. Failure to notice and take responsibility for the cultural effects of colonialism therefore deepens the wounds that alienate self and world and, by regarding the colonised as marginal excludes them from an ethical dialogue that challenges the orthodoxy of postcolonial social and political structure.

Bio:
Grant has authored Subjectivity and Being Somebody: Neuroethics and Human Identity, Bioethics in the Clinic (Johns Hopkins University Press) The Mind and its Discontents (Oxford University Press), Reasonable Care (Bristol Press), Representation, Meaning and Thought (Oxford University Press) and co-authored The Discursive Mind (Sage) and Practical Medical Ethics (Oxford University Press). His research has focused on issues in post-modern philosophy, the philosophy of mind and language, medical ethics, philosophy of medicine, philosophical psychology, and philosophy and psychiatry. He has published numerous articles in a variety of international journals such as Philosophy, British Medical Journal, Lancet, Philosophical Psychology, Inquiry, Mind, Journal of Medical Ethics, Journal of medicine and Philosophy, and Bioethics.
Laurent Binet’s *HHhH* - Stratagems of Sincerity

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Towards the end of *HHhH* (2009) the narrator, who has long hesitated on the labelling of his text – “my book about Heydrich”; “my piece on Heydrich”; “my story”; “my novel” – comes to a somewhat satisfactory hypothesis: “I think I’m starting to understand: I’m writing an infranovel.”

This generic designation encapsulates Binet’s objective: to depict historical truth (the assassination of Nazi dignitary Reinhard Heydrich in Prague on 27 May 1942) with the stylistic tools of creative fiction, but without the recourse to invention. Is Binet successful, given that his ambitious purpose is inextricably linked to issues of appropriateness and responsibility – to historical truth and figures, to readers, to literature itself? Or is the historical episode reported in *HHhH* reduced to a space of substitution for an aesthetic exercise, to a mere pre-text?

This presentation proposes to analyse Binet’s infranovel in light of the following standpoints: authenticity, objectivity, legitimacy and accountability. The paper will focus in particular on the numerous authorial interventions which are designed to make of the reader a witness of Binet’s earnestness, and will consider the legitimacy of a self-aware narrating “I” in (metafictional) historiography.

Bio:  
France Grenaudier-Klijn is Senior Lecturer in French in the School of Humanities at Massey University. She has published a number of articles on late nineteenth-century French women writing, on contemporary French literature and on post-Shoah writing in the context of contemporary France. She is also a literary and academic translator.  
[Top]
Because you deserve it

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If we fail to fulfil a moral responsibility we deserve to be harmed. This retributive aspect of our concept of moral responsibility is curious and has been the subject of considerable discussion. Yet that discussion has focused on a side issue; namely, what kind of kind of free will is needed to qualify an agent for moral responsibility. In this paper, I will focus on the more fundamental issue of what constitutes moral desert and why anyone who fails to fulfil a moral responsibility seems inescapably to deserve harm. I will argue that naturalistic accounts of our moral responsibilities cannot make sense of retribution. The same applies to non-natural views and to supernatural Buddhist “Karmic” views. However, a variation of divine command theory, according to which moral responsibilities are reduced to the commands of a god, can capture the character of moral desert and make perfect sense of its intimate connection with the idea that those who do wrong deserve to be harmed.

Bio:
I joined the School of Humanities in 2010 as a lecturer in philosophy. I was previously employed at the University of Aberdeen and before that I had been completing my PhD at Durham University. I work in all areas of ethics. Until recently the main focus of my research was in the metaphysics of free will and its relationship to issues in normative ethics. However, at the moment I am focussing mainly in metaethics where I am making it my business to defend a version of Divine Command Theory.

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What is responsibility but the construction of a meaningful caring relationship and the refusal of an arbitrary and random sharing of power? What is responsibility but the imperative to resist social disintegration, des-individuation, in other words war and political apathy? One must not forget that responsibility is a dynamic, living and interactive concept exuding from the mere fact that we were never born alone. Responsibility is a consequence of the impossibility of solipsism and of the reality of imitative empathy. It must always be defended, re-conquered, weaved upon over chaos like a Penelope-text over the white page. Not only is it a politically creative injunction, but it is also an educational stake. Theatre performance and in particular the serendipitous relation that attempts to be built with the public is sometimes a more direct way than philosophical disquisitions to understand responsibility as an everyday praxis of co-creation, as the imperative to persevere in enforcing a caring relationship between individuals by making the audience feel concerned. Theatre performance enacts a constant battle between opposite forces on stage, be that through war plays or even comedies and asserts the relation with the public over the agon, over the waiting game and the sceptic irresponsible play itself.

Bio:
Senior Lecturer in Anglophone Theatre Studies and Philosophy, Université d’Avignon/Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle, France. I am currently teaching in both Avignon and Paris in Theatre and English Studies and my research is focused upon the conjunction of performance and ethics. “Agrégée” of English, I received a PhD from the Sorbonne University in Paris in 2007. In 2012, I was selected to participate in the Mellon School of Theatre and Philosophy at Harvard University, Boston.
We appear to be in the midst of a crisis of responsibility. On one hand, responsibility has become a site and/or adequate alibi for a vibrant discourse about agency, causality and social change. Discourse(s) about responsibility can also be read as a search for the pressing answers of our time and attempt(s) to (re-) negotiate new orientations in a society confronted by a world that is perceived as complex, discontinuous and uncertain.

On the other hand, there also appears to be a widespread and general awareness of significant rupture(s) between the rhetoric of responsibility—our discursive-consensual procedures—and the realities of everyday life. This paper looks to address itself to this apparent rupture. It does this by, firstly, offering an interdisciplinary approach—phenomenological, historical, aesthetic and media ecological—to responsibility that (re-) frames responsibility as a processual answering and ability to respond, and locates response-ability in the situation of answering. Secondly, this paper moves to critique conventional understandings of responsibility, particularly the tendency for monological centrings of responsibility in the logos of an entity or instance as an isolated unity, particularly on an individual or general subject of reason. And finally, this paper asks whether the existing fabric of social relations and institutions—our media environment(s) and/or the techno-sphere—can mediate and/or (sufficiently) support and sustain life-giving (or thriving?) situation(s) of answering. Response-ability may be a relational event but what are the matrix of possible relationships propped up by an environment we can now plausibly talk of as having agency, especially given the accumulative power of passive-sensing agents operating outside or beneath conscious access and experience.
This paper attempts to rethink globalisation and New Confucianism in the context of globalisation and to bring them to a now-forming global ethics. Responsibility is always difficult. The word “responsibility” literally means “an ability to respond.” The problem is that life is limited while responsibility is infinite. Accordingly, our ethical responsiveness to the calls of the Other becomes a life dilemma and causes anxiety, especially in the 21st Century. For instance, the urgency of orchestrating a global ethic is, undoubtedly, one of the top priorities in our age of crises. If we fail to transcend the traditional national and global ethics, to offer a more practical global ethic that emphasises reciprocity, respect and communal relation, an apocalyptic future is doomed to come. Peter Singer in One World: The Ethics of Globalisation clearly states that we now all live within one atmosphere, one economy and one community. As such, numerous issues are elevated to a global level—climate change, animal rights, genetic ethics, environmental pollution and humanitarian aids etc. Problems resulting from “One World” are so pervasive and urgent that we are compelled to stand “face-to-face” to them and resolve them. Under such circumstances, the need of affirming “being-with” oriented global ethic is evident.

Yet, is “global ethics” really possible? What are its limits? Both Levinas’s ethics that highlights responsibility and respect to/for the Other, and New Confucian ethics that stresses inter-human relationship such as “ren” (benevolence, virtue, or compassion) and “lun” (ethic, morality, or order), in my view, provide us with some insights for this global ethics to come.

Bio:
Chung-Hsiung Lai is Professor of Critical Theory at the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, National Cheng-Kung University, Taiwan, is specialised in contemporary philosophy, globalisation studies and English literature.
Cultural trauma and the biopolitical imagination

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The prominence of the Holocaust in contemporary culture, both in popular entertainment and intellectual inquiry, has lead some critics to propose that it constitutes a new form of "cosmopolitan" memory (Levy and Sznaider), a "moral universal" (Alexander), or is embedded in a more complex process of "multidirectional memory" (Rothberg). These critics discuss the Holocaust in the context of new globalised forms of culture and of global histories of colonialism and imperialism. Although they draw on the work of Benjamin, Adorno, Arendt and Fanon, the focus of these earlier thinkers on power and domination has been replaced by an emphasis on memory and, more specifically, trauma.

Narratives of collective trauma tend to define victims and perpetrators on the grounds of ethnic or national identity. Now collective trauma, through the exemplary case of the Holocaust, is being used to define transnational or global forms of identity that transcend competition and conflict. But can trauma narratives avoid constituting identities that include and exclude certain individuals and groups? This paper proposes that the biopolitical division of populations into human/nonhuman, and the violence that produces and results from this division, has been obscured by the widespread use of trauma as frame for interpreting racialised conflict.

Bio:
Allen Meek is a Senior Lecturer in the School of English and Media Studies at Massey University, New Zealand. He is the author of Trauma and Media: Theories, Histories and Images (Routledge 2010). He is currently researching how events such as the Holocaust and the bombing of Hiroshima have lead cultural theorists to develop new narratives about identity and memory, and how these narratives both illuminate and obscure the politicisation of biological life.
Against Levinas: some reflections on agency and patiency

James Meffan
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Emmanuel Levinas’s philosophy seeks to instate alterity as the transcendental basis for an ethics that places on the self an “infinite” responsibility for the Other and ensures ethics’ priority as “first philosophy”. The insistence on alterity as a counter to the ontological search for comprehension – “grasping” and “adequating” difference in the process – results in an ethical agency that is primarily directed towards the self as a constant “calling into question of the same”. The effect is to radically challenge most imaginable forms of agential engagement and in the process to undercut most conceivable articulations of duty.

Duties are the concrete expression of ethics. Ethics, however, is not simply the collection of duties but a discourse that seeks to rationalise the basis for the ascription of duties. To live in a manner that is ethically engaged therefore requires two kinds of agency: performance of duties and engagement in ethical discourse itself. This is not to say that those who cannot operate as agential beings in one or both of these ways are “outside of ethics” for agency necessarily supposes patiency (the object of responsibility, the recipient of an act of duty) just as a subject supposes an object. While most of us are both ethical agents and patients, some (such as the person in a coma) are limited to ethical patiency. While patiency is an essential aspect of any kind of ethical understanding, it is of necessity subordinate to ethical agency, being determined by the agents engaged in ethical debate.

Could it be that the idea of a responsibility that is “infinite” has the paradoxical effect of diminishing agency, turning both self and others into ethical patients and undoing the basis for those important discussions that can redefine the boundaries of what counts as the proper domain of ethics?

Bio:
James Meffan is a lecturer in the English Programme at Victoria University of Wellington. Previously a teacher of postcolonial theory he has recently developed a new course called "Awkward Books" that deals more specifically with literature and ethics. His research interests include the fiction of J.M. Coetzee and the relationship between discourses of culture and national identity.

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Crown Responsibility and the Treaty of Waitangi

Peter Meihana
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In the late 1990s Ngai Tahu and Tainui settled their historical grievances with the Crown. Since then successive New Zealand governments have entered into negotiations and concluded settlements with a number of tribal groups. The road to settlement is not easy. Tribes, or claimants, must prove that the Crown has acted in a way inconsistent with treaty principles. Having established that a breach has occurred claimants are then able to enter into settlement negotiations with the Crown. Settlement packages vary but typically they comprise financial compensation and cultural redress. Settlements also include an ‘acknowledgment’ by the Crown of its past actions and omissions and an ‘apology’ for the damage caused to successive generations of Maori people. Indeed, the scenario seems fairly straightforward — there is a perpetrator, a victim, and a process through which the former pays reparations to the latter. This paper asks the question: why have settlements come to be viewed not as a Crown responsibility or obligation but as a form of Maori privilege?

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“This Unspeakable Evasion’: Saul Bellow and the Holocaust”

Erin Mercer
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Saul Bellow suggested that his involvement with literature was so overwhelming during the 1940s that he was completely given over to preoccupations with art, with language, with my struggle on the American scene, with claims for the recognition of my talent or, like my pals of the Partisan Review, with modernism, Marxism, New Criticism, with Eliot, Yeats, Proust, etc. – with anything except the terrible events in Poland. Growing slowly aware of this unspeakable evasion I didn’t even know how to begin to admit it into my inner life. Not a particle of this can be denied. And can I really say – can anyone say – what was to be done, how this “thing” ought to have been met?

Bellow's dilemma is not uncommon, for while the Holocaust is an atrocity that demands articulation, it remains something many believe unspeakable. Bellow's consternation over how to deal with the Holocaust explains something of the strangeness of the novel he published in its wake. Although the Holocaust is obscured in The Victim (1947) to such an extent that it is little wonder reviewers and critics generally miss its significance, the novel's plot revolves around the protagonist’s haunting by an anti-Semitic double symptomatic of repressed fears about victimisation and persecution. Even more disconcerting than the depiction of the uncanny, however, is the protagonist’s weird awareness of his role in an uncanny narrative. Although the novel’s use of the return of the repressed obscures issues of collective trauma to the point of invisibility, The Victim can be seen as the first American attempt to negotiate the fraught realm of Holocaust literature.

Bio:
Erin Mercer is a lecturer in the English programme at Massey University where she teaches American and New Zealand literature. Recent publications include Repression and Realism in Post-War American Literature (Palgrave Macmillan in 2011) and the forthcoming An Introduction to New Zealand Literature (Pearson 2013). She is currently working on a book called Rereading the Real: Authenticity, Genre and New Zealand Literature which explores the relationships between this country’s national literature and genres such as gothic, fantasy and science fiction.

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On 11 October 2012 The Aotearoa New Zealand government launched its White Paper “Protecting Vulnerable Children” outlining its commitment to reduce child abuse and neglect. Recent research highlights that NZ has one of the worst rates of child abuse and neglect and one of worst rates of child poverty amongst the highest 24 OECD nations (Davies et al 2010). This is perhaps unsurprising; given the global correlation of poverty with incidents of child abuse and neglect (Calder and Hackett 2003: Evans 20009: Munroe 2011). Notwithstanding the complexity of the discursive controversy surrounding the white paper, it is possible to discern a shift in the state’s response to child welfare. This has resulted in a move away from a collectivist approach, which emphasises the state’s role in supporting families in addressing the socio-economic factors which increase the likelihood of neglect or abuse, to an individual-reformist one, emphasising the family’s responsibility to manage such risks and the state’s role as educator, getting people to accept that responsibility. However, this approach also embodies an ideology and accompanying rhetoric of a specific type of family which has its origins in notions of an ‘underclass’ (Lewis 1998: Levitas 2003: Oak 2009). This underclass discourse has featured heavily in both government and media explanations of child abuse and neglect in contemporary NZ (McSharry et al (2009) and serves to legitimise the ‘othering’ of individuals and groups defined as “poor”.

Drawing upon concepts of risk and responsibility as exemplified in the work of Beck (1996:2006) and Rose (2000:2002), the white paper is explored as an example of methodological individualism and is assessed in terms of its impact on the state’s ability to address the issue of child protection. Using the Foucauldian (1996) concept of panopticism (which is a key feature of the contemporary managerialist culture in welfare), this paper demonstrates how the government has couched surveillance and control as “prevention first” -- manifest the introduction of a “vulnerable child” database and the establishment of a Vulnerable Children’s Board. It considers the implications of these developments for child welfare practice and issues of citizenship and human rights for vulnerable children and their families.
Trauma and Neoliberalism in Latin America: the ‘Periphery’ Gone Global

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The traumatic experiences of Latin American countries from the late 1950’s to the 1980’s, undergoing civil wars and national revolutions, or otherwise enduring dictatorial regimes, clearly illustrate the region’s political circumstances during the Cold War. Although many other regions— including southern and eastern European nations— shared authoritarian experiences during this period, David Harvey asserts that the South American dictatorial regimes of 1970s-1980s may be distinguished as the direct consequence of political-economic engineering. Chile and Argentina were specifically chosen in this regard as guinea pigs for the testing of what would later be designated as Neoliberalism when it reached its global implementation. With the pretext of achieving political liberalisation, the application of state violence was the vehicle for setting up a form of socio-economic coercion that today, rather than being restricted to post-colonial peripheral nations, extends to the domestic coercion of the metropolitan citizenry. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990 rendered any leftist response to these policies obsolete. Thus, while labour and progressive political parties reacted with Third Way politics in Western metropolitan nations, those countries overcoming authoritarian regimes established “transitional democracies.” In both systems, neoliberalism is envisioned as the inevitable and best socioeconomic alternative, and both have been structured to support it.

It fell on Latin America to be the pioneer in the establishment of neoliberalism, and it has likewise been there that the system has demonstrated the precedents of its own failure in, for example, the Argentinean financial collapse of 2001. Along with neoliberalism itself, the peripheral and seemingly removed traumatic experiences of post-authoritarian Latin America have become global, as have its political and social responses. Though well-established democratic states have been exempt from institutional terror, fear has now become a worldwide reality, expressed among other things in massive indices of unemployment and environmental degradation. Now more than ever we must challenge the disciplinary frontiers that impede our capacity to think and judge comprehensively. This talk seeks to situate the Latin American traumatic experience within a larger socio-political framework, contextualising it in direct relation to the global socioeconomic model that currently dictates and threatens our ability to preserve a sustainable communal way of living.

Bio:
Dr. Walescka Pino-Ojeda is the Director of the New Zealand Centre for Latin American Studies at the University of Auckland. She specialises in literature, popular culture and trauma studies within the Latin American context. She is the author of Noche y niebla: neoliberismo, memoria y trauma en el Chile postautoritario [Trans. Night and Fog: Neoliberalism, Memory, and Trauma in Post-authoritarian Chile], (Editorial Cuarto Propio,
2011).
How do trauma culture, trauma films and trauma theory mobilise and deploy the concept of responsibility? Taking as key texts films including Alan J. Pakula's *Sophie's Choice* (1982), Chantal Akerman's *Demain on déménage/Tomorrow We Move*, (2004), Michael Haneke's *Caché/Hidden* (2005) and Aki Kaurismäki’s *Le Havre* (2011) and drawing on my current project 'Getting Over Trauma,' this presentation will explore questions of responsibility as they permeate academic writing about trauma, trauma culture and trauma films. What responsibilities are assigned by trauma theory to academic theory, trauma texts, trauma culture and readers/spectators/audiences? How do these assignments limit engagements with theory and culture and how might alternative theories of trauma contest or revise these assignments? Working mainly with psychoanalytic theory, particularly Laplanche and Winnicott, as well as with feminist theories and theories of multidirectional memory, this presentation will attempt to 'get over' trauma by interrogating trauma theory's accounts of responsibility's limits and reach.

Bio:
Professor Susannah Radstone teaches in the School of Arts and Digital Industries at the University of East London. Her research expertise is in the areas of film, psychoanalysis, history and memory. She has written and edited several books including *Memory and Methodology* (2000), *Memory, History,Nation* (2005) and *Public Emotions* (2007). She is currently completing a book titled "Getting Over Trauma: New Perspectives in Memory and Culture" and is developing an international research project on memory in national contexts.
Ambivalent Remorse: Psychoanalytic thoughts on the Perpetrator as Witness.

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In experiences of violence, where perpetrators come to dictate, and the law proscribes, the worth of victims' lives, the capacity for the victim of trauma to communicate their story may be damaged or even lost. When this loss occurs it becomes difficult for the victim to re-integrate themselves into contemporary reality and thus look to a life beyond (and even including) the suffering of the past. The past becomes locked in a form of exclusive reality, a reality that cannot be communicated to others and in which the victim remains alone. Disturbingly, the perpetrator may be the only other who can speak a story of the victim’s experience, because the perpetrator is not only an aggressor but is also a witness to the violence. Indeed, they may be the only witness beyond the victim who survives. What happens then when the perpetrator is remorseful or has changed his or her affiliations? What happens to the reality of the victim of trauma?

In this paper I discuss the difficulty of witnessing one’s own trauma in the scene of violence and the role that the perpetrator may play, as witness, in this scene. I use psychoanalysis to consider the uncomfortable idea that the remorse of the perpetrator may, in some circumstances, be problematic to the recovery of some survivors of trauma precisely because remorse may deny the reality of the scene of violence and hence render the victim more alone.

Bio
Dr Juliet Rogers is on faculty at the School of Political Sciences, Criminology at the University of Melbourne, and is an Australian Research Council DECRA Fellow undertaking a psychoanalytic examination of the ‘Quality of Remorse’ after periods of political and military conflict. She has recently been a Visiting Fellow at the European University Institute and the Yale Law School. Her first monograph Law’s Cut and the Body of Human Rights: Female Circumcision, Torture and Sacred Flesh is in press with Routledge, and she is currently writing a monograph on Remorse.
Responsibility as metaphysics in Chinese education

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Western educators who teach in Chinese universities often remark on the nature of the university administration and the character of Chinese students. This paper explores some personal observations at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Southern China. It seeks to identify the historical antecedents of the current reformation of tertiary education in Guangdong Province, and does so with the leading themes of responsibility and modernisation. It is possible to identify in current practice the directions set by Chinese national leadership. The Cultural Revolution destroyed tertiary education in China. The education system has been rebuilt according to the prescription set out for the whole country. The national requirements have been interpreted in Guangdong Province in accordance with their unique historical situation. The Province, still known as Canton to many in the West, maintains its position as the major commercial gateway for the West to China. There are also traditions within universities that shape events. This paper considers the relationship between the individual Chinese student and the forces of history. At issue is the subjugation of the self to responsibilities which are acquired from outside of the family. The paper draws upon Heidegger’s concept of metaphysics in a bid to provide a framework that will enable us to understand both Chinese and Western practices. Its concern is "deep history", that which underlies or is foundational to whole cultures. Chinese metaphysics is apparent in the national, provincial and university policies which together drive the reformation of tertiary education as much as in the ordinary everydayness of Chinese students. The paper argues that there is a Chinese metaphysics which is distinct from Heidegger's description of Western metaphysics. This paper is about the grand traditions of humanity.

Bio:
Robert Shaw is a professor in the School of Management at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies. He teaches Western ethics, philosophical analysis and business research methods to management students. His research draws upon continental philosophy and is in the philosophy of science and the philosophy of management. Some of his work relates to business education, curriculum and pedagogy. In New Zealand he was a government advisor in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology. He was an elected member of city and regional councils in Wellington for 18 years. His papers are on http://shaw.org.nz/pubs.html

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Levinas reminds us that responsibility is first and foremost a responsibility for the other. However, in a walled state division and effacement become the means by which the other is excluded - physically and psychologically. The Westbank Separation Barrier exemplifies such a means of 'separation and alienation' but further can be read as a medium of collective trauma and the limits of a national self. Ideological coherence and identity is secured by ignoring, even repressing the intolerable identity and vulnerability of the other. Correspondingly, violence is legitimised precisely on the grounds that the other does not have a face and hence remains other. Various artists have addressed the policies of demarcation by using the Wall as a medium of text and image, providing the means for its own critique. Such transparency can act as both a mirror and a screen - limiting or demanding response. It can work as a form of blanking out the Wall by making it less ugly, less criminal and less obscure, but may also provide a locus of radical encounter and affective engagement. This paper examines two art projects that exemplify this tension between revealing and concealing. Artists without Walls evokes a sense of transparency by projecting a live transmission from each sector onto the opposite side of the Wall, whereas the Gilo Wall project effectively works through a logic of 'throwing the gaze back at itself'. Both projects pose questions about the potential of art to subvert and support the political and material structures with which it engages and discuss public modes of seeing that prevent or respectively demand response as a form of responsibility. The paper examines the two projects in relation to each other in order to discuss their different implications for an engagement with trauma in Jerusalem.

Bio:
Jenny Stümer is a PhD candidate at the Department of Film, TV, and Media Studies at the University of Auckland. Her thesis is titled “(Re)Facing the Wall: Screening through Alienation and Separation” and investigates the way in which political walls, both as metaphorical and material impositions of political conflict, ultimately mediate and thereby interrupt the traumatic politics of division upon which they rest. Jenny is originally from Berlin, Germany where she fulfilled her undergraduate studies before moving to Auckland. Her research interests lie in Visual Politics, Trauma and Affect as well as Critical Theory and Psychoanalysis.
“Personal, Political, Ethical: Human Rights Films to Consider the Limits of Levinas’s Responsibility”

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Levinas’s ethics as a first philosophy sees the dyadic encounter between self and other in the face-to-face as primordial, and as the primary, or only, basis for ethics. In this philosophy the ontological, or the rules and organisations placed between human beings, involves either instrumentalising the ethical relationship, or submerging (consuming) the other for the needs of the self. This ontological drive is evidenced by the urge to construct rules and regulations that provide a sense of security or order for the self that nonetheless excludes and rejects otherness. This then introduces the ‘fact’ and the ‘problem’ of ontology for Levinas: human beings live in collectives, even if not experienced as such, and thus in settings that organise us before we are born with rules (law) and values (culture). How, then, might we overcome the problem of ‘the third party’ or politics in a considerations of ethics understood in Levinas’s terms?

These questions are considered in this paper through the consideration of two films screened at the New York Human Rights Watch International Film Festival, one in 2004, and the other last year: Mon Colonel (2003) by Costa-Gavras, and Granito: How to Nail a Dictator (2011) by Pamela Yates. The first, about the Algerian war and France’s practices of torture in that war, is a denunciation of politics as understood prior to the 1990s, and a turn towards a personal politics that considers individuals’ lives as more important than abstract ideals. The second offers a complete turn to the personal that verges on the confessional; all is filtered through the filmmaker’s eyes and her obvious pleasure in the law. The question that will be considered here is: have the limits of the (Levinasian) dyadic basis for ethics been reached in Granito, given the emphasis on the personal, here manifested in the face of the filmmaker? This technique invites the spectator to engage in an intimate relationship with the filmmaker, potentially, I argue, with a loss of the political, or wider context, for which she is supposedly activating.
Neutraliteny and its associated Red Cross principle, impartiality, have long provided cause for criticism of the International Committee of the Red Cross. The stance of neutrality has left the organisation open to claims of passivity, indifference and complicity in particular historical conflicts. More fundamentally, questions have been raised about the relevance and attainability of neutrality in the modern world. For national Red Cross societies, which, in wartime at least, are auxiliaries to public authorities, these questions may be even more complex. In the two world wars the national societies were often characterised more by the display of patriotic nationalism than any sense of transnational humanitarianism, let alone neutrality. This paper examines, first, the broader critiques of Red Cross neutrality, and, second, the positioning of the New Zealand Red Cross in wartime, and the dilemmas raised by adherence to a supposedly neutral stance in the context of government regulations and expectations.

Bio:
Margaret Tennant is Emeritus Professor of History at Massey University. Her research interests have focused most recently on the history of the non-profit sector.
Since political reformation in 1998, Indonesia has experienced dramatic political change. Most people see this change as reflective of a transition from an authoritarian regime to a more democratic one. Indeed, during the past decade or so, there have been many attempts to bring to light both truth and justice with respect to past human rights abuses in Indonesia. Nonetheless, almost no perpetrators of past abuses have been punished and there has been no formal recognition by the state of the injustices many citizens experienced in the past.

One case worth mentioning here is the extended violence, which began in 1965 and continued into the next year, conducted against those who were believed to be members of the Communist Party, or supporters of it. While exact numbers are unknown, it is believed that between half a million and two million people were killed in the massacres, and hundreds of thousands more were detained for years without trial. Many studies have shown the involvement of the Indonesian state apparatus in this violence. Recently, the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights reported on their investigation into the 1965 events and concluded that crimes against humanity had occurred. Unfortunately, the President and most state representatives, as well as political organisations and members of elite social and political groups, declined the report and refused to acknowledge the tragedy (as had always been the case during the authoritarian regime). Some claimed, in opposing the report, that it was the Communist Party that initiated the violence. Even before the report was launched, debates with respect to the responsibility of the state and who should held accountable, were rife. These debates continue: what responsibility does the state hold for the victims of the massacres, and their families, and for the wider reconciliation of all elements in Indonesian society?

My paper, as a part of my PhD research on transitional justice and democratisation in Indonesia, considers how the 1965 massacres have been addressed within the period of democratic transition in Indonesia. It will consider questions related to the sufferings of the victims and the responsibility of the state.

Bio:
Sri Lestari Wahyuningroem has a Bachelor of Political Science from University of Indonesia, and Master of Art in Political Theory from Central European University, Hungary. She has been teaching and doing research in political science at University of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia since 2001 and had been involved in social activism for issues on gender, human rights and post conflict, both working with national organizations and international (including UN agencies). She is currently awarded Ausaid's Australian Leadership Award for her PhD at ANU. Before coming to ANU, she
also worked with International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) where she engaged intensively on issues related to truth and justice for human rights and democracy in Indonesia.
2011 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the 1981 Springbok Tour of New Zealand, an event which resulted in massive division and violence within New Zealand. This paper analyses how the pro-tour and anti-tour groups conceived their responsibilities during the tour. It argues that, on one level, the tour represented a clash of competing notions of liberalism in New Zealand. The anti-tour movement emphasised New Zealand’s collective responsibility to act against apartheid, something New Zealand had committed itself to doing under the Gleneagles Agreement. By the mid-1970s it was also widely argued that New Zealand’s self-image as a nation committed to social justice and equality in race relations compelled it to reject sporting links with South Africa. Those supporting the tour, implicitly and explicitly, also appealed to liberal ideals albeit in a different form. Their concern was their perceived responsibility to uphold freedom of association, the rights of amateur sportspeople to play against opponents of their own choosing. Some also argued that by sending mixed-race teams to South Africa playing against coloured teams on their tours they were fulfilling a responsibility to challenge the system of apartheid. During the 1981 tour itself, the Government framed its response to the tour, including the formation of the so-called ‘red squad’, as part of its responsibility to uphold the rule of law.

Bio:
Geoff Watson is a senior lecturer in the History Programme, School of Humanities, Massey University. His research focuses on sports history.
“A Thousand Hills: Responding to the ethical nightmare”

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Based on real events, theatrical performance A Thousand Hills (Auckland 2011) told the stories of Francois Byamana, a Rwandan refugee from the 1994 genocide, New Zealand Red Cross worker Bob Askew and the friendship that developed between them after their meeting in aid camp across the country’s border. The historically grounded performance was directed in a bold physical style, incorporating movement, image, live music and text. Rather than focusing on scenes from the genocide, the play asked how one responds in the aftermath of a social crisis, described by one of the characters as ‘an ethical nightmare.’ The drama was given a particularly poignant affect on stage by the fact that Byamana played a semi-fictionalised version of himself, providing a testimonial presence that watched over the unfolding story.

In its emphasis on issues of responsibility, the performance directly considered how enacting ethical commitment is problematised by conflicting ideological, geographical, political and economic factors: responding to the Other in reality – taking action – is not straightforward. To consider the play’s engagement with ethics I would like to evoke the work of Emmanuel Levinas, in particular his distinction between a ‘one-for-the-other subjectivity’ – an involuntary notion of ethical responsibility that ‘precedes every decision’ – with ‘the generosity of a voluntary act.’ I argue that the production suggested a need for a contingent balancing of the two subjectivities described above and indeed put these into play within the drama through identificatory strategies that complicated simple binarisation of perspective. With reference to both Levinas discussion of the role of the volunteer in ethics, and Derrida’s discussion of acts of poetic witness, this paper examines the production’s dramatisation of the difficulty of ‘acting’ ethically.

Bio:
Emma Willis teaches theatre at Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand. She holds a PhD in Theatre from the University of Auckland. Her doctoral thesis, Absent Others: dark tourism, theatricality and ethical spectatorship is forthcoming in revised book form from Palgrave Macmillan (2014). She is an active director and dramaturge as well as scholar, most recently working in collaboration with choreographer Malia Johnston to produce a series of dance theatre works (2007-ongoing).

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“Is this too personal? Confession and narration in South Africa’s TRC and Antjie Krog’s *Country of My Skull.*”

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*Country of My Skull* is an account of Antjie Krog’s experiences as she followed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC’s) hearings in South Africa, in her capacity as a radio journalist. Lengthy verbatim transcripts of victim and perpetrator testimony are interspersed with sections of lyrical prose and poetry, passages of introspection, metafictional commentary – and extensive confession. On the most obvious level the book records the confessions of perpetrators, or at least the ‘truths’ to which they testify in quest of amnesty. But it is also shot through with confessions on Krog’s part (or rather the first person narrator signalled by her name). Among these is her confession that she engaged in an extra-marital affair while covering the TRC proceedings. At the centre of the book stands a scene of domestic confession in which ‘Krog’ tells her husband of the affair and asks for his forgiveness.

Some have argued that the extensive inclusion of chilling TRC testimony in the book is appropriative or even exploitative. Further, it has been claimed that the interweaving of these highly affective testimonies with details of the narrator’s personal/domestic transgressions is irresponsible, not least because of the huge political and national stakes involved in the TRC proceedings. Most interesting, then, is Krog’s subsequent confession that the adulterous affair she relates was entirely made up, a fictional inclusion in a book so fundamentally concerned with ‘truth.’

Via consideration of Krog’s text, I seek to explore the relationship between writing fiction and confessional/testimonial telling; and that between the acts of reading and the granting forgiveness. What might the relationship between the narratorial ‘I’ and the ‘you’ it invokes as listener (judge or potential redeemer) tell us about the narrative act of confession and the performative act of forgiveness? I draw on the work of Derrida, Levinas, and Ricouer, among others, to argue for the contributions that can be made by literary analysis to readings of the political scenes in which narrative performance mediates between truth and lie.

Bio:  
Kim Worthington teaches in the school of English and Media Studies, Massey University. Her current research focuses on questions to do with confession, apology, forgiveness and reconciliation and their relationship to contemporary politics and literature. Recent publications in this area include: “The Creative Work of Confession: Ian McEwan’s *Atonement,*” in *Rethinking Narrative Identity: Persona and Perspective* (Benjamin, 2012); “Age of Iron [on personal and political confession].” *A Companion to the Works of J.M. Coetzee* (Camden House, 2011); “‘Reading’ Silence: Reconsidering the ethics of
J.M. Coetzee's *Foe.* "*Philia & Filia* (2011); “‘Suturing the Wound’: Derrida’s ‘On Forgiveness’ and Schlink’s *The Reader.*” *Comparative Literature* (Spring 2011).
Jean-Luc Godard, in *Histoire(s) du Cinéma*, famously compared the screen to a shroud. He views film as a funerary art, an art bound up with the passage of time, memory and death. Godard’s preoccupation with memory and mortality is provocatively posed as a metaphorical engagement with the trauma of the Holocaust. If cinema did not fulfil its duty, to bear witness, to provide a displaced testament to the victims of the Holocaust, he alone will bear the burden of responsibility. Godard appropriates the discourse of the Survivor in order to redeem the lost cause of cinema.

In order to understand the terms and conditions of Godard’s commitment to “show” an image of Auschwitz, I will view his films, particularly *JLG/JLG* (1994), in the light of the writings of Jean Améry. Améry maintains a more uncompromising and uncomfortable position toward the memory of the Holocaust than Primo Levi, Hannah Arendt and other Jewish writers of the period. Améry refuses to consign the reality of the Holocaust to the convenient category of collective guilt or personal trauma. Revolt, resentment and resistance -- “the emotional source of every genuine morality, which was always a morality for the losers” -- define the limits of Améry’s philosophy.

The unresolved contradictions in Godard’s own position toward the fate of the Jews and the legacy of the Holocaust become apparent in *Notre Musique* (2004). Godard invokes Améry directly in an effort to confront the outrage of annihilation and to challenge the unendurable legacy of violence. He poses a controversial solution to the problem of Israel and Palestine that inverts the premises of Améry’s ethical position on recognition and remembrance as the grounds for a politics of responsibility.