

[CFP NeMLA 2020: Affect and Empathy: Holocaust Memory in Contemporary Narratives](#)

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Call for Papers

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This panel explores a variety of narrative strategies that authors employ in order to negotiate the ethical and epistemological problems raised by the events of the Holocaust. Taking a cue from the conference theme “Shaping and Sharing Identities,” this panel is organized around contemporary reflection on and representation of the Holocaust and its continued impact on the present historical moment. Alongside pronounced generational shifts and the steady disappearance of the witness generation, Holocaust narratives are increasingly shaped by digitalization, politicization, and globalization of Holocaust memory. Such developments, alongside a recent proliferation of texts narrated from the perpetrator’s perspective, have raised pertinent questions about the ethics of identification with both victims and perpetrators as well as the possibility of transgenerational empathy or “empathic unsettlement” (LaCapra).

This panel invites papers which give special attention to the affective dimensions of Holocaust narratives as well as the theoretical and methodological tools available to critically evaluate such responses. Papers may address any of the following questions: What narrative strategies and aesthetic characteristics are employed to represent trauma, and how might such strategies invite a reconceptualization of memory? Is the transgenerational transmission of trauma an appropriate model for describing the impact of the Holocaust on future generations? To what extent is it ethical to identify with any participating group in the Holocaust, and how does the recent “affective turn” challenge the rhetoric of victim and perpetrator?

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