

Chapter 1 : Franz Kafka a bibliography - selected criticism & commentary

Examined in the light of Kafka's own medical records, many of his stories, like "In the Penal Colony," reflect this idea of the Jewish body testifying to its own unworthiness. Documentation, including illustrations from popular magazines, is abundant in Gillman's work.

Author " , writer. All of his surviving fiction was composed in German, which must be considered his mother tongue, although he was raised in a multicultural environment and had a good command of Czech. Kafka took an interest in and learned Jewish languages later in life, and his diaries and personal correspondence reveal a sustained reflection on his identity as a Jew and on East European Jewish life. Yet he saw his literary contribution as a continuation of the great German cultural tradition, and in all of his creative work mostly short fiction and fragments, novels, and aphorisms there is virtually no direct reference to Jews or Judaism as such, nor to the specific locales of Prague, Bohemia , or Eastern Europe. Franz Kafka was the only son among four children of a successful middle-class merchant in Prague. Like many Prague Jews of his class, he was educated in German and that was the language chiefly spoken at home, although his father Hermann had been raised in rural Bohemia as a Czech-speaker who also spoke and understood Yiddish. From to , after a German university-oriented secondary education, Kafka studied in the German division of the nationally divided Charles University of Prague. He began studying German literature but was disillusioned after one semester and completed a degree in law. During this time he participated in the student organization Lese- und Redehalle der deutschen Studenten in Prag, a lecture and reading group that was oriented toward German culture and that attracted assimilated German Jewish students, including Max Brod , Felix Weltsch , and Oskar Baum. Kafka obtained a bureaucratic position with a private insurance company associated with the state, where he served from until his illness. The bulk of his literary productivity was in this period, when writing or creative life and work and everyday life were seen as antagonistic forces for him. In , Kafka was diagnosed with tuberculosis, and he battled the disease for the rest of his life. Brod did not respect this request and saved the manuscripts twice over, arranging for their posthumous publication, and introducing them to a broader public with his own biography and critical interpretations of the works. His earliest work is aphoristic and more florid in style than the later work. While his reflections on Jewishness and its meaning for himself as a writer vary widely, a most characteristic, if also cryptic utterance is a diary comment of I have hardly anything in common with myself and should sit quietly in a corner, content that I can breathe. Much evidence attests to the importance of this encounter for him; Kafka began to read histories of Yiddish literature and of the Jews, and attempted to learn Yiddish. His relationship with Bauer, largely conducted through a long-distance correspondence, made frequent reference to Zionist projects in Palestine and in Europe. In he composed a long letter to his father that has a decisively literary character; while the letter was never delivered, Kafka kept a copy that has been preserved. Above all, many readers see in the powerful mood of alienation in his fiction the reflection of the life of a man living within two minorities, Jewish and German, in Central Europe; yet, this specificity belies the way in which the work has come to be emblematic of the modern Western human experience.

Chapter 2 : Franz Kafka, the Jewish Patient - Sander L. Gilman - Google Books

In this study, Sander Gilman unravels the strange tale of Kafka's relation to his body, to the specific Jewishness of his illness, and to his masculinity. Gilman's knowledge of Kafka's cultural and historical period, and specifically the cultural fears surrounding European Jews, opens the medical.

Born on July 3, 1883, in Prague, Kafka spent much of his life as a law clerk in that city. The idea seems almost contradictory: How, after all, are we to rework a poem or a story, give it an interpretive spin? And yet, there is always Franz Kafka, whose writing continues to provide not just inspiration but also source material for a wide array of work. Czechoslovakia has produced no more important writer. Yet he is a writer without much honor in his homeland. Some critics argue that his intellectual concerns make him the most representative writer of the 20th century. Yet his enduring appeal surely lies also in the visceral quality of his writing. Our records indicate we are missing your Social Security number or taxpayer identification number. In order to avoid penalties imposed by the IRS. Random House called it "a computer mistake. MONJI Franz Kafka never completed his novel "The Trial," and although he requested that it be burned after his death, the novel was posthumously published. Kafka might have torched it himself if he were alive to see this Company of Angels adaptation--a tiresome two-hour travesty. Ed Trotta, is a milquetoast everyman who finds himself arrested and on trial for a crime that is never revealed to him. Ulin, Ulin is book editor of The Times. Orwellian, Machiavellian, Faulknerian -- these designations make it hard to see a writer on his or her own terms. This is perhaps most true of Franz Kafka, whose sobriquet, Kafkaesque, has become a catchall for the weird and inexplicable. Yet 84 years after his death of tuberculosis at age 40, Kafka continues to defy such simplifications, to force us to consider him anew. The Decisive Years" -- at almost pages it is the first volume of what clearly will be a massive trilogy -- readers may find themselves in a similar perplexity. Nichols;Rob Kendt One wonders how Franz Kafka, so famously shaken by the 20th century rift between bureaucracy and individuality that his last wish was for his unpublished writings to be burned, would deal with the post-millennial condition. Since his death from tuberculosis at 40 in 1924, Franz Kafka has become a human Rorschach blot. Critics have read him as everything from the exemplar of an array of neuroses to the precursor of millions of victims of modern totalitarianism. Likewise, writers of fiction have found Kafka irresistible. Petkov" and "Going to Patchogue. Though the fantasies or assumptions, you might say that Christians have about Jews have been much studied because of their often dire and deadly consequences, Jewish fantasies about Christians are less well-studied, though they weave through the novels and stories of such writers as Philip Roth and Bernard Malamud and through the films of Woody Allen. The letters, dated to 1919, were sold to a telephone bidder, identified by the gallery only as a European private collector.

Chapter 3 : Project MUSE - Franz Kafka, The Jewish Patient (review)

FRANZ KAFKA: The Jewish Patient User Review - Kirkus. A fine-grained, scholarly exhumation of the buried cultural and especially medical lore that helped shape Kafka's conflicted self-understanding as a Jew in turn-of-the-century Austria and.

Some critics argue that his intellectual concerns make him the most representative writer of the 20th century. Yet his enduring appeal surely lies also in the visceral quality of his writing. Gilman, a prolific scholar who teaches at the University of Chicago, brings to this task vast erudition in German literature, the history of medicine and the representation of Jews and other outsiders in Western culture. Jews were believed to have bodies different from those of Christians or--even more ominously--Aryans. The litany of traits attributed to Jews and their rituals was self-contradictory. Ritual circumcision was believed to spread tuberculosis and weaken Jewish masculinity. Yet Jews were also said to be less likely to contract TB than their Christian compatriots. They were prone to neurasthenia, skin disease and hypochondria. Such prejudices were not confined to Central Europe. Gilman cites the English scientist Sir Francis Galton, who believed that there was such a thing as a "Jewish gaze" common to Jews everywhere. His two other sisters also died in the death camps. Embracing the theories of a 19th century American food faddist, Horace Fletcher, Kafka insisted on chewing his food over and over again, thereby forcing his father, Hermann Kafka--not the quietest of eaters himself--to retreat behind the newspaper. In winter he used to exercise naked with the window open. The latter fears were further exacerbated by the rise of the athletic German youth movement. In response, Jewish activists called for "muscle Jews" who would excel physically. That particular observation, Gilman informs us, comes from a common stereotype in anti-Semitic lore: These are suggestive connections. Yet Gilman goes too far when he claims that Kafka was "haunted" throughout his life by the Dreyfus trial. Unfortunately, Gilman takes one of his main cues from the work of two French philosophers, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, whose elaborate theory about "minor literature" is based on an elementary misreading of a straightforward Kafka text. Franz Kafka, on the other hand, did not have an ounce of superfluous flesh. On physical grounds alone, one can see why Kafka did not regard himself as a Kafka.

Chapter 4 : Franz Kafka and Judaism - Wikipedia

Franz Kafka, The Jewish Patient. New York: Routledge, pp. New York: Routledge, pp. In the last decade and a half, two lines of Kafka criticism have emerged into prominence.

His family were German-speaking middle-class Ashkenazi Jews. His father, Hermann Kafka " , was the fourth child of Jakob Kafka, [7] [8] a shochet or ritual slaughterer in Osek , a Czech village with a large Jewish population located near Strakonice in southern Bohemia. After working as a travelling sales representative, he eventually became a fashion retailer who employed up to 15 people and used the image of a jackdaw kavka in Czech, pronounced and colloquially written as kafka as his business logo. Otilie was his favourite sister. In November the family moved into a bigger apartment, although Ellie and Valli had married and moved out of the first apartment. In early August , just after World War I began, the sisters did not know where their husbands were in the military and moved back in with the family in this larger apartment. Both Ellie and Valli also had children. His Jewish education ended with his Bar Mitzvah celebration at the age of Kafka never enjoyed attending the synagogue and went with his father only on four high holidays a year. German was the language of instruction, but Kafka also spoke and wrote in Czech. In addition, law required a longer course of study, giving Kafka time to take classes in German studies and art history. His correspondence during that period indicates that he was unhappy with a working time schedule"from On 15 July , he resigned. The job involved investigating and assessing compensation for personal injury to industrial workers; accidents such as lost fingers or limbs were commonplace at this time owing to poor work safety policies at the time. It was especially true of factories fitted with machine lathes , drills , planing machines and rotary saws which were rarely fitted with safety guards. Kafka was rapidly promoted and his duties included processing and investigating compensation claims, writing reports, and handling appeals from businessmen who thought their firms had been placed in too high a risk category, which cost them more in insurance premiums. The reports were received well by his superiors. Kafka showed a positive attitude at first, dedicating much of his free time to the business, but he later resented the encroachment of this work on his writing time. After seeing a Yiddish theatre troupe perform in October , for the next six months Kafka "immersed himself in Yiddish language and in Yiddish literature". Later he attempted to join the military but was prevented from doing so by medical problems associated with tuberculosis , [56] with which he was diagnosed in On 13 August , Kafka met Felice Bauer , a relative of Brod, who worked in Berlin as a representative of a dictaphone company. I was not at all curious about who she was, but rather took her for granted at once. Bony, empty face that wore its emptiness openly. A blouse thrown on. Looked very domestic in her dress although, as it turned out, she by no means was. I alienate myself from her a little by inspecting her so closely Blonde, somewhat straight, unattractive hair, strong chin. As I was taking my seat I looked at her closely for the first time, by the time I was seated I already had an unshakeable opinion. Kafka and Felice Bauer communicated mostly through letters over the next five years, met occasionally, and were engaged twice. During this time Kafka began a draft of the Letter to His Father, who objected to Julie because of her Zionist beliefs. Before the date of the intended marriage, he took up with yet another woman. The boy, whose name is not known, was born in or and died in Munich in He felt comfortable there and later described this time as perhaps the best time in his life, probably because he had no responsibilities. He kept diaries and Oktavhefte octavo. From the notes in these books, Kafka extracted numbered pieces of text on Zettel, single pieces of paper in no given order. His letters to her were later published as Briefe an Milena. Kafka, hoping to escape the influence of his family to concentrate on his writing, moved briefly to Berlin and lived with Diamant. She became his lover and caused him to become interested in the Talmud. However, those who met him found him to possess a quiet and cool demeanor, obvious intelligence, and a dry sense of humour; they also found him boyishly handsome, although of austere appearance. But how to free myself and free them without ripping apart? And a thousand times rather tear in me they hold back or buried. Man cannot live without a permanent trust in something indestructible within himself, though both that indestructible something and his own trust in it may remain permanently concealed from him. He had several girlfriends.

Fichter of the Psychiatric Clinic, University of Munich , presented "evidence for the hypothesis that the writer Franz Kafka had suffered from an atypical anorexia nervosa ", [98] and that Kafka was not just lonely and depressed but also "occasionally suicidal". The synthesis of Zionism and socialism did not yet exist". Opinions ranged from the notion that he satirised the bureaucratic bungling of a crumbling Austria-Hungarian Empire , to the belief that he embodied the rise of socialism. His diary is full of references to Yiddish writers. I have hardly anything in common with myself and should stand very quietly in a corner, content that I can breathe". The truth lies in some very elusive place between these two simplistic poles". According to Rothkirchen, "This situation lent their writings a broad cosmopolitan outlook and a quality of exaltation bordering on transcendental metaphysical contemplation. An illustrious example is Franz Kafka". Bergman refused to host Kafka because he had young children and was afraid that Kafka would infect them with tuberculosis. He went to Dr. The cause of death seemed to be starvation: He rose to fame rapidly after his death, [90] particularly after World War II. The Kafka tombstone was designed by architect Leopold Ehrmann.

Chapter 5 : Franz Kafka - Wikipedia

Gilman (Jewish Self-Hatred, , etc.) seeks to reconstruct the lost ""discourses"" of race, gender, and disease in Kafka's time. He argues that Kafka's anxieties about his Jewish identity stem directly from his anxieties about his body and its infirmities, both real and imaginary.

Chapter 6 : FRANZ KAFKA: The Jewish Patient by Sander L. Gilman | Kirkus Reviews

Book Reviews Gilman shows, Kafka took a keen interest in all the medical, demographic, and sociological information of his day that bore on Jews, Germans, and Slavs.

Chapter 7 : Franz Kafka, the Jewish Patient by Sander L. Gilman

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Chapter 9 : Articles about Franz Kafka - latimes

Franz Kafka (3 July - 3 June) was a German-speaking Bohemian Jewish novelist and short story writer, widely regarded as one of the major figures of 20th-century literature.