

MAHG 5000 -- SYLLABUS
HISTORY OF THE HOLOCAUST
ONLINE COURSE
SPRING SEMESTER 2015
The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey



Instructor: Dr. Michael Hayse
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This is an online course. All aspects of this course may be completed online, including conferences with the instructor. However, You are expected to be available for synchronous discussion of readings and projects every Wednesday, 5-8 PM EST, as indicated in the schedule below.

Course description

This seminar offers an overview and analysis of the origins, implementation, and implications of the Holocaust. Attention is given to the history and development of antisemitism in the culture and legal systems of Western civilization, the popular appeal and rise of Nazism, the ideology and structures of the Third Reich, the implementation of racial and eugenic policies, particularly the “final solution” and responses of those who were persecuted.

Mastery of the knowledge of the rise of Hitler’s National Socialists to power, the implementation of eugenic and anti-Semitic policies, the radicalization of persecution and genocidal mass murder during the war, the responses of those who were persecuted, and the aftermath of the Holocaust will stand at the forefront, Emphasis will also be given to understanding how historians go about constructing history and analyzing available information and evidence, and specifically how historians’ understanding of the Holocaust has evolved over time. We will discuss some of the key interpretational debates and controversies concerning the Holocaust, and try to identify some of the issues that continue to defy clear answers.

The seminar will be devoted largely to the discussion of texts and documents. Some brief lectures will attempt to address critical issues, as well as bridge the gaps between some of the discussion topics. Given the nature of the class schedule, materials will be covered

intensely. It is essential that participants complete the readings before the class periods for which they are assigned.

Course objectives.

- ❖ Students should master the basic knowledge necessary for further analysis of the Holocaust, including
 - A basic chronology of major, relevant events, 1918-1945
 - the history of antisemitism, particularly the ways it manifested itself in modern Germany and contributed to Holocaust;
 - how the National Socialists were able to rise to power and establish a dictatorship;
 - what drove the evolution of Nazi policies of race, terror, and mass murder;
 - how victims of Nazi persecution responded to the situations they faced;
 - the structures, timing, and effects of Nazi genocide against Jews and other targeted groups;
 - International responses to the Nazi persecution and systematic mass murder.
 - Postwar responses to the Holocaust, including legal actions against the perpetrators.
- ❖ Students should be introduced to some of the key scholarly literature, debates, and controversies concerning the Holocaust (secondary literature).
- ❖ Students should familiarize themselves with some of the classic autobiographical accounts of the *Shoah*.
- ❖ Students will be introduced to the methodologies of interdisciplinary study of the Holocaust, such as use of graduate-level research tools, and interpretation of primary sources. Special attention will be paid to the important but nuanced use of survivor testimony and memoirs. Writing skills, including the proper citation of sources, will be sharpened.

Required books (in the order they will be discussed in class).

Dwork, Debórah and Robert Jan van Pelt. *Holocaust: A History*. New York: Norton, 2003. ISBN 039335245

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. Revised ed. New York: Hill and Wang, 2006. ISBN 0374500010

Jaekel, Eberhard. *Blueprint for Power: Hitler's World View*. Reprint Ed. Harvard University Press, 1981. ISBN 06774404254

Browning, Christopher. *Ordinary Men*, Reprint ed. Harper Perennial, 1998. ISBN 0060995068

Kaplan, Marion. *Between Dignity and Despair*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. ISBN 0195130928

Levi, Primo. *Survival in Auschwitz*. Reprint ed. Touchstone, 1995. ISBN 0684826801.

Weissman-Klein, Gerda. *All But My Life*. New York; Hill and Wang, 1995. ISBN 0809015803

Rosenberg, Anne. "A Hard Life Leavened By Love: A Memoir" (manuscript provided on Blackboard)

The online course:

This is an online course. There is a "synchronous component" Wednesday evenings 6-8 PM, when you should be available online. Some weeks, there will be the option to meet (with laptop) in the Sara and Sam Schoffer Holocaust Resource Center (see materials online).

You will need the following:

- A computer with high speed internet access.
- An Oovoo Video conferencing software account. This may be downloaded for free.

The course is divided into weekly modules, running Monday to Sunday (see schedule below). Assigned readings must be completed before Wednesday at 6PM, when we will meet online. Unless otherwise indicated, all weekly assignments must be completed by the end of the week (Sunday at midnight).

Evaluation and assignments:

- 15% Participation (online discussion, group work, etc.)
- 10% Weekly quiz responses
- 30% 2 book reviews of required readings (10% each), 4-5 pages each
- 10% Responses and edits to Anne Rosenberg's memoir (manuscript)
- 10% Talking points based on reading, due for assigned weeks.
- 20% Research paper on topic of choice, 18-20 pages
- 5% Presentation of research topic online

Policies

- Attendance & punctuality: Regular (online) attendance and punctuality are required and expected.
- Late assignment: Late papers and other assignments will be *marked down one letter grade for each class day they are overdue*, and will not be accepted more than two weeks late.
- Plagiarism: All work submitted for the class must be original work. All texts from which material is drawn must be acknowledged in citations (footnotes or endnotes) and bibliographies. *Willful plagiarism will result in a failing grade in the course and disciplinary proceedings by the Dean of Academic Affairs.*

Schedule of topics (subject to change):

Week 1 (January 20-25) Introduction

Introduction

Reading: Wiesel, *Night*

Week 2 (January 26-February 1): Anti-Semitism in the age of mass politics

Anti-Semitism in the age of mass politics

Reading: Dwork, Introduction & Ch. 1; also Jäckel, *Hitler's World View*, Ch. 1-3

Week 3 (February 2-8) The unlikely rise of the Nazis in interwar Germany

Reading: Dwork, Ch. 2; Jäckel, *Hitler's World View* (complete)

Week 4 (February 9-15) Power and ideology in the Third Reich

Reading: Dwork, Ch. 3 & 4; view film, *Chaos and Consent* (streaming video)

Week 5 (February 16-22) Creating the “biocracy”: the eugenic state

Reading: Dwork, Ch. 5; Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair*, through Chapter 4

Week 6 (February 23-March 1): Victims options and responses

Reading: Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair* (complete)

Week 7 (March 2-8): War and Genocide: a symbiosis?

Reading: Dwork, Ch. 6 & 7; “The Wannsee Conference, the fate of German Jews, and Hitler’s decision to exterminate all European Jews,” in Bartov, *The Holocaust* (on Blackboard)

SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS

Week 8 (March 16-22) Between ghetto and genocide

Reading: Dwork, Ch. 8 & 9; View film, *Europa, Europa* (streaming video)

Week 9 (March 23-29) What motivated the killers?

Reading: Ch. 10; Browning, *Ordinary Men* (entire)

Week 10 (March 30-April 5)

Reading: Dwork, 11; Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

Week 11 (April 6-12)

Reading: Dwork, Ch. 12 & 13; Langer, "Redefining heroic behavior: the impromptu self and the Holocaust experience," in Bartov, *The Holocaust*

Week 12 (April 13-19)

Reading: Dwork, Ch. 13; Weissmann Klein, *All But My Life* (entire)

Week 13 (April 20-26)

Reading: Dwork, Ch. 14 & Epilogue; Rosenberg, "A Hard Life: A Memoir" (on Blackboard)

Week 14 (April 27-May 1): Reflections and presentations