

Dr. Monica Osborne
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Office: CAC 103A

TF 2:00-3:50
Classroom: CAC 301
Office Hours: TF 10-12

English 380: The Holocaust in Literature, Film, and Culture

*We read books on Auschwitz. The wish of all, in the camps, the last wish: know what has happened, do not forget, and at the same time never will you know. . . . There is a limit at which the practice of any art becomes an affront to affliction. Let us not forget this. —Maurice Blanchot, *The Writing of the Disaster**

Since the end of World War II, we have seen countless efforts via literature and film to address the Holocaust. Whether through documentaries relying on gruesome footage, films set within the barbed wire of concentration camps, novels recreating the nightmare of those years, memoirs recounting the actual or imagined experiences of survivors, or museums reconstructing the experience, we find that we are still unable to adequately respond to the atrocities of the Holocaust. We remain within its shadow, and artists, writers, and filmmakers continue their attempts to depict the collective trauma aesthetically. This course considers the various methods and approaches to representing the Holocaust in film and literature. The readings and films are listed below, and we will explore themes including: testimony and witness, memory and trauma, the ethics of representation, gender and Holocaust representation, European anti-Semitism and Nazi propaganda, Hollywood's response to the Holocaust, Holocaust humor, and the post-Holocaust experience. We will view various cinematic responses to the Holocaust, including documentaries, propaganda films, recent German films, and American and/or Canadian films. These films will be supplemented by various fictional and non-fictional responses to the Holocaust, as well as a number of critical essays that will help students to more effectively understand and process the primary readings.

Films:

Imaginary Witness: Hollywood and the Holocaust
Night and Fog
The Eternal Jew (Nazi Propaganda Film—Online)
The Quarrel
Shoah (Part I)
Paragraph 175
Nowhere in Africa
As Seen Through These Eyes

Required Texts:

Berenbaum, Michael. *The World Must Know*
Havazelet, Ehud. *Bearing the Body*
Kolitz, Zvi. *Yosl Rakover Talks to God*
Michaels, Anne. *Fugitive Pieces*
Ozick, Cynthia. *The Shawl*
Wiesel, Elie. *Night*

*Additional readings will be assigned and posted to Courses (or links are provided on syllabus). You are responsible for printing them out and bringing them to class on the day the reading is due. Not having access to the reading in class could cause you to lose participation points.

Grading

Attendance, Participation, Quizzes	20%
Partner Presentation (with LMU student)	25%
Midterm Exam	10%
Response Essay (3-5 page)	20%
Critical Essay (6-7 page with works cited)	25%

This is a reading intensive class. I will ask a lot from you in terms of the length and depth of reading assignments. The point of this class is to engage critically with the texts and films and with one another in class discussions. I expect you

to complete all assigned readings and to **participate regularly in discussions**—your grade depends on it. If I feel that you are not doing the reading then I will administer quizzes. Please do not make me do that.

Because the subject material for this course is extremely sensitive, it is especially important that we are respectful of others' points-of-view. Do not be afraid to disagree with your peers' (or my) point-of-view; just be sure to do it with respect and tolerance. Meaningful dialogue is greatly appreciated.

Many of the films shown in class feature disturbing content. If you are concerned about this please speak to me during the first week of class.

Assignments

You are required to turn in **two essays**: the first will be a response essay in which you will respond to 2-3 of the texts/films by offering critical insights. Do not paraphrase or summarize my lectures. Instead, offer your own unique and critical insights and reflections. The second and final essay will be a bit longer and will require you to respond to a critical prompt that you will receive later in the quarter. You will also be required to conduct research for the paper.

There will be an oral/written midterm exam. No final exam.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course. Be sure to properly cite all of your sources, especially Internet sources, in all of your written work. Do not turn in work previously written for another class.

Electronics

You are welcome to use laptops to take notes. You are not welcome to use laptops to check email, surf the web, Skype your friend in the back row, or update your Facebook status. If I suspect that you are doing this, I will ask you to leave and it will severely impact your participation grade for the semester. I ask that you not use iPhones (etc.) in class. No electronics will be allowed during film viewings. Students who fail to respect this rule will be asked to leave.

Illness and Attendance Policies

If you are sick (e.g. coughing, fever, blowing your nose every five minutes) please don't come to my class. And please don't come to visit me in my office to make sure that I know you are sick and not faking it. I'll take your word for it. Stay home and rest to avoid getting others sick.

You can miss two classes with no effect on your grade. Additional absences *may* affect your grade—it is at my discretion.

Partner Project

You will work in pairs for this project (one student from LMU and one student from Pepperdine). Students will select a memoir written by a Holocaust survivor, arrange to meet each other in person, collaborate on a "dear author" letter to the survivor, read the memoir, engage in an in-depth analysis of the text, work together on the report/reflection, and prepare two resonating questions that you would like to pose to the author. Our friends at the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust (LAMOTH) will visit our class on Friday January 30—you will choose your memoir on that day. Instructions will be provided in greater detail the third week of class.

Schedule

Week 1: Reading the Archives

Tues Jan 13 Intro to Course

Dan Pagis poem <http://exceptindreams.livejournal.com/106475.html>

Fri Jan 16 Film: *Night and Fog*
Adolph Hitler: "Nation and Race" from *Mein Kampf*
<http://www.mondopolitico.com/library/meinkampf/v1c11.htm>

Week 2: Testimony and Witness

Tues Jan 20 Elie Wiesel: *Night*

Fri Jan 23 Hartman, Geoffrey, "Learning from Survivors: The Yale Testimony Project"
Film: *The Eternal Jew* (1940 Nazi Propaganda Film)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIHVin56U2w>
Still Images: <http://www.holocaust-history.org/der-ewige-jude/stills.shtml>

Week 3: The Absence of God

Tues Jan 27 Discuss Book/Partner Projects
The World Must Know ("The Nazi Assault" 1-65)
Emil Fackenheim: "Jewish Faith and the Holocaust"
<https://www.commentarymagazine.com/article/jewish-faith-and-the-holocaust-a-fragment/>

Fri Jan 30 **CANCELLED (SICK)**

The World Must Know ("The Holocaust" 66-122)

Week 4: Responsibility

Tues Feb 3 Emmanuel Levinas: "Useless Suffering"
The World Must Know (123-153)

Fri Feb 6 Film: *Schoah* (watch in class)
Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust Book Visit and Selection
Yosl Rakover Talks to God

Judith Butler on Hannah Arendt's notion of the "banality of evil"
<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/aug/29/hannah-arendt-adolf-eichmann-banality-of-evil>

Week 5: The Ethics of Representation

Tues Feb 10 Claude Lanzmann: "From Holocaust to 'Holocaust'"
The World Must Know ("The Last Chapter" 156-176)

Fri Feb 13 Film: *Nowhere in Africa*
Giorgio Agamben: "The Witness" (from *Remnants of Auschwitz*)
Primo Levi: "Useless Violence" (from *The Drowned and the Saved*)

Week 6: The Ethics of Representation

Tues Feb 17

Continue Agamben, Levi, and *Nowhere in Africa*

Thurs Feb 19

(EXTRA CREDIT) Wolf Gruner (USC) “Jewish Defiance, Resistance, and Protest in Nazi Germany,” 5-6pm

Fri Feb 20

DUE: Response Essay

The World Must Know (177-223)

Week 7: Gender and Sexuality

Tues Feb 24

Yehuda Bauer: “Jewish Resistance—Myth or Reality?” (from *Rethinking the Holocaust*)

Film: *Paragraph 175*

4pm MANDATORY EVENT Roberta Kwall (DePaul) “The Myth of the Cultural Jew: Culture & Law in Jewish Tradition”

Fri Feb 27

The Shawl (Cynthia Ozick)

Week 8: SPRING BREAK Mar 2-6

Week 9: The Second Generation—Trauma and Transmission

Tues Mar 10

Ehud Havazelet: *Bearing the Body* (first half)

Melvin Bukiet: “Introduction,” Nothing Makes You Free: Writings by Descendants of Jewish Holocaust Survivors

Thurs Mar 12

Event at 4pm: L’Dough V’Dough (Challah Baking with Holocaust Survivors)

Thurs Mar 13

Ehud Havazelet: *Bearing the Body* (second half)

Week 10: The Second Generation—Trauma and Transmission, Continued

Tues Mar 17

Anne Michaels: *Fugitive Pieces* (Part 1)

Fri Mar 20

Anne Michaels: *Fugitive Pieces* (Part 2)

Discuss Midterm and Sign Up

Week 11: Films and Midterm Exams

Tues Mar 24

Fugitive Pieces (cont)

Mandatory Event 4pm: Screening of *As Seen Through These Eyes* and Q&A with filmmaker Hilary Helstein and Professor Holli Levitsky (LMU)

Fri Mar 27

Office Visits

11:00AM- Sylvia

2:00PM- Tony

2:15PM-Yunni

2:30PM-Xiyin
2:45PM- Alan
3:00PM-Ping

Week 12: Midterm Exams

Tues Mar 31 Office Visits
10:15AM- Binghua
10:30AM- Josh
11:00AM- Mou
11:30AM- Ying
2:00PM- Vatche
2:15PM- Mark
2:30PM- Marie
2:45PM- Tracey
3:00PM-Hangzheng
3:15PM-Jangwen
3:30PM- Valerie

Fri Apr 3 Library Session
PESACH/PASSOVER

Week 13: Hollywood, Humor, and the Holocaust

Tues Apr 7 Office Visits
11:00AM- Pat
11:30AM-Russell
11:45AM-Anna
2:00PM- Chloe

2:45PM: CLASS STARTS

Fri Apr 10 Lecture on Holocaust Humor

Week 14: The Holocaust in Popular Culture

Tues Apr 13 Film: *Imaginary Witness: Hollywood and the Holocaust*

Fri Apr 17 Film: *Imaginary Witness: Hollywood and the Holocaust*

Week 15:

Tues Apr 21 <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-0315-douglas-anti-semitism-20150315-story.html>

DUE: CRITICAL ESSAY (via COURSES)

Fri Apr 24 TBD

Final Exam Week April 27-May 1

FINAL DATE: Sun Apr 26, 12pm (LAMOTH)
SCHEDULED: Tues Apr 28 1:30-4pm

Websites Featuring Holocaust Materials and Links

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
<http://www.ushmm.org/>

Jewish Virtual Library
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/>

The History Place Holocaust Timeline
<http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/holocaust/timeline.html>

Yad Vashem Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority
<http://www.yadvashem.org/>

Simon Wiesenthal Center
<http://www.wiesenthal.com/>

Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation
<http://www.vhf.org/>

Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies
<http://www.library.yale.edu/testimonies/>

Selected Bibliography of Secondary Sources

Apel, Dora, Memory Effects: The Holocaust and the Art of Secondary Witnessing
Arendt, Hannah, Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil
Bauer, Yehuda, Rethinking the Holocaust
Berenbaum, Michael, and Abraham J. Peck, eds., The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed, and the Reexamined
Bernard-Donals, Michael, and Richard Gleizer, eds., Witnessing the Disaster: Essays on Representation and the Holocaust
Breitman, Richard and Allan J. Lichtman, FDR and the Jews
Clendinnen, Inga, Reading the Holocaust
Cole, Timothy, Selling the Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler, How History is Bought, Packaged, and Sold
Dawidowicz, Lucy S., The Holocaust and the Historians
Doneson, Judith E., The Holocaust in American Film
Ezrahi, Sidra DeKoven, By Words Alone: The Holocaust in Literature
Feingold, Henry L., Bearing Witness: How America and Its Jews Responded to the Holocaust
Finkelstein, Norman G., The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering
Flanzbaum, Hilene, ed., The Americanization of the Holocaust
Friedlander, Saul, ed., Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution"
Gubar, Susan, Poetry after Auschwitz
Hartman, Geoffrey H., ed., Holocaust Remembrance: The Shapes of Memory
Hartman, Geoffrey H., The Longest Shadow
Hirsch, Marianne, Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory
Hungerford, Amy, The Holocaust of Texts: Genocide, Literature, and Personification
Insdorf, Annette, Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust
Kremer, S. Lillian, Witness through the Imagination: Jewish American Holocaust Literature
LaCapra, Dominick, Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma
Lang, Berel, Act and Idea in the Nazi Genocide
Lang, Berel, ed., Writing and the Holocaust

Langer, Lawrence L., The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination
Lipstadt, Deborah, Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust, 1933-1945
Marrus, Michael, R., The Holocaust in History
Mintz, Alan, Popular Culture and the Shaping of Holocaust Memory in America
Morgan, Michael L., ed., A Holocaust Reader: Responses to the Nazi Extermination
Morgan, Michael L., Beyond Auschwitz: Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought in America
Morse, Arthur D., While Six Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy
Mosse, George L., Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism
Novick, Peter, The Holocaust in American Life
Rosenfeld, Alvin H., A Double Dying: Reflections on Holocaust Literature
Rothberg, Michael, Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation
Shandler, Jeffrey, While America Watches: Televising the Holocaust
Sicher, Efraim, ed., Breaking Crystal: Writing and Memory after Auschwitz
Wyman, David S., The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust, 1941-1945
Wyman, David S., Paper Walls: America and the Refugee Crisis, 1938-1941
Yahil, Leni, The Holocaust: The Fate of European Jewry, 1932-1945
Young, James E., At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture
Young, James E., The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning
Young, James E., Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust: Narrative and the Consequences of Interpretation
Zelizer, Barbie, ed., Visual Culture and the Holocaust