

Religion 232: Holocaust
M Hour, Fall 1998
Prof. Stephen Haynes
Clough 403; 843-3583/272-9266

Introduction

This class will focus on the Nazi campaign to annihilate European Jewry between 1939 and 1945, and on the context, precedents and implications of this chapter in history. After an introduction to the phenomenon of anti-Semitism, the first section of the class will deal with historical questions: What happened? When? Where? Who was involved? The second section will explore the Holocaust in human perspective: What can we ascertain about the experiences and motivations of the victims, perpetrators, bystanders, resisters and rescuers? The third section of the course will highlight religious roots of, and religious responses to, the Holocaust. We will consider questions such as: Is Christianity inherently anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic? What challenges does the Holocaust represent for Jewish thought and faith? How does the Holocaust affect questions of forgiveness? Finally, we will explore the phenomenon of Holocaust denial and the issue of the Holocaust's uniqueness.

Requirements

Skills

According to the mission statement of the College, certain skills contribute to attainment of the College's educational goals. Each of these skills will be required for success in this class. They include:

Critical skills: The ability to analyze arguments, to assess evidence, to discover, articulate, and evaluate assumptions.

Creative skills: Flexibility of thought which allows one to ask thoughtful and penetrating questions, to generate new insights, to seek new solutions to problems, to envisage new possibilities, to respond positively to change.

Communication skills: The ability to listen, to enter into dialogue, to write and speak with clarity and style in English; and proficiency in a foreign language.

Research skills: The ability to read critically, to formulate and test hypotheses, to collect and interpret information, and to draw conclusions.

Evaluation skills: The ability to formulate and justify value judgments, to evaluate oneself and one's beliefs honestly.

Empathic skills: The ability to appreciate the perspective of others and to respond empathetically.

Aesthetic skills: The ability to express oneself artistically, to exercise the imagination, and to recognize quality.

Synthetic skills: The ability to perceive ordering principles such as those inherent in myth, language, mathematics, and schools of thought and to fit diverse pieces of knowledge together into a whole.

Tasks:

Students enrolled in this course shall:

1. *attend and participate* in class sessions, having actively read the assigned material
2. write *two short papers*, due on the dates noted in the syllabus
3. keep a *journal* in which personal responses and learnings are catalogued
4. complete periodic *quizzes*
5. complete *final and mid-term examinations*

Required Texts:

*Readings Book (to be purchased in the Bookstore)

Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*

David P. Gushee, *The Righteous Gentiles of the Holocaust*

Ernst Klee, et. al., eds., *The Good Old Days* (available as photocopied from bookstore)

Elie Wiesel, *Night*

Inge Scholl, *The White Rose*

Alan S. Rosenbaum, *Is the Holocaust Unique?*

Simon Wiesenthal, *The Sunflower*

Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men*

Explanations

Attendance, Preparation and Participation--These are important aspects of a student's involvement in a course such as this. *Attendance* means being present in class on time and remaining until class is concluded; *Preparation* means coming to class having actively read the assignment and noted questions, puzzles or learnings to be shared on request. *Participation* means contributing regularly to discussions in a critical, searching and honest way, always remaining respectful of the viewpoints of others--especially your classmates.

N.B.: *Students may miss class twice during the semester for any reason. Students who miss class three or more times will have their A&P grades lowered accordingly.*

Papers: Students will write two short papers (3-4 pages), with due dates noted on the schedule of topics and readings. These papers should demonstrate integration of and thoughtful responses to course material. These are neither “research” papers nor “reaction papers.” The assignment requires students to incorporate a grasp of course readings, discussions, personal reactions and questions. Papers will be graded on content, style and mechanics and should conform to Kate L. Turabian, *Student’s Guide for Writing College Papers* or some other standard writing manual.

Paper One should include the student's reflections on *one* of two outside-of-class assignments: the viewing of videotapes 1 and 3 of the documentary film *Shoah*, or the reading of *Maus*, volumes I and II (text or CD-ROM version). These resources will be placed on library reserve. Since these are shared resources, please plan ahead.

Paper Two should deal in part with the phenomenon of rescue, and include a review of David Gushee’s *The Righteous Gentiles of the Holocaust*.

Journal: Students will keep journals for reflecting on readings, lectures and class discussions, as well as other matters related to the content and process of the course. These will be collected three times during the semester, on the dates noted in the syllabus. About two entries per week is a good rule of thumb. (*N.B.: If you keep your journal on computer disk, be sure to back up your file!*).

Journal Assignments:

1) Surf the internet for sites dealing with the Holocaust. What can one learn from these sites? Which of them are most educational and why? Are some sites counterproductive educationally? Do you think a college Holocaust course might be conducted over the internet?

2) Report on at least one conversation you’ve had this semester with a friend, acquaintance or family member about your involvement in this course. What does the conversation reveal about their assumptions concerning the Holocaust, Jews, anti-Semitism, education, etc?

3) How has this course influenced or been influenced by the other courses (or activities) you’re involved with this semester? How might the course be taught differently so that such connections were made more frequently?

Exams Both the midterm and final exams will be take-home. They will consist of objective and essay questions.

Quizzes: Over the course of the semester, five unannounced quizzes will be given at the beginning of class. The best four of these will comprise a student’s quiz grade. Quiz questions will be designed to judge student’s preparation for class.

Other Activities: Periodically, students will be asked to participate in small group discussions or to complete in-class writings assignments. Both activities will help form the instructor's impression of students' preparation for class.

Late Work: Without an explicit extension from the professor, papers, journals and exams will not be accepted after the due date. Quizzes may not be made up.

Percentages for Tabulating Grades:

Attendance, Preparation and Participation 20%

Midterm Examination 15%

Final Examination 20%

Papers 20% (10% each)

Quizzes 10%

Journal 15%

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Thurs 8/27	Introduction to the Course (film: "The Western Tradition")	
Tues 9/1	Origins of Anti-Semitism (film: "The Western Tradition")	Hilberg, 5-38
Thurs 9/3	Origins of Anti-Semitism (film: "The Longest Hatred")	*Dawidowicz, 3-22; *Hitler, <i>Mein Kampf</i> , 285-329
Tues 9/8	Hitler and National Socialism (film: "Triumph of the Will")	Hilberg, 41-96
Thurs 9/10	Concentration	Hilberg, 99-138;
Tues 9/15	Mobile Killing Operations (film: "Confessions of a Hitler Youth")	Hilberg, 157-217
Thurs 9/17	Killing Center Operations (film: "The Warsaw Ghetto")	Hilberg, 221-238; <i>The Good Old Days</i> , 217-223; 228-235; 238-249
Fri 9/18	Journal Due	
Tues 9/22	Killing Center Operations	Hilberg, 239-59; <i>The Good Old Days</i> , 250-274
Thurs 9/24	Special Session (evening) (film: "Night and Fog")	Wiesel, <i>Night</i>
Tues 9/29	Victims	*Rittner & Roth, <i>Different Voices</i> , 58-64, 73-83, 99-118
Thurs 10/1	Victims	*Rittner & Roth, <i>Different Voices</i> , 270-308; *Wistrich, "Franz Stangl"; <i>Good Old Days</i> , 155-59; 163-171
Fri 10/2	Paper One Due	
Tues 10/7	Perpetrators (film: "Obedience")	Browning, Preface, 1-96; <i>The Good Old Days</i> , 75- 86; 141-43; 151-52
Thurs 10/9	Perpetrators	Browning, 97-189; <i>The Good Old Days</i> , 46-74
Tues 10/13	Resistance	<i>The White Rose</i> , 3-58

	(film: "The White Rose")	
Thurs 10/15	Resistance	<i>The White Rose</i> , 58-93, 125-128, 138-147
Fri 10/16	Mid-term Exam Due	
Tues 10/20	FALL BREAK	No Class
Thurs 10/22 1-	Rescue (film: "Weapons of the Spirit")	Gushee, <i>The Righteous Gentiles of the Holocaust</i> , 17, 45-67
Fri 10/23	Journal Due	
Tues 10/27	Rescue (film: "Weapons of the Spirit," cont.)	Gushee, 69-136
Thurs 10/29	Judaism and the Holocaust	*R&R, 290-96; *Katz, 141-173
Tues 11/3	Judaism and the Holocaust	* <i>Hasidic Tales of the Holocaust</i> , foreword & tales
Thurs 11/5	Christianity and the Holocaust (film: "Shadow on the Cross")	*Luther, 265-285; *Bonhoeffer, <i>No Rusty Swords</i> , 221-29; 240-42
Tues 11/10	Christianity and the Holocaust *Mosse, <i>Nazi</i>	*Scholder, 168-81; *Littell, 180-90; <i>Culture</i> , 235-249, 256-261;
Thurs 11/12	Forgiveness	Wiesenthal, 3-98
Friday 11/13	Paper Due	
Tues 11/17	Forgiveness	Wiesenthal, 118-147; 166-173; 186-203; 208-225; 245-6; 266-8; 271-4
Thurs 11/19	Denial	*Lipstadt, <i>Denying the Holocaust</i> , 1-29; *Stern, <i>Holocaust Denial</i> , 100-108; 113-134
Tues 11/24	Special Session	film: "America and the Holocaust"
Thurs 11/26	THANKSGIVING	
Tues 12/1	Uniqueness	Rosenbaum, <i>Is the Holocaust Unique?</i> , 1-38
Thurs 12/3	Uniqueness (film: "The Forgotten Genocide")	Rosenbaum, 39-85

Fri 12/4

Journal Due

Tues 12/8

Uniqueness
(film: "Purple Triangles")

Rosenbaum, 87-99; 163-208

