

Religion 232: Holocaust
M, W 1:00-1:50; Th 6:00-8:00
Fall 2006
Prof. Stephen Haynes
Clough 403; 843-3583/272-9266
Office Hours: TBA

Introduction

The focus of this class is the Nazi “Final Solution to the Jewish Question,” a campaign to annihilate European Jewry, and the context, precedents and implications of this chapter in modern history. After an introduction to the phenomenon of anti-Semitism, we will deal with historical questions: What happened? When? Where? Who was involved? We will then explore the Holocaust in human perspective: What can we ascertain about the experiences and motivations of victims, perpetrators, bystanders, resisters, and rescuers? Next, we will investigate religious roots of, and religious responses to the Holocaust, considering questions such as: Is Christianity inherently anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic? And What challenges does the Holocaust represent for Jewish thought and faith? Finally, we will explore the phenomenon of Holocaust denial and relate what we have learned to other genocides.

Goals

According to Arthur Chickering and Zelda Gamson, good practice in undergraduate education:

1. encourages contact between students and faculty
2. develops reciprocity and cooperation among students
3. encourages active learning
4. gives prompt feedback
5. emphasizes time on task
6. communicates high expectations, and
7. respects diverse talents and ways of learning

I have kept these principles in mind in designing this course, the ultimate goal of which is student transformation. This sort of learning, as Paul Ramsden writes, “should be seen as a qualitative change in a person’s way of seeing, experiencing, understanding, conceptualizing something in the real world—rather than as a quantitative change in the amount of knowledge someone possesses.” Transformative learning does not simply happen; but it can be facilitated by an environment where students are encouraged to develop a sense of agency and take responsibility for their education.

In this class, as in liberal arts education generally, the primary means toward student transformation is the development of critical thinking. Critical thinking focuses not on

acquiring facts but on understanding their significance and interrelationships and reflecting on their significance for society in general, for our lives, and for the lives of others. The content covered in this class will not only inform us and develop our learning skills, but will enhance our awareness of the learning process and the ethical and institutional contexts in which it takes place.

Methods

The methods used to encourage critical thinking in the liberal arts emphasize the movement from “surface” to “deep” cognitive learning described in “Bloom’s Taxonomy”:

Knowledge-- recall of specific information (lecture/reading)

Comprehension--understanding of what was read (discussion)

Application--converting of abstract content to concrete situations (discussion/journals)

Analysis--comparison and contrast of content to personal experiences (journals)

Synthesis--organization of thoughts, ideas, and information from content (journals/tests)

Evaluation--judgment and evaluation of characters, actions, outcome, etc., for personal reflection and understanding(journals/tests)

Students in this class will be required to engage in and demonstrate each of these types of learning, as well as the ability to ask thoughtful and penetrating questions, to listen and enter into dialogue, to write and speak with clarity and style, to appreciate the perspectives of others, and to respond empathetically.

Tasks

Students enrolled in this course shall:

- 1) *Attend and participate* in class sessions, having actively read assigned material
- 2) meet with a *small group* six times during the semester
- 3) keep a *journal*, due on the dates noted in the syllabus
- 4) complete *two tests*
- 5) complete a *final examination*

Required Texts

Ernst Klee, et. al., eds., *The Good Old Days*

Elie Wiesel, *Night*

David Gushee, *The Righteous Gentiles of the Holocaust*

James Waller, *Becoming Evil*

Inge Scholl, *The White Rose*

Richard Rubenstein and John Roth, *Approaches to Auschwitz* (revised edition)

Robert Ericksen and Susannah Heschel, eds., *Betrayal*

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

Explanations

This class will be taught using Moodle. Many readings and suggested resources are linked to the syllabus through Moodle. Note, however, that if you want to reach me electronically and be assured of getting a response in a timely manner, it is best to use my campus e-mail address (haynes@rhodes.edu).

Attendance, Preparation and Participation

Attendance, preparation and participation are crucial 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 or learnings to be shared on request. *Participation* means contributing regularly to discussions in a critical, searching and honest way.

N.B.: Students may miss three classes (including Thursday night sessions) during the semester for any reason. Four or more absences will negatively affect a student's A & P grade.

Discussions will be more successful if each of us respects each others' opinions, is careful not to dominate, allows the full and free expression of divergent views, and resists the pressure to reach premature or artificial solutions to problems. Above all, our classroom should be a safe place for us to discuss things we care about. If you are not accustomed to these expectations for class participation, you may need to prepare comments before coming to class. Note that meaningful class participation results from active reading of assignments. Active reading requires a dictionary and a pencil or highlighter. Use the latter to emphasize important points, make marginal notes, or record questions.

N. B. Bring a copy of the readings to each class session. I will expect them to be "marked up" in ways that reflect your active reading.

Small Groups

Each student will be assigned to a small group which will meet six times during the semester on Thursday evenings or another time agreeable to group members. Students' participation in small group sessions is mandatory and will be judged primarily on the basis of journal entries.

Instructions for scheduled small group meetings:

Small Group Meeting 1: Christian Anti-Judaism

Get to know each other. Talk a bit about how you became interested in this subject and what you hope to learn this semester. Each member of the group should share their reactions to the reading assignment. Use the study questions as a guide to your discussion.

Small Group Meeting 2: Hitler's Racial Ideology

Each member of the group should share their reactions to the reading assignment. Use the study questions as a guide to your discussion.

Small Group Meeting 3: Holocaust Perpetrators

Each member of the group should share their reactions to the reading assignment. Each member should guide the others through a document from the book they found particularly interesting or significant for understanding the Holocaust. Use the study questions as a guide to your discussion.

Small Group Meeting 4: Film Session

With others in your small group, view and discuss a feature film dealing with the Holocaust. Talk about the experience. How did the film enhance or complicate your understanding of the Holocaust? In choosing a film, you may peruse this list of [familiar Hollywood titles](#).

Small Group Meeting 5: Leaflets of the White Rose

Each member of the group should share their reactions to the reading assignment. Use the study questions as a guide to your discussion.

Small Group Meeting 6: Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Each member of the group should share their reactions to the reading assignment. Use the study questions as a guide to your discussion.

Journals

Journals will be read and graded six times during the semester. They are due on the dates noted on the schedule of topics and readings. All journal entries should be made on-line using the course's Moodle site. Journals *should* contain an average of two entries per week of course work. Journals *must* contain individual responses to questions posed for small group sessions. Journals will be graded on the seriousness of the student's engagement with course material and the depth and detail with which small group sessions are described. General journal entries may focus on any aspect of the course. Here are some suggested topics:

*Discuss your background, experiences, and expectations for this course. What questions do you bring with you, and what do you hope to understand when the course is over?

*This semester you have viewed the Holocaust through the eyes of victims, perpetrators and resisters. How would you rank these groups in terms of their contributions to our

understanding of the Holocaust? Should each group receive “equal time,” or is there some other way to determine the proper focus?

*Review some of your chief learnings from this course. How has it affected your learning in other areas? Does the Holocaust have implications for your major or profession? Would you recommend the course to others? What changes would be beneficial?

*Discuss conversations you’ve had this semester that relate to the course. What have been some of the responses you’ve heard when people learn you’re taking it.

Quizzes

Unannounced quizzes may be given at the beginning of class. Quiz questions will be designed to judge students’ preparation for class and quiz grades will be factored into Attendance and Participation average.

Exams

All exams will be take-home and will include identifications and essay sections.

Late Work

Without an explicit extension from the professor, assigned work will not be accepted after the due date. Missed quizzes may not be made up.

Percentages for Tabulating Grades:

Attendance, Preparation and Participation 20%
Tests 30% (15% each)
Final Examination 25%
Journal 25%

Grading Scale:

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|---------|----|---------|----|
| 93-100 | A | 73-77.9 | C |
| 90-92.9 | A- | 70-72.9 | C- |
| 88-89.9 | B+ | 68-69.9 | D+ |
| 83-87.9 | B | 63-67.9 | D |
| 80-89.9 | B- | 60-62.9 | D- |
| 78-79.9 | C+ | 0-60 | F |

Schedule of Topics and Readings

| Day | Date | Topic/Assignment |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday | August 23 | Introduction to the Course |
| Thursday | 24 | Film: “First World War and the Rise of Fascism” ; “Second World War” |
| Monday | 28 | What is the Holocaust? R&R, prologue, ch.1 |
| Wednesday | 30 | Roots of Anti-Semitism R&R, ch.2; Ruether |
| Thursday | 31 | Small Group Meeting (1): Luther |
| Friday | September 1 | Journal 1 Due |
| Monday | 4 | Labor Day—NO CLASS |
| Wednesday | 6 | Roots of Anti-Semitism R&R, ch. 3 |
| Thursday | 7 | Film: Triumph of the Will ; transcript of the film |
| Monday | 11 | Roots of Anti-Semitism R&R, ch. 4 |
| Wednesday | 13 | Nazism R&R, ch.5 |
| Thursday | 14 | Small Group Meeting (2): Hitler, "Nation and Race" |
| Friday | 15 | Journal 2 Due |
| Monday | 18 | NO CLASS R&R, ch. 6; <i>The Good Old Days</i> , 46-74 |
| Wednesday | 20 | Final Solution <i>The Good Old Days</i> , 75-171 |
| Thursday | 21 | Film: “The Warsaw Ghetto” ; “Night and Fog” |
| Friday | 22 | TEST ONE DUE |
| Monday | 25 | Final Solution R&R, ch. 8; The Wannsee Protocol |
| Wednesday | 27 | Perpetrators Waller, <i>Becoming Evil</i> , 3-49 |
| Thursday | 28 | Small Group Meeting (3): <i>The Good Old Days</i> , 211-274 |
| Monday | October 2 | Perpetrators Waller, <i>Becoming Evil</i> , 50-123 |
| Wednesday | 4 | Victims Wiesel, <i>Night</i> ; on-line resource ; study guide |
| Thursday | 5 | Film: “Obedience” ; Stanford Prison Experiment |
| Monday | 9 | Victims Rittner & Roth,; 58-63 ; 99-103 ; 73-83 |
| Wednesday | 11 | Victims Rittner & Roth, 270-286 ; 287-308 ; 104-118 |
| Thursday | 12 | Small Group Meeting (4): Film Session |
| Friday | 13 | Journal 3 Due |
| Monday | 16 | FALL BREAK |
| Wednesday | 18 | Rescuers Gushee, 69-116 |
| Thursday | 19 | Film: “Weapons of the Spirit” |
| Monday | 23 | Rescuers Gushee, 117-175 |
| Wednesday | 25 | No Class Resistors <i>The White Rose</i> , 3-72; on-line resource |
| Thursday | 26 | Small Group Meeting (5): <i>The White Rose</i> , 73-93, 119-137 |
| Friday | 27 | Journal 4 Due |
| Monday | 30 | The Church R&R, ch. 10; <i>Betrayal</i> , 129-148 |
| Wednesday | November 1 | NO CLASS |
| Thursday | 2 | Special Session: Guest |
| Friday | 3 | TEST TWO DUE |
| Monday | 6 | The Church <i>Betrayal</i> , 1-21; 40-67 |
| Wednesday | 8 | The Church <i>Betrayal</i> , 90-128 |
| Thursday | 9 | Small Group Meeting (6): Bonhoeffer, 221-29; 240-42 |

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| Friday | 10 | Journal 5 Due |
| Monday | 13 | Catholic Responses www.jcrelations.net (statements 1028,1030, 1034, 1042) |
| Wednesday | 15 | Protestant Responses www.jcrelations.net (statements 995, 1002, 1003, 987, 1005, 1008) |
| Thursday | 16 | Film: “Shadow on the Cross”; “Theologians Under Hitler” |
| Monday | 20 | NO CLASS |
| Monday | 27 | Jewish Responses R&R, ch. 12; www.jcrelations.net (statements 1014,1016) |
| Wednesday | 29 | Denial What is Denial? ; Denial Timeline |
| Thursday | 30 | Film: “The Triumph of Evil” ; reading: Never Again? |
| Friday | December 1 | Journal 6 Due |
| Monday | 4 | Uniqueness Rosenbaum, 11-64 |
| Wednesday | 6 | Uniqueness Rosenbaum, 163-208 |

