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RELS 232-01, Social Issues: Holocaust, Fall, 2007

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Religion 232: Holocaust
M, W 11:00-11:50; Th 6:00-8:00
Fall 2007
Prof. Stephen Haynes
Clough 403; 843-3583/272-9266
Office Hours: TBA

Introduction

The focus of this class is the Nazi “Final Solution of 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.

Course Goals

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

- encourages contact between students and faculty
- develops reciprocity and cooperation among students
- encourages active learning
- gives prompt feedback
- emphasizes time on task
- communicates high expectations, and
- 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 material 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.

Course 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.

Course Tasks

Students enrolled in this course shall:

- 1) *attend and participate* in class sessions, having actively read assigned material
- 2) take a series of on-line *quizzes*
- 3) meet with a *small group* six times during the semester
- 4) keep a *journal*, due on the dates noted in the syllabus
- 5) complete *two tests*
- 6) 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*

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?*

Simon Wiesenthal, *The Sunflower*

Explanations

Moodle

This class will be taught using Moodle, a web-based course delivery system. 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.

Preparing for Class Sessions

Success in this class requires that you regularly participate in class discussions—voluntarily or when called upon. 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.

Discussions will be more successful if each of us respects each others' opinions, is careful not to dominate, allows 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.

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. If you don't appear to have the reading we are discussing, I will ask you where it is.

Quizzes

Periodic quizzes based on readings and films in the course will be administered on the course Moodle site. The average of the quiz grades will be figured into the Attendance and Participation grade.

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: "The Wannsee Protocol"

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 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: *The Sunflower*

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 detailed 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 course is allowing you to view the Holocaust through the eyes of victims, perpetrators and resisters. How would you differentiate 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 studies in other areas this semester? 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?

Exams

All exams will be take-home and will include identification 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%
Small Groups and Journal 25%

Grading Scale

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93-100	A	83-87.9	B
90-92.9	A-	80-89.9	B-
88-89.9	B+	78-79.9	C+

73-77.9 C
 70-72.9 C-
 68-69.9 D+

63-67.9 D
 60-62.9 D-
 0-60 F

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Day	Date	Topic/Assignment
Wednesday	August 22	Introduction to the Course
Thursday	23	Film: “First World War and the Rise of Fascism” ; “Second World War”
Monday	27	What is the Holocaust? R&R, prologue, ch. 1
Wednesday	29	Roots of Anti-Semitism R&R, ch.2; Rosemary Ruether
Thursday	30	Small Group Meeting (1): Martin Luther
Friday	31	Journal 1 Due
Monday	September 3	Labor Day—NO CLASS
Wednesday	5	Roots of Anti-Semitism R&R, ch. 3
Thursday	6	Film: Triumph of the Will ; transcript of the film
Monday	10	Roots of Anti-Semitism R&R, ch. 4
Wednesday	12	Nazism R&R, ch.5
Thursday	13	Small Group Meeting (2): Adolf Hitler, "Nation and Race"
Friday	14	TEST ONE DUE
Monday	17	Final Solution R&R, ch. 6
Wednesday	19	Final Solution <i>The Good Old Days, 3-74</i>
Thursday	20	Film: “The Warsaw Ghetto” ; “Night and Fog”
Friday	21	Journal 2 Due
Monday	24	Final Solution R&R, ch. 8
Wednesday	26	Perpetrators <i>The Good Old Days, 75-135</i>
Thursday	27	Small Group Meeting (3): The Wannsee Protocol
Monday	October 1	Perpetrators <i>The Good Old Days, 211-274</i>
Wednesday	3	Victims Wiesel, <i>Night</i> ; on-line resource ; study guide
Thursday	4	Film: “Obedience” ; Stanford Prison Experiment
Monday	8	Victims Rittner & Roth,; 1: 58-63 ; 99-103 ; 2: 73-83
Wednesday	10	Victims Rittner & Roth, 3: 270-286 ; 4: 287-308 ; 5: 104-118
Thursday	11	Small Group Meeting (4): Film Session
Friday	12	Journal 3 Due
Monday	15	FALL BREAK
Wednesday	17	Rescuers Gushee, 69-116
Thursday	18	Film: “Weapons of the Spirit”
Monday	22	Rescuers Gushee, 117-175
Wednesday	24	Resistors <i>The White Rose, 3-72</i> ; on-line resource
Thursday	25	Small Group Meeting (5): <i>The White Rose, 73-93, 119-137</i>
Friday	26	TEST TWO DUE
Monday	29	The Church R&R, ch. 10; <i>Betrayal, 129-148</i>
Wednesday	31	The Church <i>Betrayal, 1-21; 40-67</i>
Thursday	November 1	Special Session: Guest
Friday	2	Journal 4 Due

Monday	5	The Church	<i>Betrayal</i> , 90-109; Barmen Declaration
Wednesday	7	The Church	<i>Betrayal</i> , 110-127; Bonhoeffer, 221-29; 240-42
Thursday	8	Film: "Shadow on the Cross";	"Theologians Under Hitler" ; <i>Betrayal</i> , 22-39
Monday	12	Catholic Responses	www.jcrelations.net (statements 1028,1030, 1034, 1042)
Wednesday	14	Protestant Responses	www.jcrelations.net (statements 995, 1002, 1003, 987, 1005, 1008)
Thursday	15	Small Group Meeting (6): <i>The Sunflower</i>	
Monday	19	NO CLASS	
Monday	26	Jewish Responses	R&R,ch. 12; www.jcrelations.net (statements 1014,1016)
Wednesday	28	Denial	What is Denial? ; Denial Timeline
Thursday	29	Film: "The Triumph of Evil" ; reading: Never Again?	
Friday	30	Journal 5 Due	
Monday	December 2	Uniqueness	Rosenbaum, 11-68
Wednesday	5	Uniqueness	Rosenbaum, 221-290

