

Discernment and Discourse 1313: Literature of the Holocaust

Course Syllabus: Spring 2020
DISC 1313. 065, .066, .067, .068

Class locations: Dallas Hall

T/Th: 9:30-10:50AM #149; 11:00–12:20PM #149;
12:30–1:50PM #137; 2:00–3:20PM #153

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Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 3:30-4:30PM, and/or by appointment

NOTE: All matters associated with this course are subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

Course Description:

How can a few pages of a short story, a stanza of a poem, or a novel shed light upon something as horrific as the Holocaust? How can these narratives and stanzas illuminate our understanding of Antisemitism in Europe during Hitler's Third Reich? Often, when approaching the Holocaust, we are faced with the interdisciplinary task of examining, through historical, literary, and aesthetic lenses, the horrific acts of atrocity that took place across Europe between 1933-1945. By utilizing critical reading, reasoning, and writing skills, we will examine and write about the role that various literary and aesthetic genres play in illuminating our understanding of that which took place across Europe during the Holocaust.

Students must earn a C- or better in order to proceed in the sequence of DISC course. *Prerequisite:* DISC 1311 or 550 on the SAT Critical Reasoning or 24 on the ACT English section and/or DISC 1312.

Student Learning Objectives:

Students will learn to critically engage with written and visual texts of various genres.

Students will learn to craft coherent and effective thesis-driven arguments.

Students will learn to research, prepare, and write university-level papers.

Required Books:

- 1) Hayes, Peter. *Why? Explaining the Holocaust. First edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017.*
- 2) Ozick, Cynthia. *The Shawl.* New York: Knopf, 1989.
- 3) Readings on Canvas (print PDF for class discussions): Raphael, Linda S, and Marc L. Raphael. *When Night Fell: An Anthology of Holocaust Short Stories.* New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1999.
- 4) Schiff, Hilda. *Holocaust Poetry.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995.
- 5) Volavková, Hana. *I Never Saw Another Butterfly: Children's Drawings and Poems from Terezin Concentration Camp, 1942-1944.* New York: Schocken Books, 1993.
- 6) Wiesel, Elie. *Night.* New York, NY: Hill and Wang, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006.
- 7) *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace* (5th Edition), Joseph Bizup, Joseph M. Williams

Spring 2020 Assignments and Academic Calendar:

January 21 Tuesday	Introduction to the Course
January 23 Thursday	<p>Introduction to the Holocaust and Holocaust Literature Themes and Motifs: Antisemitism, Alienation, Persecution, Destruction, etc. THEME: "Alienation"</p> <p>1) <i>When Night Fell</i> (All readings from this collection of short stories are on Canvas): "The Teacher" (short story)</p> <p>2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i>: "Chapter 1 Targets: Why the Jews?" – pages 3-20</p> <p>•How to write an analytical reading response to a research texts (RRR)</p>

January 28 Tuesday	Introduction to Holocaust Memoirs <u>THEME: "Persecution"</u> 1) <i>Night</i> : pages vii – 28 2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i> : "Chapter 1 Targets: Why the Jews?" – pages 20-35 RRR #1 Due •How to write an analytical response to a literary text (BWA)
January 30 Thursday	<u>THEME: "Destruction"</u> • <i>Night</i> : pages 29 – end BWA#1 Due
February 4 Tuesday	Introduction to Holocaust Poetry 1) <i>Holocaust Poetry</i> : "Alienation" – pages: 5, 8, 9, 12-13, 14: "Heritage," Hayim Gouri (5); "The Burning of the Books," Bertolt Brecht (8); "First They Came for the Jews," Pastor Niemöller (9); "Refugee Blues," W.H. Auden (12); "How Can I See You, Love," David Vogel (14) 2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i> : "Chapter 2 Attackers: Why the Germans" – pages 36-55 •How to write an analytical, argument-driven thesis statement •How to (and why we) use Aristotle's Three Persuasive Appeals (ethos, pathos, and logos) when writing essays
February 6 Thursday	1) <i>Holocaust Poetry</i> : "Persecution" – pages: 21, 22, 23, 24: BWA#2 Due "He Was Lucky," Anna Swirszczynska (21); "I Saw My Father Drowning," and "There Is A Last, Solitary Coach," David Vogel (22, 23); "Clouded Sky," Miklós Radnóti (24) 2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i> : "Chapter 2 Attackers: Why the Germans" – pages 55-72 RRR #2 Due
February 11 Tuesday	1) <i>Holocaust Poetry</i> : "Destruction" – pages: 39-40, 41, 45, 55 "Death Fugue," Paul Celan (39); "O the Chimneys," Nelly Sachs (41); "Be Seeing You," Vasko Popa (45); "Night Over Birkenau," Tadeusz Borowski (55) 2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i> : "Chapter 3 Escalation: Why Murder?" – pages 73-91 •How to organize and structure an academic essay •How to and why we use textual evidence for supporting a claim
February 13 Thursday	In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #1 (bring a working thesis statement to class, and bring laptop to class) Discussion / Social Media / Film • <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i> : "Chapter 3 Escalation: Why Murder?" – pages 91-113 RRR#3
February 18 Tuesday	In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/Conferences – Essay #1
February 20 Thursday	Essay #1 Due Introduction to Holocaust Short Stories <u>THEME: Family</u> 1) Ida Fink's "The Key Game" included in PDF on Canvas
February 25 Tuesday	<u>THEME: Resistance</u> 1) <i>When Night Fell</i> : "Artists in the Ghetto" and "Bread" BWA#3 Due 2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i> : "Chapter 4 Annihilation: Why This Swift and Sweeping?" – pages 114-137
February 27 Thursday	<u>THEMES: Family and Resistance</u> 1) <i>When Night Fell</i> : "The Last Journey," and "The Boxing Match" BWA#4 2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i> : Chapter 4 Annihilation: Why This Swift and Sweeping?" – pages 137-175 RRR #4 Due •How to use the library and navigate library databases (smu.edu/cul) •How to choose credible popular (non peer-reviewed) and scholarly (peer-reviewed) sources

March 3 Tuesday	<p>THEME: Collapse of Childhood</p> <p>1) Ida Fink’s “Aryan Papers” (Canvas)</p> <p>2) <i>Holocaust Poetry</i>: “Destruction” – pages: 61, 62-63, 67, 69, 71 “A Girl of Six from the Ghetto,” Jerzy Ficowski (61-63); “A Dead Child Speaks,” Nelly Sachs (67); “O the Night of the Weeping Children!,” Nelly Sachs (69); “Pigtail,” Tadeusz Różewicz (71) BWA#5 Due</p> <p>3) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i>: “Chapter 5 Victims: Why Didn’t More Jews Fight Back More Often?” – pages 176-202</p>
March 5 Thursday	<p>1) <i>Holocaust Poetry</i>: “Persecution” – pages: 27-28, 29, 32-35 “A Cartload of Shoes,” Abraham Sutzkever (27-28); “How?,” Abraham Sutzkever (29); “(from) Holocaust,” Charles Reznikoff (32-35)</p> <p>2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i>: “Chapter 5 Victims: Why Didn’t More Jews Fight Back More Often?” – pages 202-217 RRR #5 Due</p>
March 10 Tuesday	<p>In-Class Workshop Essay #2 Academic Research Essay: Navigating the Databases / Online Sources (bring laptops to class for research exercise)</p> <p>•<i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i>: “Chapter 6 Homelands: Why Did Survival Rates Diverge?” pages 218-258</p>
March 12 Thursday	<p>In-Class Workshop: Navigating the Databases / Online Sources</p> <p>2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i>: “Chapter 6 Onlookers: Why Such Limited Help from Outside?” – pages 259-278 RRR #6 Due</p> <p>Research Workshop (bring laptops to class) Discussion / Social Media / Film</p>
March 16-22	Spring Break! Enjoy!
March 24 Tuesday	<p>THEME: Collapse of Relationships</p> <p>1) <i>When Night Fell</i>: “Stephen and Anne,” and “Old Words – New Meanings”</p> <p>2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i>: “Chapter 7 Onlookers: Why Such Limited Help from Outside?” – pages 278-299 RRR #7 Due</p>
March 26 Thursday	<p>THEME: Collapse of Motherhood</p> <p>1) Cynthia Ozick’s <i>The Shawl</i>: “The Shawl” (3-10) BWA#7 Due</p> <p>2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i>: “Chapter 8 Aftermath: What Legacies, What Lessons?” – pages 300-324</p>
March 31 Tuesday	<p>1) Cynthia Ozick’s <i>The Shawl</i>: “Rosa” (13-70) BWA#8 Due</p> <p>2) <i>Why? Explaining the Holocaust</i>: “Chapter 8 Aftermath: What Legacies, What Lessons?” – pages 324-342 RRR #8 Due</p>
April 2 Thursday	<p>Bring Two Working Paper Topics to Class</p> <p>THEME: Collapse of Childhood:</p> <p>•Read through the poetry created by children in: <i>...I Never Saw Another Butterfly: Children’s Drawings and Poems from Terezin Concentration Camp, 1942-1944: Poetry</i></p>
April 7 Tuesday	<p>• <i>...I Never Saw Another Butterfly: Children’s Drawings and Poems from Terezin Concentration Camp, 1942-1944: Drawings</i></p> <p>Class Discussion: Holocaust Denial and Antisemitism Today</p>
April 9 Thursday	In-Class Writing Workshop – Research Essay
April 14 Tuesday	Outline Due: Bring a typed detailed (sentence) outline for Essay #2 In-Class Workshop – Research Essay Presentations
April 16 Thursday	Conferences – Research Essay
April 21 Tuesday	In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/ Conference – Research Essay
April 23	In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/ Conference – Research Essay

Thursday	
April 28 Tuesday	In-Class Workshop/Peer Revision/ Conference – Research Essay *Bring Complete Draft of Academic Essay to Class for Peer Edit
April 30 Thursday	Last Day of Class Final Academic Essay Due

Grading

Essay #1	20%
Essay #2 – Academic Research Essay	25%
Essay #2 Academic Research Essay Outline	10%
Five BWAs and Five RRRs	30%
Participation / Reading Quizzes / Oral Presentation	10%
Peer Reviews	5%
Total	100%

Essay #1	20%	200
Essay #2 – Academic Research Essay	25%	250
Essay #2 Academic Research Essay Outline	10%	100
Five BWAs / Five RRRs (up to 30 pts each)	30%	300
Participation / Reading Quizzes / Oral Presentation	10%	100
Peer Reviews (25 pts each)	5%	50
Total	100%	1000 pts

Assignment Descriptions

(Note: You must submit all major assignments to Turnitin.com via Canvas by the due date.)

Assignment Descriptions:

All major paper assignments must adhere to proper MLA format and must be submitted to Turnitin.com via Canvas by the due date.

Essay #1:

Length: Three to Four pages (not including Works Cited page)

Source limit: One source minimum

Topic: Throughout your academic career and beyond, you will be asked to offer in-depth analysis of texts, events, phenomena, etc. In this paper, you will be asked to offer your own interpretation of a work and support that interpretation using evidence from the source itself, along with analysis from outside sources. Building an argument in this way will be not only be used in later assignments for this class, but will be a hallmark of your academic experience at SMU, as it will equip you with transferable cognitive skills.

Therefore, choosing from any of the works we have read thus far, you are to write a four-page analytical paper that traces or examines a theme, motif, or idea that is rooted in the text(s).

Remember:

- This essay must be in WordDoc format (doc or docx) in order to upload it to Canvas
 - This essay must adhere to proper MLA format
 - This essay must contain an original title that is specific and indicates the topic of your essay
 - This essay must contain a Works Cited page (in MLA format)
 - A clearly stated thesis statement, which will be the “main claim/argument” of your paper, must appear at the end of your introductory paragraph
 - Each paragraph must begin with a topic claim (topic sentence) that directly relates, supports, addresses, or builds upon your thesis statement
 - Every topic claim must be supported and rooted in textual evidence (quotes from the text(s))
 - Also, review Chapters 1-3 of *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace*
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Essay #2: Academic Research Essay

Length: Six – Seven pages (not including Works Cited) in MLA format,

Source Requirements: Your argument will need to be properly sourced to be persuasive. This means you should be looking to use credible sources to support any disputable points you make. Including Peter Hayes’ *Why: Explaining the Holocaust*, at least one book from the library, and scholarly articles would also certainly accomplish supporting your argument. However, scholarly sources should make sense within the context of the paper, but not everything you include has to be scholarly (though it should be credible – for example: USHMM.org or YadVashem.org). It would be very difficult for me to imagine that you could support an academic research essay of this length in less than five sources. The best papers will support each of its claims with sources that enhance the credibility and clarity of the essay.

Topic: Choosing from any of the topics addressed in Peter Hayes’ book, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*, you are to write a six to seven page analytical research paper that stems from that topic and/or traces or examines a theme, motif, or idea that is rooted in the text(s), or that addresses a topic addressed in the readings or course discussions.

Remember:

- This essay must adhere to proper MLA format
 - This essay must contain an original title that is specific and indicates the topic of your essay
 - This essay must contain a Works Cited page (in MLA format)
 - Be careful not to slip into summary (assume that your reader has read the text(s)).
 - You should address and introduce your reader to the genre, if writing about a text.
 - A clearly stated thesis statement, which will be the “main claim/argument” of your paper, must appear at the end of your introductory paragraph. Your thesis should “take a stance” and address the “why?” and “how?” of your topic.
 - Each paragraph must begin with a topic claim (topic sentence) that directly relates, supports, addresses, or builds upon your thesis statement.
 - Every topic claim must be supported and rooted in textual evidence (quotes from the text(s) and sources).
 - Pay attention to transition sentences within paragraphs and between paragraphs (see the *They Say I Say* handout for list of transitional words).
 - When quoting supporting sources, remember to include a “quotation sandwich”
 - Also, review all of *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace*
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Brief Writing Assignments (BWAs)

Assignment: Throughout the semester, you must turn in **Five Brief Writing Assignments (BWAs)**. The BWAs will be about one page in length. These BWAs are reading responses to that day's assigned reading, and should appear in paragraph form (these are not outlines or merely bullet-point observations). Also, each BWA must contain an original title that is specific and indicates the topic of your BWA, as well as include a Works Cited page (in MLA format). Throughout your academic career and beyond, you will be asked to offer in-depth analysis of texts, events, phenomena, etc. In this response paper, you will be asked to offer your own interpretation of a work and support that interpretation using evidence from the source itself, along with analysis from outside sources. Building an argument in this way will not only be used in later assignments for this class, but will be a hallmark of your academic experience at SMU, as it will equip you with transferable cognitive skills. Therefore, choosing from any of the texts assigned, you are to write a BWA analytical response that traces or examines a theme, motif, or idea that is rooted in the text(s).

In an analysis you can examine or address an array of topics from a particular theme, motif, or image, to a certain characterization, tone, passage, etc. Remember that the heart of an analysis addresses the questions "how?" and "why?" e.g.: Why is this theme in this poem? How does this tone highlight the issue being addressed in this story or passage? How does this narrative reflect the atrocities that occurred during the Holocaust?

Purpose: the purpose of this Brief Writing Assignment is to introduce you to analytical analysis and writing, which is what Essays #1 and #2 will build upon.

Like each of the major essay assignments, these BWAs must be typed, adhere to the MLA format, and include Work Cited information.

NOTE: Each BWA will only be accepted on its due date, and must be typed and submitted to Canvas before the start of class. Since we will discuss the contents of the BWAs on the day that they are due, BWAs turned in before or after the due date on the syllabus will not be accepted. **You are responsible for keeping track of how many BWAs you have submitted.**

Research Reading Response (RRR) of Peter Hayes' book: *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*

Assignment: Throughout the semester, you will be assigned sections to read from Peter Hayes' academic book addressing the Holocaust: *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*. You must turn in **Five Research Reading Responses (RRRs)**. For this assignment, you are to write a one-page reading response to the assigned chapter reading(s) of that day. This is **not** a summary, but rather an analytical response to Hayes' text. Remember summary-mode tends to focus on addressing **what**; whereas, analytical-mode tends to focus on asking and addressing **why** and/or **how**.

Purpose: The purpose of this assignment is to critically engage with an academic text about the subject of the course (the Holocaust), as a way to prepare for critically reading, analyzing, and writing about various academic sources you will use in your academic research essay.

In your RRR, consider asking and/or addressing the following:

- 1) As you read and write your reading response reflection(s), ask yourself: What is the thesis (or main idea/claim) that Hayes is making in this section or chapter?
- 2) How does the author develop and/or support said claim? Or how does his development of his argument in this section provide insight for you regarding the chapter's topic? In other words, what kind or type of evidence does he use to support his claims? Does he use Aristotle's rhetorical appeals of *ethos*, *pathos*, or *logos*?
- 3) What is one main thing you learned and/or one main point that stood out to you from this section's readings, and why?

- 4) Are any of the “themes” we have been considering in our literature readings addressed or amplified in this chapter/section? If so, which one(s)? How does Hayes’ text help illuminate some of the themes found in our literary texts?
- 5) As always, you should use textual evidence to support your responses, observations, claims, etc.

Each Research Reading Response (RRR) will only be accepted on its due date, and must be typed and submitted to Canvas before the start of class. RRRs turned in before or after the due date on the syllabus will not be accepted. **You are responsible for keeping track of how many RRRs you have submitted.** Each RRR should also include a title that is specific and indicates the topic, as well as adheres to proper MLA format and includes Work Cited information.

Attendance

Because each class period consists of a mixture of class discussion or group work, your thoughtful, attentive, and active participation is essential (and will form a portion of your grade). If you sleep, engage in non-class-related activities (e.g., texting on your phone), or interfere with your classmates’ ability to learn, you will be counted absent for that day. Be on time: class starts promptly. Leaving early will count as an absence.

Attendance policy: If you have more than **two** absences of any kind (except for those sanctioned by the University for University sanctioned teams or official organizations and excused via the proper paperwork) in a TTH section, your grade will suffer a penalty of up to a full letter grade: for example, a final average of 85 would become a 75. If you have more than four absences in a TTH section (except for those sanctioned by the university and excused via the proper University-sanctioned paperwork), you should expect to fail the course. **NOTE:** A doctor’s note does not count as a “University-sanctioned” excuse (see “Appendix” in *Criteria* for further details). **You are responsible for your attendance. You must make sure that you sign the roll sheet and/or notify me if you arrive late and after I have taken roll.**

Continually arriving late to class will affect your participation grade in the course. Two tardies will result in one unexcused absence for the course; I will consider you absent if you arrive more than 15 minutes late to class, and I will consider you tardy if you arrive after the sign-in sheet has circulated.

Class Participation

Your success in this course is a function of your level of engagement. I am interested in the quality not quantity of your remarks. Please use your analysis of the readings, your BWA, RRR, and prior research and/or study when responding orally in class, and be prepared to back up any points you make.

Participation in this course does not include doing work unrelated to this course during class or sleeping in class. Remember that, unless specified by the Instructor, using any computers or other personal electronic devices for personal messaging, research, or entertainment is prohibited.

Late Work

Each paper must be turned in to turnitin.com (via Canvas) at the beginning of class. For each day your paper is late, your paper will be deducted a letter grade. Your paper will be considered late if it is turned in one minute after the start of class. If your paper is not turned in to turnitin.com, you will fail the assignment.

***NOTE:** Late BWAs Reading Responses, RRRs, homework assignments, or missed reading quizzes **will not be** accepted or made up.

All major assignments (Essays #1 and Academic Research Essay) must be completed in order to pass this class.

Personal Communication Devices

Remember to turn all cell phones, laptops, and other personal communication or electronic devices off before the start of class. Unless specified by the Instructor, do not use these devices during class.

University Policies:

Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/Provost/SASP/DASS> to begin the process. Once approved and registered, students will submit a DASS Accommodation Letter to faculty through the electronic portal DASS Link and then communicate directly with each instructor to make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

Religious Observance: Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence (<https://www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/Chaplain/ReligiousHolidays>).

Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities: Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (See 2018-2019 University Undergraduate Catalogue)

Regarding the “Campus Carry” Law: “In accordance with Texas Senate Bill 11, also known as the “campus carry” law, following consultation with entire University community SMU determined to remain a weapons-free campus. Specifically, SMU prohibits possession of weapons (either openly or in a concealed manner) on campus. For more information, please see: http://www.smu.edu/BusinessFinance/Police/Weapons_Policy.