

Course Syllabus

Course Information

Hist 1500 The Holocaust and Antisemitism M, W 2-3:15pm
Spring 2021 10 weeks (adaptable)

Instructor Contact Information

Shannon Quigley Office Hours: by appointment
Email:

Course Description

In this course we will look at the event of the Holocaust, also called the Shoah, from within a historical framework, also contextualizing the event within World War II. We will look at what the Holocaust was and define its place and role within Western and Jewish history. Furthermore, we will critically evaluate historical anti-Judaism and antisemitism prior to the Holocaust, Holocaust denial and distortion and how each of these concepts play a role in today's world and in our current understanding of the history of the Holocaust. We will also look at antisemitism since the Holocaust in its many varied forms and briefly look at varying approaches to the study of the Holocaust. We will do this by reading historical works as well as memoir, also looking at two films and utilizing Holocaust museum websites and resources.

Texts

Documents on the Holocaust: Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland, and the Soviet Union Eds: Yitzhak Arad, Israel Gutman, Abraham Margalio. Wasserstein, Bernard. *On the Eve*. 2013.

Friedlander, Saul. *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, Volumes 1 and 2. 1997, 2007.

Bauer, Yehuda. *A History of the Holocaust*. Revised Ed. 2001.

Bergen, Doris. *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*. 2002.

Kershaw, Ian. "Working Towards the Führer': Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship," in *Hitler, the Germans, and the Final Solution*. 2008.

Weinrich, Max. *Hitler's Professors*. 1946.

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. 2006.

Klemperer, Victor. *I Will Bear Witness: A Diary of the Nazi Years, 1933-1941*. 1998.

Desbois, Patrick. *The Holocaust by Bullets*.

Heschel, Susannah. *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany*. 2008.

Confino, Alon. *A World without Jews: The Nazi Imagination from Persecution to Genocide*. 2014.

Goldhagen, Daniel. *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*. 1996.

Lipstadt, Deborah. *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*. 1993.

Gushee, David. *Righteous Gentiles of the Holocaust*. 1993.

Dwork, Deborah. *Children with a Star*. 1991.

Gerlach, Wolfgang. *And the Witnesses Were Silent: The Confessing Church and the Persecution of the Jews*. 2000.

Flannery, Edward. *The Anguish of the Jews: Twenty-Three Centuries of Antisemitism*. 1985.

Littell, Franklin. *The Crucifixion of the Jews*. 2017.

Huchet Bishop, Claire. Introduction to *Jesus and Israel*, Jules Isaac. 1971.

Isaac, Jules. *The Teaching of Contempt: Christian Roots of Anti-Semitism*. 1964.

Films

Big Sonia Film (watch in class, available on Amazon Prime)

Who Will Write our Story Film (watch in class)

Elisabeth of Berlin. 2008. (watch in class)

Denial. 2016 (about Deborah Lipstadt trial with Holocaust denier David Irving – recommended)

Websites

www.ushmm.org

www.auschwitz.org

www.yadvashem.org

Student Learning Outcomes

The purpose of examining the Holocaust and antisemitism is to assess the historical backdrop and cultural history in noting the context of the Holocaust and the role of antisemitism in this event. Besides learning the historical events of the Holocaust, we will look at why this event continues to bear unparalleled significance in the study of European and Western history. We will look at the questions of how this event occurred, arising when individuals within society go down a path of least resistance and allow “the other” in their midst to be castigated and persecuted. We will assess questions of human responsibility, good and evil, relative versus absolute morality in order to better comprehend the significance of the Holocaust on humanity. Student learning objectives also include honing critical thinking skills, summarizing materials of varying formats and researching and writing a thesis-oriented paper.

Measurement of Outcomes, Assignments, Grading

Students will be required to write **three (3-4 page) response papers** (10% each) as explained in the assignments due section. **One short five-minute class presentation** (10%) will also be required, either on the educational tool on the Holocaust museum website that you wrote about in week 4 or on your project/research paper. A **one-page proposal** for your **end of term final research paper (8-10 pages) or your semester project** (50% for both proposal and final paper) will also be required. The research paper will then be due on the last day of class. Alternatively, you may choose to do a **semester long project** exploring “the other,” or following the journey of a victim of the Holocaust via one of the museum websites. A **six-page written report on the project** will be due the last day of class. Class discussion will be worth 10% of grade.

Three (3-4 page) response papers (10% each)

One short five-minute class presentation (10%) – presentations will take place last three weeks of class and will be assigned by instructor

One-page proposal for end of term final research paper (8-10 pages) or six-page written report on semester project (50% for proposal and final paper or project report)

Class discussion (10%)

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Meeting 1: Introduction to the Study of the Holocaust, Defining Antisemitism

Introduce Holocaust Museum websites: ushmm.org , yadvashem.org , Auschwitz.org

Explain semester long project or final research paper options. Begin thinking about this as your one-page proposal for your project/final paper is due in two weeks.

Meeting 2: Jewish Life/History in Europe; History of anti-Jewishness and antisemitism in Germany and throughout Europe

Auschwitz Block 27 (Yad Vashem)

Readings: excerpts from Wasserstein, *On the Eve*, Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews* Vol. I and Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust*

We will watch *Projections of Life: Jewish Life Before World War II* USHMM video in class

Assignment Due: 1st Short Paper Due (3-4 pages) Addressing the following Questions: What is your understanding of the Holocaust? What did the first class and the readings contribute to your understanding? What are topics you would like to study more? Other thoughts regarding the study of the Holocaust.

Meeting 3: World War I, Weimar Germany and the Rise of the Nazi Party

(Immediate pre-holocaust history, European cultural history, rise of nationalism)

Readings: excerpts from both volumes of Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* and Bergen, *War and Genocide*, Kershaw, "Working Towards the Führer" article

Assignment Due: One-page proposal for final project/research paper.

Meetings 4 and 5: World War II, the Final Solution to the Jewish Question, Hitler's Antisemitism and the Holocaust (we will continue the previous week's discussion on nationalism, *volkscommunity*, etc., also looking at Nazi propaganda, "the othering" of minorities, particularly the Jewish people and Hitler's messaging)

Readings: primary sources contained in *Documents on the Holocaust*; excerpts from Hitler speeches blaming the Jews for the war contained in Weinrich's *Hitler's Professors*, excerpts from both volumes of Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, Vol. II, Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* and Bergen, *War and Genocide*

Assignment Due at 4th Meeting: 2nd Short Paper Due (3-4 pages) Choose one of the three Holocaust Museum websites presented on the 1st day of class and explore and write about one of their educational/archival components and how to use this resource and what you learned in doing so.

Meeting 6: The Holocaust as Encountered through Memoir

Readings: Wiesel, *Night*, excerpts from Klemperer, *I Will Bear Witness: A Diary of the Nazi Years*
We will briefly discuss *Night* and watch *Big Sonia* in class.

Meeting 7: The Holocaust: East and West – Shooting Pits, Ghettos, Transports, Death Camps

Readings: primary sources contained in *Documents on the Holocaust*; excerpts from Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, Vol. II, Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets*.

Assignment Due: 3rd Short Paper Due (3-4 pages) Address how *Night*, *Big Sonia*, *I Will Bear Witness*, or other Holocaust memoirs/diaries or survivor stories have affected your comprehension of the Holocaust. What strikes you about these stories? Are they helpful to you as you learn the history of the Holocaust?

We will watch portions of *Who Will Write Our Story* film about the Oneg Shabbat archives in class.

Meeting 8: Anti-Judaism and Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial/Distortion and DeJudaization Efforts

Readings: excerpts from Heschel, *Aryan Jesus*, Confino, *A World Without Jews* and Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*.

Meeting 9: **The Holocaust – Children, Resisters, the Righteous, Survivors and Other Victims**

Readings: excerpts from Gushee, *Righteous Gentiles of the Holocaust*, Gerlach, *And the Witnesses were Silent*, Dwork, *Children with a Star*

We will watch portions of *Elisabeth of Berlin* film in class.

Meeting 10: **Reflections on the Holocaust and Antisemitism's Endurance** (also briefly discuss historiographical debates in the study the Holocaust: terminology – Holocaust, Shoah, etc.; intentionalism/functionalism; particular/universal); current (mis)use of terminology – fascism, Nazism, genocide, etc.)

Readings: Littell, *The Crucifixion of the Jews*, excerpts from Flannery's *Anguish of the Jews* and Isaac's *Teaching of Contempt*, Hutchet Bishop's introduction to *Teaching of Contempt*.

Assignment Due: Final Research Paper or Project Due