

The Holocaust in Historical and Comparative Perspective

Hist 484/592- Spring 2006-LI209

Professor: Wendy Lower
Office: Linthicum 119E
Email:wlower@towson.edu

History Department
tel: 410 704 3934
Office hours: TBA

Required Readings (available at the University bookstore):

Steve Hochstadt ed, Sources of the Holocaust .Palgrave, 2004.
Doris Bergen, War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust. Rowman and Littlefield, 2003.
Christopher Browning. Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland. NY, 1992.
Tadeusz Borowski, This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen. New York: Penguin, 1967.
Samek's Testimony, 1943 (70 pp unpublished manuscript, distributed in class)
Gellately, Robert and Kiernan, Ben. The Specter of Genocide. Cambridge, 2002.

Prerequisites: 6 credits in modern European history including **History 103**.

Course Content:

By the end of the Second World War, Hitler and his accomplices had annihilated millions of Jews, Slavs, communists, Roma, the mentally and physically ill and others deemed racial and political enemies of the Third Reich. At the center of this genocide was the Nazi campaign against the Jews, what the Nazis euphemistically termed "the Final Solution" and post-war accounts coined "The Holocaust." This course will examine the history of Nazi genocide and its post-war legacy We will analyze the changing postwar views of the Holocaust, and the different "lessons of the Holocaust" that are put forth by scholars, political leaders and survivors. Some time will also be devoted to studying genocides that have occurred around the globe and since the Holocaust, in particular the mass killing in Cambodia, Rwanda and more recently in the Darfur region of Sudan.

Course Objectives:

This course will challenge you to think critically about the different individuals, forces and conditions that brought about the Holocaust and other cases of genocide. Although it is very difficult to assess the motivations of the perpetrators, we will explore the various psychological, socio-cultural, and political factors. You will learn about the state-sponsored German system and this destructive machinery's influence upon individual and group behavior. In addition you will study the different Jewish responses to Nazi persecution, and the varied forms of resistance that were possible within increasingly restrictive settings. Though the Nazis targeted the Jews as one "race" in fact the Jews of Europe were a culturally diverse people. These topics will be explored through primary material on the subject, including Nazi documents (translated into English), American diplomatic reports, as well as victims' diaries and memoirs.

Assignments, Grading and Learning Outcomes::

In addition to the weekly readings, discussions, and document analyses, student learning will be evaluated and measured through oral presentations, written essays and in class tests. Students will be required to write three short papers (about 5 pages each, double-spaced), and take two exams (a mid term and final). Since we will have the special opportunity to interview Helen Tichauer, an Auschwitz survivor who was among the first transports of Slovakian Jews to the camp in early spring 1942, each student will prepare one question for the interview. We will as a group learn how to collect oral histories for public use, how to conduct an oral history, and prepare the manuscript to be deposited at the archives..

In Class Presentations/Participation in Oral History Project	10%
Papers (3 each)	25%
Mid Term	30%
Final	35%

A (94-100) A- (90-93) B+ (87-89) B (84-86) B- (80-83) C+ (77-79) C (70-77) D (60-69) F (0-60)

Policies

Class participation and attendance are factored into final grades and in borderline cases can mean the difference between e.g. C+ and B-. According to Towson's attendance policy, students who do not attend the first two class meetings and fail to inform the department may be dropped from the class. I will take attendance at each class. Excused absences are permitted (e.g. illness, family emergency, religious observance, university event), but please inform me. It is impolite and unfair to your colleagues if you arrive late to class and/or leave early. All cell phones must be turned off during class. Any student whose phone rings during class will be asked to leave the class that day and marked down with an unexcused absence. Students with more than 3 unexcused absences will fail the course. **Plagiarism** is the taking of another's ideas or writings as one's own. Do not copy verbatim text from a published source, cut and paste material from the Internet and then submit that copied text to me as your "masterpiece" in prose. This is intellectual theft, which is easily detectable to the reader and will not be tolerated. You must remember to acknowledge another author's ideas if you include them in your written assignments. For more information on plagiarism, see the University's Student Academic Integrity Policy, Appendix F of the University Catalogue, Part V.

For any student who may need an accommodation due to a disability, please see me during my office hours. A memo from Disability Support Services authorizing your accommodations will be required.

COURSE SCHEDULE **LECTURES, DISCUSSIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

- Jan 30 (Mon) Introduction to Course: How do we define the Holocaust? Why study this event?
Feb 1 (Wed) Antisemitism, Racism and Nationalism in Germany and Europe (Case study, The Protocols of Zion); Bergen, War and Genocide, (ix-29); Announce Questions for Monday Discussion
- Feb 6 (Mon) Discussion: Selected Documents From Hochstadt's Sources of the Holocaust pp. 1-28 (Intro, New Testament, Papal Encyclical, von Treitschke)
Feb 8 (Wed) Hitler and the Rise of the Nazi Party , Bergen, War and Genocide, 29-53
- Feb 13 (Mon) Discussion: Adolf Hitler's Mein Kampf and his "Address to the Industry Club," 25 Points, Weimar Government's Assessment of the Nazi Party in 1927," Goebbels "Why Are We Enemies of the Jews"
- Feb 15 (Wed) The Third Reich as a Racial State: Excerpt from Steche's Textbook on Racial Science, Genetics and Racial Policy, "Law on Mandatory Sterilization" (Handout) and in Hochstadt Sources, pp. 29-31; 103-106, 108-109)
- Feb 20 (Mon) The Structures of Nazi Power and the "Jewish Question" in the 1930s, Bergen War and Genocide, 53-81, and in Hochstadt, Sources, pp.36-56.
- Feb 22 (Wed) 1938 Vienna Model and Kristallnacht: **Group Presentations of Perspectives** (Nazi, Jewish, International, Ordinary Germans) Handouts: Documents on The November 1938 Pogrom Goering-led Meeting of 12 Nov 1938 1816-PS; US Diplomatic reports from October and November 1938 on the plight of deported Polish Jews and the pogrom; and in Hochstadt, Sources, 70-72, 75-82.
- Feb 27 (Mon) Jewish Life in Nazi Germany: Professional Associations, Self Help Organizations, Isolation, The Emigration Odyssey Bergen, War and Genocide, 81-101, Hochstadt, pp. 65- 69, 73-74, 83-84
Mar 1 (Wed) International Responses, The Evian Conference, and Case Study- the SS St. Louis
- Mar 6 (Mon) Euthanasia and the "Cover of War" (1939-1941), Bergen War and Genocide, 101-131. Hitler's Order for T4, Religious Responses (Evangelical Memorandum, Von Galen)
Mar 8 (Wed) Deadly Medicine Discussion: H. Friedlaender's essay on euthanasia (Handout)
VISIT TO USHMM, trip date subject to change
Announce Mid Term Questions and IDs

- Mar 13 (Mon) **MID TERM**
 Mar 15 (Wed) Ghettoization in Poland, 1939-1941, Bergen War and Genocide, 131-145 Discussion: Lodz and Warsaw Ghetto Reports, Ringelblum's Oneg Shabbat in Hochstadt, Sources, 85-94

SPRING BREAK (No class Mar 20, 22)

- Mar 27 (Mon) Operation Barbarossa and the Onset of the Genocide, Bergen War and Genocide, 145-161
 The Einsatzgruppen and the pattern of destruction in the Soviet Union in Hochstadt, Sources, 110-115, 1
 Mar 29 (Wed) Discussion: Browning's Ordinary Men * **First Paper Due**.
 April 3 (Mon) Decision Making in 1941, Wannsee and the Creation of a Killing System: Deportations and Death Camps (1942-43); Bergen, War and Genocide, 161-183, in Hochstadt, 116-117, 118-120, 129-131, 132-36

NO CLASS Wednesday APRIL 5 (Yom Hashoah ceremonies)

- April 10 (Mon) Perpetrators and Victims in the Death Camps: Auschwitz, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka
 April 12 (Wed) Discussion: Borowski, This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen * **Second Paper Due**
 In CLASS "Voice of the Woman Survivor." Prepare Questions
 April 17 (Mon) **** Interview with Helen Tichauer**
 April 19 (Wed) Collaboration and Resistance in Nazi occupied Europe
 In Class Analysis: Kovner's Vilna Ghetto in Hochstadt, 186-189, 192-204, 235-241; Handouts from the Hungarian Interior Ministry, Confiscation of Property and Deportations Summer 1944
 April 24 (Mon) Silent Bystanders?- Allied Knowledge, Local Witnesses (radio intercepts, Katznelson case, WRB)
 Bergen, War and Genocide, 205-221; Tim Cole essay on Bystanders (Handout)
 April 26 (Wed) Discussion Samek's Testimony. * **Third Paper Due**: Why Didn't the Jews Resist?: Puzzling Sources and Mischievous Questions
 May 1 (Mon) Nuremberg and Lemkin, Justice and Prevention: In Class Analysis: UN Convention on Genocide, 1948, Excerpt from Totally Unofficial Man: The Autobiography of Lemkin
 May 3 (Wed) Representations and Memorialization: Excerpts: *Shoah* and *The Specialist* Eichmann in Jerusalem, Alan Steinweis essay in the Americanization of the Holocaust
 May 8 (Mon) The Holocaust- Uniqueness, Comparability and Lessons
 Case Studies:*****In Class Presentations** Gellately/Kiernan eds. Specter of Genocide
 May 10 (Wed) USHMM Videos: Dallaire and Koppel on Rwanda; Fowler's Witnessing Darfur
 May 15 (Mon) Last Class- Review of Final Examination Questions and Ids