

Arts and Letters 100g

The Holocaust in Literature and Film

Spring 2009

Prof. Wolf Gruner

Email: gruner@usc.edu

Phone: (213) 740-1668

Office hours: Tue/Thur 12.45-1.45 pm & by app't.

Office: SOS 262

Time: Tu/Th 2:00-3:20pm

Room: WPH103

Class #: 35247R

Course is on Blackboard

The Holocaust is one of the most disputed events in modern history. Through close discussion of literature and film we will explore the origins and the development of persecution and mass murder of the European Jewry during World War II. During the course we will address major questions as: Why did people participate in persecution? Could people resist? Who did help the Jews? Could the Holocaust have been prevented? These questions are still valuable today. Key themes we will explore include: the personalities of the perpetrators, the lives of the victims, the role of the bystanders, and the motives of the rescuers. We will use closely discussion of movies by famous filmmakers as Chaplin, Polanski and Spielberg, as well as documentaries, novels and diaries. Using both fiction and non fictional material we will also touch upon the eternal debate between historians and artists about the interpretation of historical events.

Required books (at Bookstore or library)

Jurek Becker, Jacob the Liar

Anne Michaels, Fugitive Pieces

Primo Levi, Survival in Auschwitz

Patrick Modiano, Dora Bruder

Rutka's Notebook. A voice from the Holocaust

Required movies

The Pianist, 2002, Roman Polanski

Rosenstrasse, 2003, Margarete von Trotta,

Schindler's list, 1993, Steven Spielberg,

Sophie Scholl – the last days, 2005, marc rothemund

Attention:

Some of the movies and documentaries display graphic images; some of the novels describe graphic scenes.

Due to some in class showing of movies or documentaries, some days the class will take 10-15 minutes longer, which will be cut of the following session.

Course requirements: The assignment encompasses participation, discussion and papers (discussion, midterm, final, and research).

Class discussions: Participation in class discussions is vital to the learning process. I expect that you will attend all class meetings, complete assigned reading and watching on time, and engage actively with the material in our weekly discussions. As a part of your discussion grade, we will schedule each student, probably in pairs, to take responsibility for leading discussion for one session. In addition, every other week I will ask you to submit short, informal essays, no longer than one page, in which you describe two or three issues or questions raised by the books or movies for the upcoming two sessions which particularly interest you. These papers, due on Monday or Wednesday afternoon by e-mail (see schedule), will serve as a basis for discussion. I will provide guidelines for ways of participating in and leading discussion. The breakdown of your grade is as follows: **daily participation, 5%; leading discussion, 5%; discussion, 5%; discussion essays, 5%; for a total of 20%.**

Examinations: Two essay exams will be given—a midterm in March and a final in May (per the *Schedule of Classes*) based on lectures, material, and discussions. Both examinations will have short response identifications and essay questions. **Midterm: 20%; Final: 30%.**

Papers: You are required to write a research paper of 15 pages on a topic of your choice related to one of the central areas under consideration in this class. I will provide a separate handout explaining the paper requirement and suggesting topic areas for investigation. **Paper: 30%.**

Academic Integrity: USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A:

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

Students with Disabilities: Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Mon through Fri, the phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Schedule

1. Tue, Jan. 13: Introduction: The Study of the Holocaust

2. Thu, Jan. 15: Terms, Interpretations of history, art and history

in class short clips of Movie: The Great Dictator, 1940, Charles Chaplin

3. Tues, Jan. 22: Anti-Semitism, Nationalism, and Racism

in class clips of the documentary: Triumph of the Will, (Nuremberg 1934), 1935, Riefenstahl

4. Thu, Jan. 24: Jewish life under the Nazis

in class The Holocaust, TV-Miniserie 1978 **Part 1**

5. Tue, Jan. 27: Jewish life under the Nazis

discussion part 1

6. Thu, Jan. 29: Voices of the victims

Kristallnacht: Testimonies of the Shoah video archive

7. Tue, Febr. 3: Voices of the victims

Visit of the Shoah archive

Short discussion paper due wed.

8. Thu, Febr. 5: Occupation of Poland

The Holocaust, TV-Miniserie 1978, **Part 2**

Short discussion paper due Mon.

9. Tue, Febr. 10: Occupation of Poland

discussion

10. Thu, Febr. 12: Occupation of France

discussion of Dora Bruder by Patrick Modiano

11. Tue, Febr. 17: Occupation of Poland

discussion Movie: The Pianist, 2002, Roman Polanski

12. Thu, Febr. 19: Invasion of the Sovietunion

in class documentary of the Shoah institute "spell your name"

Short discussion paper due Mon.

13. Tue, Febr. 24: Invasion of the Sovietunion

tentative: discussion with the directors of "spell your name" in class

14. Thu, Febr. 26: Ghettos I

Discussion Jurek Becker, Jacob the Liar

15. Tue, March 3: Mid-term Conclusions and Assessment

16. Thu, March 5: Mid-term exam based on required reading up to this date and class discussions

17. Tue, March 10:

in class: The Holocaust, TV-Miniserie part 3

18. Thu, March 12:

discussion

Spring break march 16-21

19. Tue, March 24: Discussion of Open Questions

tentative visit the of the Lion Feuchtwanger coll., Doheny library

20. Thu, March 26: The Final Solution

discussion of Rutka's Notebook. A voice from the Holocaust, Yad Vashem 2008

21. Tue, March 31: The Final Solution

in class parts of the documentary: **Shoah (1985) by Claude Lanzmann** parts on death camps

Short discussion paper due Wed.

22. Thu, April 2: The Final Solution

discussion of "Survival in Auschwitz" by Primo Levi

23. Tue, April 7: Final solution

in class Holocaust, tv miniserie, part 4

Short discussion paper due Wed.

24. Thu, April 9: Response and Resistance

discussion of movie: Rosenstraße, Margarete von Trotta, 2003

Short discussion paper due Mon.

25. Tue, April 14: Forced Labor and Rescue

discussion of movie: Schindler's list, 1993, Steven Spielberg,

26. Thu, April 16: Rescue and Abandonment

discussion of "Fugitive Pieces" by Anne Michaels

Short discussion paper due Mon.

27. Tue, April 21: German Resistance

discussion Movie Sophie Scholl – the last days, 2005, Marc Rothemund

28. Thu, April 23:

discussion in class discussion with movie script writer Rod Barr who just finished a film script based on a testimony of a survivor from Vienna

29. Tue, April 28: The Aftermath: Trials and Denials

parts of documentary in class: The Nuremberg Trial, 1995
and or The Eichmann trial, 1997

30. Thur, April 30: The Assessment: Conclusions and Open Questions

Final exam based on required books and movies, and class discussions
(per *Schedule of Classes*)