

ARLT 100g:

The Holocaust: The Politics of Representation

Professor J. Halberstam

Lecture Hall: SGM 123

Class Time: TTH 930-1050 am

Office Hours: Tu 11-12:30 and Th. 11-12:30, and by appointment

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Course Description

In this class, we will use a range of genres including fiction, autobiographical writings, film and theoretical essays to explore the challenges—*aesthetic, political and pedagogical*—in representing the Holocaust. Between the years of 1939-1945 some 40 million people were killed in camps, in combat, in the bombing of cities; they died from disease, starvation, atomic bombs and genocidal extermination. While there have been other conflicts in history with massive death tolls, never have so many died so quickly and through such an array of weapons, policies and human actions. Death was produced both efficiently, using new technologies of killing, and with great effort using conventional weapons, hands and guns. People died together; they died alone. They died in families; they died among strangers. People died at home and in bare barracks; they died old and young, rich and poor, healthy and infirm. Certainly a huge percentage of the deaths in this period were manufactured as part of the genocidal mission of National Socialism, engineered by Germans and carried out across the killing sites of Europe—Germany, Poland, the Ukraine—but there were also killing projects engineered by Russia, by Japan, by the allied powers and by the US. Given that we want to understand and grapple with the implications of this catastrophe for human life, what means are available to writers, to film makers, to poets, philosophers, artists and memorialists to represent the ending of a world?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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| 1) 2 Response papers to be handed in over the course of the semester:
Each one should react to one of the readings and should be 3 pages long.
I will give you guidelines for these responses. | 30% |
| 2) Midterm exam in Wk 9 - focused on readings from Wk 1 to Wk 8 | 15% |
| 3) One Essay (5-6 pages) which engages in a sustained way with either one of the novels or one of the films we watch. | 30% |

4) Participation/Attendance in Discussion Sections 10 %

5) Final Exam – take-home – written essay 15%

***Attendance** rules are as follows:

All absences should be explained.

After 4 unexplained absences your grade will be reduced by half a point (an A will be reduced to and A minus, a B + to a B, and A minus to a B + etc).

After 6 absences your grade will be reduced by a full point (an A will be a B, a B+ will be a C+ etc).

After 8 absences, you will have missed a quarter of the class and will be awarded an F.

******Absences will be counted both in lecture and in discussion sections******

***Participation means:** coming to class – both discussion section and lecture, participating in class discussion, completing all assigned readings in a timely manner, asking questions, participating in a presentation group.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action. These strictures may extend to behaviors outside the classroom that are related to the course.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES who request academic accommodations based on a disability are 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 (or to a TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.--5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY is essential 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/>.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Books

BERGEN, Doris. *WAR AND GENOCIDE: A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE HOLOCAUST*. Rowan and Littlefield, 2002.

FRANK, Anne. *ANNE FRANK: THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL, The Definitive Edition* (NY: Bantam, 1997).

Ed. FRIEDLÄNDER. Saul. *PROBING THE LIMITS OF REPRESENTATION: NAZISM AND THE FINAL SOLUTION*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1992

KLUGER, Ruth. *STILL ALIVE: A HOLOCAUST GIRLHOOD REMEMBERED* (NY, NY: The Feminist Press, 2003).

LEVI, Primo. *SURVIVAL AT AUSCHWITZ*. NY: COLLIER, 1961.

SONTAG, Susan. *REGARDING THE PAIN OF OTHERS*. NY: PICADOR, 2004.

SPIEGELMAN, Art. *MAUS I & II: A SURVIVOR'S TALE: MY FATHER BLEEDS HISTORY, VOL. 1* (NY: Pantheon Books, 1986).

YOUNG, James. *THE TEXTURE OF MEMORY: HOLOCAUST MEMORIALS AND MEANING*. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1994.

ZELIZER, BARBIE. *REMEMBERING TO FORGET: HOLOCAUST MEMORY THROUGH THE CAMERA'S EYE*. University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Films

Triumph of the Will (1935) directed by Leni Riefenstahl

Night and Fog (Nuit et Bruillard) (1955) directed by Alain Resnais

Schindler's List, (1995) directed by Steven Spielberg

The Maelstrom: A Family Chronicle (1997) dir. Peter Forgács

Shoah (selections) (1985) directed by Claude Lanzman

The Reader (2008) dir. Stephen Daldry

Schedule

Week One: Introduction to the Holocaust

Jan. 15-17

Reading: Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*.

Film: *Night and Fog*, Alan Resnais, 1955

Week Two: Representing Catastrophe

Jan. 22-24

Reading: Barbie Zelizer, Chapter One and Two; Doris Bergen, Chapters 1 + 2, pp. 1-50.

Film: Clips in class from *Triumph of the Will*, *Night and Fog*.

Week Three: Fascinating Fascism

Jan. 29-31

Reading: Susan Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism" (BB).

Film: *Triumph of the Will*

Themes: Politics and aesthetics; fascism and culture; nationalism and sexuality.

Special Event: **THURSDAY:** Class Visit from Shoah Foundations Representative

Week Four:
Feb. 5-7

In Hiding

Reading:

The Diary of Ann Frank; Doris Laub, *War and Genocide*, Ch. 3 and Ch. 4.

Week Five:
Feb. 12-14

Home Movies

Reading:

The Diary of Ann Frank; Bill Nichols, "The Memory of Loss: Péter Forgács's Saga of Family Life and Social Hell (Bill Nichols in Dialogue with Péter Forgács)." *Film Quarterly*. Vol. 56, No. 4 (Summer 2003): 2–12. [BB]

Film:

The Maelstrom: A Family Chronicle (1977) dir. Forgacs

*******Feb 14. First Response Paper Due in Class – On *The Diary of A. Frank********

Week Six:
Feb. 19-21

Trials and Tribulations

Reading:

Doris Laub, *War and Genocide* chapter 5; Browning, "German Memory" from *Probing the Limits*; Barbie Zelizer, Chapter Three.

Film:

Judgment at Nuremberg 1961 screen in class TUESDAY

Week Seven:
Feb. 26-28

Testimony

Readings:

Primo Levi, *Survival at Auschwitz*. Zelizer, Chapter Three.

****Feb. 28th Second Response Paper Due In Class – Use Shoah Foundation Material**

Week Eight:
March 5-7

MIDTERM EXAM
In Class Exam on March 5

Week Nine:
March 12-14

Gender and Trauma

Readings:

Still Alive by Ruth Kluger; Laub, Chapters 7 & 8.

Film:

The Reader

Week Ten:
March 19-21

SPRING BREAK

Week Eleven:
March 26-28

Schindler's List

Reading:

Friedländer, Saul. "Introduction." *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the 'Final Solution'*. White, Hayden. "Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth." *Probing the Limits of Representation*. Hansen, Miriam. "Schindler's List Is Not Shoah: Second Commandment, Popular Modernism, and Public Memory." *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*. Ed. Barbie Zelizer. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2001. 127-151. [BB].
Weissman, Gary. "Shoah Illustrated, Section 1: Steven Spielberg and the Sensitive Line." *Fantasies of Witnessing: Postwar Efforts to Experience the Holocaust*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004. 140-189. [PDF]

Film:

Schindler's List

Week Twelve:
April 2-4

SHOAH

Reading:

Weissman, Gary. "Shoah Illustrated, Section 2: Claude Lanzmann and the Ring of Fire." *Fantasies of Witnessing:*

Postwar Efforts to Experience the Holocaust. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2004. 189-206. [PDF]. Felman, Shoshana. "The Return of the Voice: Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah*." *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*. Shoshana Felman & Dori Laub. NY: Routledge, 1992. 204-283. [PDF]

Film: Sections of *Shoah*;

Week Thirteen: MAUS
April 9-11

Reading: *Maus* by Art Spiegelman; "Mourning and Postmemory" by Marianne Hirsch;

Film: *Shoah*

Themes: Representing the Holocaust; Documentary and the Holocaust

Week Fourteen: MAUS
April 16-18

Reading: *Maus II*

Film: *An Unfinished Film*;

*******Long Paper Due in Class April 18*******

Week Fifteen: MEMORIALIZING
April 23-25

Reading: James Young, *The Texture of Memory*; Cole, Tim. "The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC," *Selling the Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler, How History is Bought, Packaged and Sold*. New York: Routledge, 1999. 146-171. Barbie Zelizer, Chapters 4 and 5.

Week Sixteen:
April 30-May 2

After Auschwitz
Take Home Final

Reading:

Edward Said from *The Question of Palestine (BB)*; Doris Bergen, Conclusion;

Film:

Waltz With Bashir