

HISTORY 37/GMST 37
HISTORY AND MEMORY: THE HOLOCAUST AND
THE PROBLEM OF GENOCIDE
SPRING 2020

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Nearly seventy years after the Holocaust ended, and despite an enormous amount of research and testimony, the genocide of European Jewry continues to generate compelling historical, literary, artistic, and interpretive questions. This course explores historical explanations of the Holocaust, forms of memory and commemoration, and artistic representations of the Holocaust through a multidisciplinary approach that relies on primary sources and documentation, fiction, memoirs, poetry, film, and historical scholarship.

Course Requirements:

Two six-page papers (20% each)

Twelve-page paper based primary and secondary sources (30%)

Class participation (30%)

Class attendance is required, and unexcused absences will result in a lower final grade.

Please note that we will watch films as a class on most Tuesday afternoons from 4 to 6 in the classroom. However, attendance on Tuesday afternoons is optional **if you have scheduling conflicts with athletics, work, or other commitments**. All films are on reserve in McCabe and so you can watch them at your convenience, and most **will be available as streaming video on Moodle**. Or you can rent a copy from Amazon Prime or Netflix.

This course helps fulfill the requirements of German Studies and Peace and Conflict Studies.

All students are expected to read the College's policy on academic integrity and honesty that appears in the Swarthmore College Bulletin. This work you submit must be your own. If you have questions regarding how and when to cite your sources, please ask.

The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore and are also on reserve in McCabe.

Anonymous, *A Woman in Berlin*
Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men*
Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*
Art Spiegelman, *Maus*, volumes one and two

There is no shortage of on-line sources about the Holocaust. The three links provided below will give you access to a plethora of materials about the Holocaust and genocide.

Holocaust Geographies Collaborative: Stanford University

<https://web.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/project.php?id=1015>

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance: Berlin

<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/>

European Holocaust Research Infrastructure

<http://www.ehri-project.eu/try-out-ehri-portal>

Center for Holocaust Studies: University of Minnesota

<http://www.chgs.umn.edu/>

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: Washington, DC

<https://www.ushmm.org/>

Experiencing the Holocaust: Holocaust Sources in Context

<https://perspectives.ushmm.org/dashboard>

Yad Vashem: World Center for Holocaust Research, Education and Commemoration

<http://www.yadvashem.org/>



January 22: Introduction to Course; Jewish Emancipation and Antisemitism

Doris Bergen, *War and Genocide*, chapter 1 (Available via Tripod)
Documents on Antisemitism (Moodle)

Watch for January 29: *Triumph of the Will* (121 minutes; streamed)

January 29: Hitler's *Weltanschauung*; Jews under the Third Reich

Ruth Czyner, who was part of *Kindertransport* in 1939, will be in class to discuss living under the Third Reich.

Discuss *Triumph of the Will*

Doris Bergen, *War and Genocide*, chapters 2 and 3 (Moodle)

Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, pp. 51-65 (required) and 284-329 (optional but recommended. Feel free to skim) Moodle

The Nuremberg Race Laws (Moodle)

Look at the following website: "Inside the Paris Department Store Where Nazis Shopped for Stolen Jewish Belongings" <http://www.messynessychic.com/2015/10/08/inside-the-paris-department-store-where-nazis-shopped-for-stolen-jewish-goods/>



Watch for February 5: *The Wannsee Conference* (87 minutes; streamed)

February 5: The Origins of The Final Solution

Discuss *The Wannsee Conference*

Doris Bergen, *War and Genocide*, chapters 4 and 5 (Moodle)

Christopher Browning, "The Decision Concerning the Final Solution" (Moodle)

Listen to the following podcast: "Fritz Haber and Zyklon B" Radio Lab (22 minutes)

<http://www.radiolab.org/story/180132-how-do-you-solve-problem-fritz-haber/>



Watch for February 12: *A Film Unfinished* (98 minutes; streamed)

A Film Unfinished

<https://proxy.swarthmore.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcampus.swankmp.net%2Fswarthmore335402%2Fwatch%3Ftoken%3DB126BC68960AF19C>

Watch for February 12: *The Story of Chaim Rumkowski and the Jews of Lodz* (55 minutes; streamed)

February 12: Life in the Ghetto

Discuss *A Film Unfinished* and *The Story of Chaim Rumkowski and the Jews of Lodz*
Laurence Rees, *Auschwitz: A New History*, introduction and chapters 1-3 (Moodle)

February 19: The Killing Fields in the Soviet Union and Poland

Doris Bergen, *War and Genocide*, chapters 6 and 7 (Available via Tripod)
Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men*
“It Took Nerves of Steel” and “The Ruthless Murder of Jews by German Fascist Invaders”
(Moodle)

Start Watching for March 4: *Shoah* (streamed)

February 26: Killing The People Next Door

Jan Gross, *Neighbors*

March 4: Remembering the Holocaust

Discuss *Shoah*

FIRST PAPER DUE ON MARCH 6 (FRIDAY)

Watch for March 18: *The Nasty Girl* (90 minutes; streamed)

The Nasty Girl

<https://proxy.swarthmore.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcampus.swankmp.net%2Fswarthmore335402%2Fwatch%3Ftoken%3DB393B496CF9E7D03>

March 18: The Holocaust as Memoir and Film; Postwar Politics and the Holocaust

Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

Laurence Rees, *Auschwitz: A New History*, chapter 5 (Moodle)

Watch and Discuss *Night and Fog* in class

Discuss *The Nasty Girl*

March 25: Educational Restitution

Lecture by Professor Rakhmiel Peltz (Drexel University)

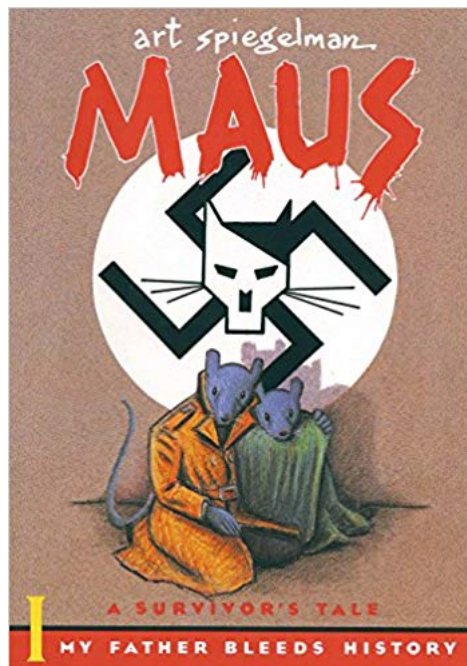
Watch *Toby's Sunshine* (<https://www.alivetobyssunshine.com/the-film/>)

Look at Website *Alive! Educational Restitution after the Holocaust*

(<https://www.alivetobyssunshine.com/>)

April 1: The Holocaust as Graphic Novel

Art Spiegelman, *Maus*. 2 volumes



April 8: Holocaust Memorials and Commemoration; Discussion with Daniel Reynolds

Daniel Reynolds, *Postcards from Auschwitz: Holocaust Tourism and the Meaning of Remembrance*.

Watch for April 15: *Mein Krieg* (90 minutes; streamed)
and *What Our Fathers Did: A Nazi Legacy* (96 minutes; streamed)

What Our Fathers Did: A Nazi Legacy

<https://proxy.swarthmore.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcampus.swankmp.net%2Fswarthmore335402%2Fwatch%3Ftoken%3D414379700B7D827C>

April 15: Accepting Guilt ... Or Not; The *Rashomon* Syndrome and the Dangers of Relativism, or Bonzo Goes to Bitburg

Discuss *Mein Krieg* and *What Our Fathers Did: A Nazi Legacy*

Rudolph Hoss and Franz Stangl on Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Sobibor (Moodle)

Margaret Bourke-White, “Hitler Never Told a Lie” and “Hildegarde Again” (Moodle)



Primo Levi, “The Gray Zone” (Moodle)

Elizabeth Kolbert, “The Last Trial: A Great-Grandmother, Auschwitz, and the Arc of Justice”

<https://motl.org/the-last-trial-a-great-grandmother-auschwitz-and-the-arc-of-justice/>

Robert Moeller, “War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany” <https://www-jstor-org.proxy.swarthmore.edu/stable/2169632>

Documents on Bitburg (Moodle)

Watch for April 22: *Germany, Pale Mother* (123 minutes;)

April 22: Gender and the Holocaust

Anonymous, *A Woman in Berlin*

Discuss *Germany, Pale Mother*

SECOND PAPER DUE ON APRIL 24 (FRIDAY)

Watch for April 29: *Mr. Death: The Rise and Fall of Fred A. Leuchter* (91 minutes; streamed) and *The Last Laugh* (88 minutes; streamed)

The Last Laugh

<https://swarthmore.kanopy.com/video/last-laugh-0>

April 29: The Whys of Holocaust Denial; Humor and the Holocaust

Discuss *Mr. Death* and *The Last Laugh*

Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust* (Preface and “Canaries in the Mine”)

Holocaust Denial on Trial Website <http://www.hdot.org/>

Bernard Krigstein, *Master Race* (Moodle)