

September 29, 2004

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Syllabus

The Holocaust: The Art of Preserving Memory.

NPSY 3830

Fall 2004

Wednesdays, 12:00-1:50pm, beginning September 22nd

Instructor: Gerda Lederer

The generation that experienced the Holocaust is dying out. Hitler would be 115 years old this year, the soldiers who fought in the Second World War in their eighties. To inform successor generations, there are countless testimonials and a stream of books, films, and photos, along with Holocaust museums and memorials all over the world. In addition, there have been increasingly vehement arguments surrounding the theoretical and moral implications associated with the Holocaust. In 2003, an ambitious collection of 62 excerpts of the most significant and vibrant writings on the Holocaust (and countless references) was published. A selective study of this work will allow us insight into the fundamental concerns, challenges, and debates provoked by the Nazi genocide and increasingly relevant to preserving the memory of the Holocaust.

Required text, available from Barnes and Nobel:

“The Holocaust: Theoretical Readings,” edited by Neil Levi and Michael Rothberg, first published 2003 by Rutgers University Press.

Class Meeting 1. September 22

We discuss the scope, content, and level of the course - on hand of the text as well as students' interests and expectations..

Assignment for next meeting: Read Introduction to Part I, and Selection 1, 3, and 4.

Write a brief paragraph about each of the three assigned selections, commenting on what the selection means to you.

Class Meeting 2. September 29

Discussion of content and meaning of reading assignment. What did Levi, Delbo, and Kluger mean to communicate? The role of first-hand witnesses transmitting knowledge and trauma.

Slide presentation by Stanley Bloomfield..... The Camps

Assignment for next meeting: Read Part II, the Introduction and Selections 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10.
Express briefly in writing what point of view each selection expresses.

Class Meeting 3. October 6

What is the argument over the uniqueness the Holocaust? What is the "Final Solution"? What was the "Judenrat" and what is its significance?

Assignment for next meeting: Read Part III, the Introduction and Selections 11, 13, and 16.

Class Meeting 4. October 13

Authoritarianism, fascism, and antisemitism; following the leader.

Assignment for next meeting: Read Part IV, the Introduction and Sections 17, 18, 19, and 20.

Class Meeting 5. October 20

Gender and Genocide; the role of women in Nazi society.
 Discussion of student report topics and schedule.

Assignment for next meeting: Read Part VI, the Introduction and Selections 29, 30, and 31.

Class Meeting 6. October 27

Political psychology, ethics, and justice

Guest: Renee Wiener

Assignment for next meeting: Review Parts I-VI that we have studied and all your notes for midterm

Assignment for Meeting 8 on November 10th: Read Part VIII, the Introduction and Selections 46, 47, and 51.

Class Meeting 7. November 3

Midterm Exam

Class Meeting 8. November 10

Discuss midterm exam...

Literary renderings of the Holocaust - narratives, fiction, and documentaries

View segments of video "Shoah"

Assignment for next meeting: Read Part IX, **only** the Introduction; Read Part XI, Introduction and Selections 57 and 58.

Class Meeting 9. November 17

The Holocaust, uniqueness and genocide - the politics of memory

Elisabeth Pozzi-Thanner -

Assignment for next meeting: Read Part XI, Selections 59, 60, 61, 62

Class Meeting 10. December 1

The new, subsequent mass killings

Student presentations

Assignment for next meeting to be announced.

Class Meeting 11. December 8

Have we gained new insights? Guilt, reconciliation and forgiveness

Student presentations.

Assignment for next meeting: Review all readings, raise questions! Finish report!

Class Meeting 12. December 15

Student reports, questions and answers. Review course content.

Class Meeting 13. December 22

Final Exam
