

**The Holocaust in American Culture**  
**Prof. David Greenberg**  
**Journalism & Media Studies**

**Class Time:** MW Period 6 (4:30-5:50)  
**Email:** davidgr[at]rci.rutgers.edu  
**Office Hours:** Mon. 10.30 a.m.-12 p.m.  
**Course No.:** 04:567:473:03

**Room:** Bishop 211  
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**Syllabus**

**Description.** When the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. opened in 1993, people asked why a “European” catastrophe was being memorialized alongside shrines to Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln. One answer is that since World War II, the experience and memory of the Holocaust have helped shape American culture. This course looks at a few of the ways the Holocaust and Nazism changed America: by fostering a distrust of the masses among intellectuals; by promoting civil liberties and religious toleration; by encouraging a view of the Soviet Union as equivalent to Nazi Germany; by elevating the goals of protecting human rights and stopping genocide foreign policy; and by providing a new focus for Jewish identity. Through these and other topics students will analyze the role that the Holocaust plays in American life.

**Course Requirements.**

- Regular attendance and active participation. This course meets 2½ hours a week. Arriving on time and staying for the duration is essential. Students may miss one class, no questions asked. Students who miss more than one class, or substantial portions of a class, will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for each class missed, even if you inform me in advance. In case of severe illness or extraordinary circumstances, you must provide documentation. If you have a conflict such as a job or sports that will force you to come late, leave early, or miss class, you should not take this course.  
  
A key purpose of a seminar like this is to teach students to develop and share their own ideas. The very work of the course consists of engaging in a discussion about ideas. Students who abstain from discussion are missing the course’s whole purpose. A class in which you do not contribute (or try to contribute) to discussion is equivalent to a missed class. Proficient spoken and written English is expected.
- Reading. The reading for this class ranges from 150 to 200 pages a week.
- Classroom presentations. Each week one student will prepare a 15-minute presentation framing the main book under discussion. This presentation should *not* summarize the reading. Rather, it should aim to achieve two main goals:
  - 1) It should *place the reading in the literature to which it belongs*. How does this work resemble or differ from other books on the topic? What is its contribution to understanding the topic? What controversies did it respond to or generate?
  - 2) The presentation should *offer salient ideas and questions about the reading*. Typically this will involve giving some background: Who is the author? How was the book received upon publication? To answer these questions, of course, it’s necessary to read other works on the topic and do some research. (I may be able to suggest books.) As a rule, you should plan to read at least three books for the presentation. You will not necessarily be rewarded for reading more books, although doing so will probably make for a richer presentation, and that richness will be rewarded.

- Short paper. Students will write a paper of no more than 5 pages, due **Feb. 12.**
- Term paper. Students will write a term paper of no more than 10 pages, due **Apr. 25.**
- A note on Internet research. It is tempting these days to do your research with Google or other search engines. This is not permitted. The websites you discover this way vary widely in their accuracy and reliability. Certain sites found through search engines can contain valuable information, but you must take care to validate them. Also, it's important to distinguish between library databases and Internet search engines. Many universities subscribe to databases that contain various journals. (Here are Rutgers': <http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/indexes/indexes.shtml>) You should use these databases, which collect scholarly journals, newspapers, and the like. They will not turn up random people's home pages. However, even with these databases, you are advised to scrutinize the sources that you dig up. A statement made in a scholarly journal like *The Journal of American History* is to be read differently from one made in a political magazine like *Human Events*.

### **Additional Rules and Information.**

- Cell phones must be turned off and may not be used in class.
- Laptops may be used for note-taking only. No emailing or Web-surfing during class.
- Students must show up on time and stay for the duration of the class. During class, students should not engage in personal conversations, read newspapers, do crossword puzzles, or undertake other personal diversions unrelated to class activity.
- Academic Integrity. Plagiarism and cheating are forbidden, according to the terms of Rutgers University policy. It is your responsibility to review and obey these policies. The policy is at <http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>.
- On plagiarism, the statement below (from [history.rutgers.edu/undergrad/plagiarism.htm](http://history.rutgers.edu/undergrad/plagiarism.htm)) appears in Rutgers University's rules. Like all such rules, it applies to this class.

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be promptly cited in the text or in a footnote. Acknowledgment is required when material from another source is stored in print, electronic, or other medium and is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "to paraphrase Plato's comment ..." and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one's general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any questions about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member.

## Reading List.

### Required

Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* (Franklin Watts)  
Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust* (Plume)  
Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Mariner Books)  
Ron Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler: The Search for the Origins of His Evil* (Harper)  
Jackson Spielvogel, *Hitler and Nazi Germany* (Prentice Hall)  
Stuart Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*. (Columbia University Press)  
David Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust* (New Press)

### Films

*The Diary of Anne Frank*  
*The Double-Headed Eagle: Hitler's Rise to Power*  
*Mr. Death: The Rise and Fall of Fred A. Leuchter, Jr.*  
*Schindler's List*  
*The Trial of Adolf Eichmann or The Specialist*

### Weekly Assignments.

📖 **Book** available at Rutgers University Bookstore or in Alexander library reserves

📁 **Article** or book chapter available at online library reserves. Go to [www.libraries.rutgers.edu](http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu) and click on "Find Reserves" in the left-hand column.

🎬 **Film** to be viewed at Livingston Campus Media Center or, if necessary, on your own.

#### W Jan 17 **Introduction**

📖 Jackson Spielvogel, *Hitler and Nazi Germany*, pp. 1-9.

#### M Jan 19 **The History of Anti-Semitism**

📖 Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust*, pp. 36-60.

📁 Bernard Lewis, Introduction, *Semites and Anti-Semites*, pp. 11-23.

📁 Berel Lang, "On the 'the' in 'the Jews,'" in *Those Who Forget the Past*, pp. 63-70.

#### W Jan 24 **Weimar Germany and the Nazi Rise to Power**

📖 Spielvogel, *Hitler and Nazi Germany*, Chapters 2-3.

📖 Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust*, Chapter 4.

#### M Jan 26 **The Nazi State**

📖 Spielvogel, Chapter 4.

📖 Bauer, Chapters 5-6.

#### W Jan 31 **Hitler – Film**

Spielvogel, Chapters 5 & 7.

🎬 *The Double-Headed Eagle*

#### M Feb 5 **Hitler and The Holocaust – Discussion**

📖 Spielvogel, Chapter 9.

📖 Bauer, Chapters 9, 13.

- W Feb 7     **American Reaction**  
    📁 David Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust*. Chapters 2, 16.  
    📁 Lucy Davidowicz, "Could America Have Rescued Europe's Jews?"  
    📖 Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, 1-3.
- M Feb 12    **The Postwar Years**  
    📖 Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, Chapters 5, 6.  
    📁 Lawrence Baron, "The Holocaust and American Public Memory, 1945-1960," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 17:1, Spring 2003, pp. 62-88.
- W Feb 14    **Library Research Session**
- M Feb 19    **Totalitarianism in Theory**  
    📁 Peter Baehr, Introduction to *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, pp. xvi-xxi.  
    📁 Hannah Arendt, "Total Domination," in *Portable Hannah Arendt*, pp. 119-145.  
    📁 Hannah Arendt, "Organized Guilt and Universal Responsibility," pp. 146-55.  
    📁 Arthur Schlesinger, "The Challenge of Totalitarianism," (Ch. IV) in *The Vital Center* pp. 51-67.  
    📁 Richard Pells, "Hannah Arendt and the Totalitarian Mystique," in *The Liberal Mind in a Conservative Age*, pp. 83-96.
- W Feb 21    **Nazism and Communism**  
    📖 Stuart Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*, Chapters 5-7.  
    📁 Les K. Adler & Thomas G. Paterson, "Red Fascism: The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism, 1930s-1950s," *American Historical Review*, April, 1970, pp. 1046-1064.
- M Feb 26    **McCarthyism**  
    📁 D. F. Fleming, "Are We Moving Toward Fascism?" *Journal of Politics*, Mar. 1954, pp. 39-75.  
    📁 Peter Viereck, "The Revolt Against the Elite," in *The Radical Right*, pp. 135-54.  
    📁 Seymour Martin Lipset, "The Sources of the 'Radical Right,' " in *The Radical Right*, pp. 259-98.
- W Feb 28    **Rise of Civil Liberties**  
    📖 Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*, Chapters 2, 3.  
    📁 Richard Primus, *The American Language of Rights*, Chapter 5.
- M Mar. 5     **Life in the Camps and the Question of Lessons**  
    📁 Bruno Bettelheim, "Behavior in Extreme Situations: Defenses," in *The Informed Heart*, Chapter 5.  
    📁 Tzvetan Todorov, "Heroism and Saintliness," "Dignity," and "Caring," in *Facing the Extreme: Moral Life in the Concentration Camps*, pp. 47-90.  
    📁 Lawrence Langer, "Pre-empting the Holocaust," pp. 1-22.
- W Mar. 7     📖 *The Diary of Anne Frank*

Mar. 12-14 **SPRING BREAK**

M Mar. 19 **The Anne Frank Debate**

- 📁 Stephen Whitfield, "Shoah," in *In Search of Jewish Culture*, pp. 168-196.
- 📁 Ralph Melnick, "With My Own Eyes," *The Stolen Legacy of Anne Frank*.
- 📁 Cynthia Ozick, "Who Owns Anne Frank?" *The New Yorker*, October 6, 1997, pp. 76-88.
- 📁 Ian Buruma, "The Afterlife of Anne Frank," *New York Review of Books*, February 19, 1998, and exchanges with Melnick and Ozick.
- 📖 reread Novick, pp. 117-20.

W Mar. 21 **Genocide and Foreign Policy I**

- 📁 Raphael Lemkin, "Genocide," *American Scholar*, March 1946.
- 📁 Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell*, Preface, Chapters 1-4.
- 📁 Irwin Cotler, "The Holocaust, Nuremberg, and Human Rights."

M Mar. 26 **Genocide and Foreign Policy II**

- 📖 Novick, Chapter 11, pp. 239-263.
- 📁 Power, *A Problem from Hell*, Chapter 6.
- 📁 Elie Wiesel, "For the Dead and the Living."
- 📁 "Should the U.S. Invade Iraq?" *Slate*, September 27-October 11, 2002.

W Mar. 28 🎧 *The Trial of Adolph Eichmann or The Specialist*

- 📖 Novick, Chapter 7. [18
- 📁 Arendt, excerpts from *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, pp. 313-388.

M Apr. 2 **The Eichmann Debate**

- 📁 Articles on Arendt-Eichmann affair, from *Partisan Review*, 1963-1964.

W Apr. 4 **Jewish Identity**

- 📖 Novick, Chapters 8-10.
- 📁 Hasia Diner, "Post-World War II American Jewry and the Confrontation with Catastrophe," *American Jewish History*, 2003, pp. 439-467.
- 📁 Jonathan Rosen, "The Uncomfortable Question of Anti-Semitism."

M Apr. 9 **Holocaust Denial - Film**

- 🎧 *Mr. Death*
- 📖 Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, Chapters 1-4.
- 📖 Novick, Chapter 12.

W Apr. 11 **Holocaust Denial - Discussion**

- 📖 Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, Chapters 8-11.
- 📖 Ron Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, Chapter 12.

M Apr. 16 **Mainstreaming the Holocaust – Film**

- 🎧 *Schindler's List*

W Apr. 18 **Mainstreaming the Holocaust – Discussion**

- 📁 Yosefa Loshitzky, "Introduction."
- 📁 Omer Bartov, "Spielberg's Oskar."

- 📁 Jeffrey Shandler, "Schindler's Discourse."
- 📁 Leon Wieseltier, "Close Encounters of the Nazi Kind."
- 📁 Stanley Kauffmann, Review of *Schindler's List* (2 parts)

- M Apr. 23 **Discussion of Term Papers**  
📖 Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, Introduction, Chapters 4, 5
- W Apr. 25 **Discussion of Term Papers**  
📖 Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, Chapters 13-15.
- M Apr. 30 **The Search for Answers**  
📖 Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, Chapters 16, 19-20.