

History 317 / JS 317: **The Holocaust and Genocide**

Spring 2008

MWF, 1:10 - 2:00 pm, HSS 317

Prof. Benjamin Martin

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Introduction

The term “genocide” was invented in 1944; in 1948 it gained international legal status largely in response to Nazi Germany’s effort to murder the Jews of Europe. Since then, “genocide” has become a central category in contemporary politics, international law, historical research, and moral debate. But what is genocide? How is it defined, what is the relationship between the Nazi Holocaust and other episodes of genocide, and what is at stake in these debates? In this course we will use a range of sources—historical research, memoirs, films, fiction, and graphic novels—to grapple with key questions about the Holocaust, including the motivations of the Nazi (and other) perpetrators and the experience of the Jewish (and Sinti and Roma, and many other) victims. Analysis of the genocides affecting the Armenians and African populations under European colonialism will help us ask how the Holocaust can be understood as part of broader trends. The second part of the course will focus on the Holocaust’s many afterlives: How did the international community respond to the Holocaust after World War II? How have communities—from families, to nations, to Hollywood—commemorated the Holocaust? How have survivors and their children dealt with the experience in art and literature? Finally, we will ask how the memory of the Holocaust and the idea of genocide affected the world’s response to the killings in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda in the 1990s. Has the condemnation of genocide, the famous cry of “Never again!,” been all talk, or are we getting to a place where genocide can be understood in order to be prevented?

Requirements

Key requirements for this course are your careful reading, active participation in class discussions based on weekly readings, and several writing assignments. There will be an in-class mid-term exam on March 14. You will be asked to write two papers: one 3-4-page paper, due on April 14, and one 7-9-page final research paper, due on May 16. There is no final exam.

You will also be asked to form study groups of 3-4 students. Groups are expected to meet regularly to discuss the readings. Each group will be responsible for one week of the course: the group will lead class discussion for most of one session that week, and will post a reading guide on-line for that session (at least 24 hours in advance of class). At the conclusion of that week, the group will post online a study guide to that week, bringing together themes discussed in the readings, questions raised in the lectures, and linking that week’s topics to the rest of the course. This must be online by Wednesday morning of the following week. Regardless of whose week it is, every student should be prepared to participate in every class discussion. The assignments will be weighted roughly as follows:

Mid-term exam: 20%

Group presentation and online posting: 20%

First paper: 15%

Final paper: 25%

Participation (individual): 20%

All assignments must be completed to pass the course. Papers are to be submitted on time. Late papers will be penalized one full grade for every 24 hours late or fraction thereof (e.g., a B paper turned in late will receive a grade of C). Papers submitted more than three days (72 hours) after the deadline will receive a grade of F regardless of quality.

Regular attendance is necessary to succeed in this course; the readings alone will not be sufficient. Attendance will be taken at every session. More than two unexcused absences will seriously affect your grade; more than four will make it impossible for you to pass. Please notify me in advance (by email is best) if you are unable to attend class or unable to complete an assignment on time. Otherwise, I will not accept work turned in late. Absences and late work will be excused in the case of illness, family emergency, or university-excused absences. You may be required to provide evidence for your reason of absence (such as a doctor's note).

Graduate Students: Readings marked as "optional" are required for you. Please meet with me after the first class session to discuss additional requirements.

Withdrawals, Incompletes

Withdrawal procedures are your responsibility. Please contact me as early as possible if problems arise. I will not initiate an Incomplete on your behalf; an emergency-only Incomplete must be requested, to be completed within one year.

Disability Services

Students with disabilities who require accommodations are encouraged to contact me at the beginning of the semester. The Disability Programs and Resource Center (Student Services Building 110; (415) 338-2724 (voice/TTY); Fax: (415) 338-1041; e-mail: dprc@sfsu.edu) is available to facilitate whatever accommodations are necessary.

Scholastic Honesty

Your work for this course must conform to University policies concerning scholastic honesty. Scholastic dishonesty will result in an "F" for the assignment and/or for the course. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarizing (misrepresenting as one's own anything done by another), submitting the same or substantially similar papers for more than one course without prior consent of all instructors concerned, sabotaging another's work, and unauthorized collaboration (such as substantial rewriting of an essay by another) on assignments or exams. You are encouraged to work together in preparing for discussions and other group activities, reviewing for exams, and improving your writing, but should not contribute substantial content to other students' papers. All cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Chair and College Dean.

WARNING

This syllabus is for informational purposes only. It is not a final statement of the policies, assignments, or schedule for this course. *Only the online course materials can be considered authoritative, and these are subject to change at any time.* Students are responsible for checking the online course materials regularly (at least three times a week) for any changes.

Texts

Eric Weitz, *A Century of Genocide. Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton University Press, 2005) ISBN 13: 978-0691122717
 Sven Lindqvist, “*Exterminate all the Brutes*” (Granta, 2002) ISBN 13: 978-1862075085
 Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men* (Harper Perennial, 1998) ISBN 13: 978-0060995065
 Primo Levi, *Survival at Auschwitz* (Touchstone, 1996) ISBN 13: 978-0684826806
 Marion A. Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair* (OUP USA, 1999) ISBN 13: 978-0195130928
 Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Mariner, 2000) ISBN 13: 978-0618082322
 Art Speigelman, *Maus* (Pantheon, 1993) ISBN 13: 978-0679748403

Also available for optional purchase:

Jan Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Penguin, 2002) ISBN 13: 978-0142002407
 Cynthia Ozick, *The Shawl* (Vintage, 1990) ISBN 13: 978-0679729266
 Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will be Killed with Our Families* (Picador, 1999) ISBN 13: 978-0312243357
 James Young, *Texture of Memory* (Yale University Press, 1994) ISBN 13: 978-0300059915
 (Chapters from this some of these books will also be available as photocopies or online)
 Other readings will be available on-line

Lecture Schedule

1. Fri, Jan 25 Introduction: What is Genocide? Outline of the course

Week 1: Ideologies of Genocide

2. Mon, Jan 28 “The Holocaust” versus “Genocide”
 Readings: Weitz, *Century of Genocide*, Introduction (8-15)
 Dirk Moses, “The Holocaust and Genocide,” in *The Historiography of the Holocaust*, ed. Dan Stone (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004): 533-555

3. Wed, Jan 30 Climate Change teach-in

4. Fri, Feb 1 Racism and Nationalism: Some Background
 Readings: Weitz, Chapter 1: “Race and Nation: An Intellectual History,” (16-52);
 Optional: Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860-1945* (Cambridge, 1997), selections: “Darwinism and Social Darwinism,” (pp. 24ff.)

Week 2: Imperialism and Mass Murder

5. Mon, Feb 4 Colonial Genocides, 1: Racism and Colonial Conquest
 Readings: Lindqvist, *Exterminate all the Brutes*, first half

6. Wed, Feb 6 Colonial Genocides, 2: Racism and Military Culture
 Readings: Finish Lindqvist, “*Exterminate all the Brutes*”
 Optional: Isabel Hull, “Military Culture and the Production of ‘Final Solutions’ in the Colonies: The Example of Wilhelminian Germany,” in Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan, eds., *The Specter of Genocide* (Cambridge, 2003): 141-162.

7. Fri, Feb 8 The First Genocide?: The Americas

Readings: David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: Columbus and the Conquest of the New World* (New York: OUP, 1992), Prologue and 3-16, 97-148; Optional: David E. Stannard, "Uniqueness as Denial: The Politics of Genocide Scholarship," in A. S. Rosenbaum, ed., *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2nd ed., 2001): 245-290

Week 3: "Population Management" and the Modern State

8. Mon, Feb 11 "Population Management," 1. Eugenics
Readings: Henry Friedlander, *Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, Ch. 1 (1-22); Francis Galton, "Eugenics" in S. Ledger, ed., *Fin de Siecle. A Reader in Cultural History*, 329-332; see webpage on sterilization laws in the US: http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/topics_fs.pl?theme=3&search=&matches=
9. Wed, Feb 13 "Population Management," 2: Relocation (Turks and Greeks)
Readings: Naimark, *Fires of Hatred*, Introduction and Chapter 1 (1-56);
Optional: Bruce Clark, *Twice a Stranger: How Mass Expulsion Forged Modern Greece and Turkey* (London: Granta, 2006), introduction and Ch. 4 ("The Lausanne Bargain")
10. Fri, Feb 15 "Population Management," 3: Murder (Turks and Armenians)
Readings: Weitz, pp. 1-7; Jay Winter, "Under Cover of War: The Armenian Genocide in the Context of Total War," in Gellately and Kiernan, eds., *The Specter of Genocide*, 189-214

Week 4 – Nazi Germany to 1939

11. Mon, Feb 18 The Nazis: The Creation of a Racist State
Readings: Burleigh and Wiperman, *The Racial State*, 23-73
12. Wed, Feb 20 Nazi Ideology: Volk, Race, Health, and the Jews.
Readings: Weitz, Chapter 3 ("The Primacy of Race: Nazi Germany"), 102-143;
Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (selections on-line); Optional: Shulamit Volkov, "Anti-Semitism as a Cultural Code," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, 1978
13. Fri, Feb 22 Nazi "Population Management" in Practice, 1933-1939
Readings: Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair*, Intro (in part) and Chapter 1 (10-49);
Burleigh and Wipermann, *Racial State*, selections from: "Persecution of the 'hereditarily ill,' the 'asocial,' and homosexuals"; Optional: Geoffrey J. Giles, "The Institutionalization of Homosexual Panic in the Third Reich," in R. Gellately and N. Stoltzfus, eds., *Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany*, 233-255

Week 5: Holocaust 1: Expulsion and Concentration, 1939-1941

14. Mon, Feb 25 Nazi Anti-Jewish Measures, 1938-1939
Readings: Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair*, Chapter 5 (re: 1938 Kristallnacht, 119-143)
15. Wed, Feb 27 WWII, the First Phase
Readings: Christopher Browning, *Path to Genocide*, 3-56;
Hitler, Speech of 30 January 1939, in Arad, Gutman, and Margaliot, eds., *Documents on the Holocaust*, 132-135; Optional: Kaplan, Ch. 6 (145-172)

26. Wed, April 2 Collaboration of Many Types
Readings: Levi, "The Gray Zone," Chapter 2 from *The Drowned and the Saved*, 36-69; Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews* (excerpt from Kallis, *The Fascism Reader*); Optional: Jan Gross, *Neighbors* (entire)
27. Fri, April 4 Rescue, Resistance, but also Apathy
Readings: Novick, *Holocaust in American Life*, Chapters 1-3 (19-62)

Week 10: The Aftermath, 1. The Birth of "Genocide" and Early Debates

28. Mon, April 7 Genocide and the Post-War International Community
Readings: Novick, *Holocaust in American Life*, Part II (pp. 63-126)
The Convention on Genocide; The Declaration on Human Rights
(<http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html>; <http://www.hrweb.org/legal/udhr.html>)
29. Wed, April 9 Genocide: German, European, or Human?
Readings: Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, excerpt; Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, excerpt; Optional: Zygmunt Bauman, "Modernity, Racism, Extermination," in Back and Solomos, *Theories of Race and Racism*, 212-228
30. Fri, April 11 1968: The Holocaust and Generational Crisis
Readings: Novick, *Holocaust in American Life*, 127-145; Optional: Harold Marcuse, "The Revival of Holocaust Awareness in West Germany, Israel, and the United States," in C. Fink et al., eds., *1968: The World Transformed* (Cambridge, 1999): 421-438

Week 11: The Aftermath, 2. Monuments, Memory, and Identity

31. Mon, April 14 Germany: *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*
First paper due
Readings: James E. Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*, 1-48; Optional: Tony Judt, "Epilogue" from *Postwar*
32. Wed, April 16 US: The Holocaust and American Identity Politics
Readings: Peter Novick, *Holocaust in American Life*, 146-169; Young, *Texture of Memory*, 283-286; Optional: Young, *Texture of Memory*, 286-350
33. Fri, April 18 Later Generations: Coping and Questioning
Readings: Novick, pp. 170-206; Art Spiegelman, *Maus* (Book I); Optional: *Maus* (Book II) or Cynthia Ozick, *The Shawl*

Week 12: The Post-Cold War World, 1. Reinterpreting Communist Crimes

34. Mon, April 21 Discussion
35. Wed, April 23 Class Genocide? The Reevaluation of Soviet Crimes
Readings: Weitz, *Century of Genocide*, Chapter 2: "Nation, Race, and State Socialism: The Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin," 53-101
36. Fri, April 25 Racist Communist Genocide? The Khmer Rouge
Readings: Weitz, *Century of Genocide*, Chapter 3: "Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge," 144-189

Week 13: The Post-Cold War World, 2. The Return of Genocide

37. Mon, April 28 Bosnia: Ancient Hatreds or Modern Genocide?
Readings: Weitz, *Century of Genocide*, Chapter 5, “National Communism: Serbia and the Bosnian War,” 190-235; Optional: Andrew Bell-Fialkoff, “A Brief History of Ethnic Cleansing,” *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993)
38. Wed, April 30 “Ethnic Cleansing” and “Liberal Interventionism”
Readings: Mark Danner, “America and the Bosnia Genocide,” *New York Review of Books* (Dec 4, 1997). Online at: <http://www.markdanner.com/articles/show/60>
In-class viewing: “While America Watched – The Bosnia Tragedy” (ABC TV, 1994)
39. Friday, May 2 Rwanda: Post-Colonial Politics
Readings: P. Gourevitch, *We Wish To Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda*, excerpts; and TBA

Week 14: The Post-Cold War World 3. Responses to the New Genocides

40. Mon, May 5 Rwanda: International Inaction and Responses
Readings: Linda Melvern, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda’s Genocide*, selections; Alan Kuperman, *The Limits of Humanitarian Intervention*, selections
41. Wed, May 7 International Justice in the ‘90s: “Never Again,” again?
Readings: Kingsley Moghalu, *Rwanda’s Genocide: The Politics of Global Justice*, selections; Eric Stover, *The Witnesses*, selections; Novick, *Holocaust in American Life*, 207-238
42. Fri, May 9 Understanding with the Holocaust
Readings: Novick, *Holocaust in American Life*, 239-266

Week 15: Where are we now?

43. Mon, May 12 The State of Genocide Today: Global Justice and the Crisis of Interventionism
Readings: Novick, *Holocaust in American Life*, 267-284; articles from *The New Republic*, June 28, 2004; P. Gourevitch, “Just Watching,” *The New Yorker* (June 12, 2006); see: www.savedarfur.org
44. Wed, May 14 Conclusions, discussion
- Friday, May 16 Final paper due*