

# REPRESENTING THE HOLOCAUST SYLLABUS FOR SOC (some changes to come, but books will be the same)

Prof. Rachel Baum

## ➔ Your Teacher



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Wants to be called: Rachel, Prof. Baum, or Dr. Baum

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Favorite book: *The Little Prince*

## ➔ Accommodations

I'm here to help and will do whatever I can to support your success -- whether you are a returning student, a struggling writer, or the future President of the United States.

Students with a Visa from the Student Accessibility Center should give me their Visa within the first 2 weeks of the class.

Students will be called by whatever name and gender they desire. Please let me know if I should call you something different than is on the roster.



Photo Credit: Flickr, "Surreal Name Given" by Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Holocaust remains one of the most horrific events in modern history. It is nearly impossible to comprehend the torture and murder of human beings on such a massive scale. Indeed, some people have said that the complexity and horror of the Holocaust cannot be represented. Yet there are many books, films, photographs, poems, paintings, and other representations of the event. Can such words & images help us to confront the Holocaust? To understand it?

What are the ethical issues involved in trying to represent the murder of millions of human beings? This class provides a general background to the Holocaust, while also looking at the responsibility of representation, so important in the image-rich, social-media connected age.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

|                                   |                                |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Instructor Info, p 1              | How your grade is tallied, p 3 |
| If you need an accommodation, p 1 | Where to get help, p 4         |
| Requirements & Books, p 2         | Policies, p 4                  |
| Extra Credit, p 3, p 5            | Learning Matters, p 5          |
|                                   | Calendar, p 6 - 9              |

# THE COURSE

## WHAT TO DO>

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance./Participation** (100 points). You can miss 2 classes and still get full points. Here's how it breaks down:

- 1 - 2 absences: 100 points
- 3 absences: 80 points
- 4 absences: 60 points
- 5 absences: 35 points
- 6 absences: 10 points
- 7 - 8 absences: 0 points.

If you miss more than 8 classes, you will fail the course.

Participating in class will earn students extra points here.

2. **Quizzes** (13 quizzes, 320 points total. The first two quizzes on history are 50 points each; others are 20). There are frequent quizzes in this course to make sure that everyone is doing and understanding the reading. Most are only a few questions long; the quizzes on history are more substantial. The quizzes are generally due before class on the day that the reading is due. You will take the quizzes on D2L, and they are mostly multiple choice.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

## WHAT TO BUY

These books are available at the UWM bookstore or from other booksellers

- Michael Berenbaum, *The World Must Know* (ISBN: 9780801883383). \$10, used
  - Gerda Weissman Klein, *All But my Life*. (ISBN: 9780679729778) . \$6, used
  - Art Spiegelman, *Maus II: A Survivor's Tale: And Here My Troubles Began* (ISBN: 9780809015801) \$8, used
- TOTAL COST .....\$24.

3. **Journal** (440 points; 11 entries, 40 points each)

Most of the writing in this class will be done through journal entries, which allow you to regularly engage with the issues of the course. You will hand the journal into a D2L folder. I will give you a question every week, or you can choose your own. Please plan on typing your work into a word processing program and then pasting it into D2L (you may have to use keyboard controls to do this).

**Your journal entries must be a minimum of 300 words.**

**Thirteen journal entries are on the syllabus, but you need to only hand in ELEVEN.** If you do more, they can count towards your Flexible Learning Opportunities (Extra Credit).

4. **Final Exam** (130 points). Your final exam for this course will be a final paper or project. It will be due on May 17th, the official date the university has given us for our final exam.

5. **Quiz on Syllabus:** 10 points

## Flexible Learning Opportunities (Extra Credit)

### Up to 100 points total

I see extra credit as a way for students to take charge of their learning. Bomb a quiz? Forgot to do a journal? Do one or more of the below and get back on track.

1. Watch a Holocaust film from our class list (on D2L) and write a 1-2 page single-spaced paper about it. (up to 25 points each). Other films must be approved by me. .

2. Attend Holocaust-related events/lectures and write a 1 page, single spaced paper about them (up to 50 points). Please approve the activity with me first. Some activities are listed at the end of the syllabus.

3. Complete extra journal entries beyond the ten required. These will be worth up to 25 points each.

All extra credit papers must be in the D2L dropbox by midnight, May 11, 2017

## On the importance of enjoying life

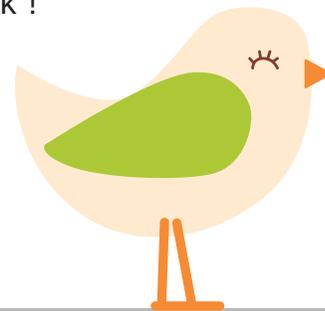
As the weeks go on, I will often give you the extra "homework" to "Do something life-affirming." It is intended as serious advice - even a requirement for succeeding in this class.

In this class, you will be looking directly at human evil, at how cowardice, group mentality, rationalization, political power, and other human traits lead to mass murder. This is hard work -- especially hard on the heart and spirit. Sometimes you will put down the work for this class feeling depressed, sad, or angry.

These are appropriate feelings to have about mass murder, and it is right to feel them. But we also have to find ways to counter them.

You will find that I am generally a happy person. I study a time of atrocity, and it gets to me, but the hidden gift of studying this time is that it has made me deeply appreciative of the many blessings in my own life -- a loving family, great friends, safety, and security.

So when I say, "Do something life affirming," I mean, do something that reminds you that life is really the best gift. That might mean hanging out with friends, calling your family, climbing a mountain, working out, or rolling on the floor with your puppy. Whatever makes you happy to be alive will fulfill this "homework"!



### Grades

The grading for this course is based on 1000 points. Your final grade will be computed like this. You can keep track of your grade points on D2L.

950-1000 points = A

900-949 = A-

860 - 899 = B+

821 - 859 = B

800 - 820 = B-

760 - 799 = C+

721 - 759 = C

700 - 720 = C-

650 - 699 = D+

600 - 649 = D

Below 600 points = F

## Plagiarism & Cheating (Don't be a cheater)

Plagiarism is claiming someone else's work as your own. The internet has made it easier to plagiarize, and sometimes people don't even realize that they are doing it. For example, if you look up a review of a film that we are studying and someone says something smart, and you take that idea and put it in your paper, you need to credit the source -- even if you are putting it in your own words. It's fine to learn from online sources -- just give those sources credit. If you use their exact words, those words need to be in quotation marks, with the source clearly noted. If you are unclear about how to do this, I'm happy to help.

I expect you to complete quizzes on your own and not to share questions or answers with anyone else in the course.

I have a zero-tolerance policy towards plagiarism and cheating in large part because they take up a lot of time, depress me, and chip away at the crazy optimism required to be a teacher. Also, cheating is just wrong. I will report the case to the dean of students and you will fail the class.

If you are considering cheating because you are overwhelmed with life, please talk to me instead, or take advantage of some of the resources on the right. There is always a better way!

## Absences

If you are absent, please look on the syllabus to see what we covered that day. If you missed a film, please contact me to determine how you can watch it. Talk to a classmate to get any notes and to find out what we did.

I don't do "excused" vs "un-excused" absences because people can be sick without a doctor's note. If you have a special circumstance, do see me. (I'm a person, not a robot. :)

## Religious Holidays

If you miss class because of a religious observance, you will be allowed to make up the work without penalty.

University Policy about these issues and others (e.g., students called to active military duty, discriminatory conduct, incompletes, etc) can be found at: <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf>

## Help & Resources

If you're having challenges, don't go it alone -- there's help available!

1. If you're having technical issues, contact [help@uwm.edu](mailto:help@uwm.edu) or call 414-229-4040.
  2. Make an appointment with me. You are welcome to email me, drop by office hours, or set up an appointment for a Skype session or phone call. I'm here to help!
  3. Use the Writing Center. The Writing Center is a free resource for any stage of the writing process, from getting started to revising drafts to polishing a final essay. It's located in Curtin 127, x4339, and online tutoring is available as well!
  4. Check out the resources of the Student Success Center. The Student Success Center is in BOL 120 and they offer a variety of help, from tutoring in certain subjects, to mentoring, to short courses on a variety of subjects. Stop by or spend time on their website to see all they do!
  5. Go to Norris Health Center (x4716) for concerns about your physical or mental health.
- UWM has offices with resources for Veterans, LGBT students, returning adult students, and more! Whatever your situation, don't hesitate to take advantage of all the help available -- that's what it's there for!

## What you'll learn in this class

A student successfully completing the class will be able to

- Identify the major events of the Holocaust and describe the historical progression of the Nazi murder of the Jews of Europe
- Describe the major ethical, aesthetic, and representational concerns around representations of the Holocaust
- Recognize, evaluate, and analyze the complex moral context of the Holocaust, with particular attention to the roles of victim, perpetrator, and bystander
- Analyze a Holocaust text (literature or film) with particular attention to the ethical, aesthetic, and representational issues raised by the text.



## Why it matters

We hear about Syrian refugees and we don't know what to do. Violence connected to racism and discrimination are in the news daily. Every day, we have to make decisions about images -- Do we share that graphic photo about war, or is that wrong to do to your Facebook friends? Is it always wrong to compare a political figure to Hitler, or is this comparison sometimes appropriate? While we won't be able to answer all these questions, learning about the Holocaust and considering the ethical issues of representation can help us to engage more complexly, thoughtfully, and ethically with these 21st-century issues.

## Events for Extra Credit

\* Jeffrey Shandler, Rutgers University. "The Holocaust on American Television." Feb 5, 2 pm, 4th Floor, Golda Meir Library, UWM .

\* Howard Melton, Holocaust survivor. Interviewed by Ben Merens. Jewish Community Center, Whitefish Bay, March 19, 10 - 11:15 am.

\* Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Commemoration), Jewish Community Center, Whitefish Bay, April 23, 3 - 4:30.

\* Linda Hooper (principal from "Paper Clips"), Congregation Shalom, April 30, 2 - 3:15

\* Visit Jewish Museum Milwaukee (1360 N Prospect). Check their website for information on two Holocaust-related exhibits this Spring

**There will be other events on campus & beyond to attend. If you want to go to something not mentioned, please ask me about it.**

### Credit Hour Policy

Federal Law requires that I tell you how many hours you will spend on this course. Here's how I think it will break down: In-class: 37.5 hrs, Reading & Thinking: 60 hrs, Quizzes: 12 hrs, Writing: 30 hrs. But of course your mileage may vary.

# Calendar

subject to change

Berenbaum = *The World Must Know*

Klein = *All But My Life*

Spiegelman = *Maus II*

| Week | Date   | Reading  | Assignment Due  |
|------|--|--|---|
| 1    | Introduction                                 |  |   |
|      | Tues Jan 24                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Syllabus (D2L)</li> </ul>   | Purchase books. Read syllabus & take quiz on it.  |
|      | Th Jan 26                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Berenbaum</u>, pp 2 – 22</li> </ul> <p>In class: History of the Holocaust</p>  |   |
| 2    | What was the Holocaust?                      |  |   |
|      | T Jan 31                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Berenbaum</u>, pp 22 – 37</li> </ul> <p>In class: History of the Holocaust, continued</p>  |   |
|      | Th Feb 2                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Berenbaum</u>, pp 37 – 51</li> </ul> <p>In class: Why is Holocaust representation an issue? Thinking about testimony, memory, and representation</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz #1 on <u>Berenbaum</u> 2 – 51 due before Thurs class</li> <li>Journal #1 due by midnight, Sun, Feb 5</li> </ul> |
| 3    | What can we learn from one survivor's story? |  |   |
|      | T Feb 7                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>All But My Life</u> (book by Gerda <u>Weissman Klein</u>)</li> </ul> <p>In class: Discuss book in small groups &amp; whole class discussion (try to read first ½ for Tues, second ½ for Thurs)</p> |   |
|      | Th Feb 9                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>All But My Life</u></li> </ul> <p>In class: Discuss book in small groups &amp; whole class discussion</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz #2 due before class on 2/9</li> <li>Journal #2 due 2/12</li> </ul>  |
| 4    | The Ethics of Holocaust Images               |  |   |
|      | T Feb 14                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Berenbaum</u>, pp 51 – 78; 81 – 88</li> </ul> <p>In class: <i>One Survivor Remembers</i> (DVD); Klein</p>  |   |

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
|   |  | videos, Holocaust Testimony   |  |
|   | <u>Th</u> Feb 16                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Berenbaum</u> 92 – 98; 100 – 116; 119- 153</li> </ul> <p>In class: The ethics of graphic Holocaust images; <i>Night and Fog</i> (DVD)</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz #3 (on <u>Berenbaum</u> 51 - 88) due before class 2/16</li> <li>• Quiz #4 (on <u>Berenbaum</u> 92 - 153) due 2/19</li> <li>• Journal #3 due Sun, 2/19</li> </ul> |
| 5 | The “ <u>Choiceless Choices</u> ” of the Victims |   |  |
|   | T Feb 21   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tadeusz <u>Borowski</u>, “This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen”</li> </ul> <p>In class: Discuss story in small groups &amp; whole class discussion</p>   | Quiz #5 due before class   |
|   | <u>Th</u> Feb 23                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sara <u>Nomberg-Pryztyk</u>, “Esther’s First Born”</li> <li>• Sara <u>Nomberg-Pryztyk</u>, “The Block of Death”</li> </ul> <p>Note: These stories contain discussion of the killing of infants and our class discussion will include discussion of the specific perils of female prisoners, including sexual violence.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz #6 before class</li> <li>• Journal #4 due 2/26</li> </ul>  |
| 6 | Survivor Fiction: Ida Fink                       |   |  |
|   | T Feb 28   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ida Fink, “A Scrap of Time,”</li> <li>• Ida Fink, “The Key Game”</li> </ul> <p>In class: Discuss story in small groups &amp; whole class discussion</p>  | Quiz #7 before class   |
|   | <u>Th</u> March 2                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ida Fink, “A Spring Morning”</li> <li>• Ida Fink, “Behind the Hedge”</li> </ul> <p>In class: Discuss story in</p>  | <p>Quiz #8 before class</p> <p>Journal #5 due 3/5</p>  |

|    |   |  |   |
|----|---|--|---|
|    |   | small groups & whole class discussion  |   |
| 7  | <i>Shoah</i>                            |  |   |
|    | T March 7                               | In class: <i>Shoah</i> (DVD)   |   |
|    | <u>Th</u> March 9                       | In class: Representing perpetrators, bystanders, Hitler ( <i>Blind Spot, Downfall, etc</i> )   | Journal #6 due 3/12                         |
| 8  | Representing Hitler                     |  |   |
|    | T March 14                              | Look <i>Whos Back</i> (DVD) and other videos   |   |
|    | <u>Th</u> March 16                      |  | Journal #7 due 3/19                         |
|    | SPRING BREAK                            | March 19 - 26, 2017  |   |
| 9  | Why did the murderers become murderers? |  |   |
|    | T March 28                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christopher Browning, "Revisiting the Holocaust Perpetrators: Why Did They Kill?"</li> </ul> In class: Confronting evil; Zimbardo & Milgram experiments                                       | Quiz #9 due before class                    |
|    | <u>Th</u> March 30                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four excerpts from <i>The Good Old Days: The Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders</i></li> <li>Bernard Gotfryd, "Helmut Reiner."</li> </ul> In class: Confronting evil, cont. | Quiz #10 before class<br>Journal #8 due 4/2 |
| 10 | Poetry                                  |  |   |
|    | T April 4                               | Paul <u>Celan</u> , "Death Fugue"  |   |
|    |   | In class: Judaism 101; how is poetry different?  |   |
|    | <u>Th</u> April 6                       | Read the whole poetry bundle on D2L  | Journal #9 due 4/9                          |
|    |   | In class: Analyzing Poetry in small & large group discussions  |   |
| 11 | <u>Maus II</u> : Can the                |  |   |

|    |   |  |  |
|----|---|--|--|
|    | Holocaust be represented in a graphic novel?            |  |  |
|    | T April 11  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Maus II</u> (book by Art Spiegelman)</li> </ul> In class: Discussion of book in small groups & whole class   |  |
|    | Th April 13   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Maus II</u></li> </ul> In class: Discussion of book in small groups and whole class  | Quiz #11 before class<br>Journal #10 due 4/16                    |
| 12 | Second Generation Literature                            |  |  |
|    | T April 18  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• J. J <u>Steinfeld</u>, "Ida Solomon's Play."</li> <li>• Carl Friedman, "from <u>Nightfather</u>"</li> </ul> In class: Discussion of stories           | Quiz #12 before class  |
|    | Th April 20   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thane Rosenbaum, "Cattle Car Complex"</li> <li>• J.J. <u>Steinfeld</u>, "The Apostate's Tattoo"</li> </ul> In class: Discussion of stories, tattooing | Quiz #13 before class<br>Journal #11 due 4/23                    |
| 13 | <i>Train of Life</i>                                    |  |  |
|    | T April 25  | In class: DVD  |  |
|    | Th April 27   | In class: DVD  | Journal #12 due 4/30<br>(must write after seeing the whole film) |
| 14 | Holocaust Representation in Art, Music, and the Digital |  |  |
|    | T May 2   | In class: Art & Music  |  |
|    | Th May 4  | In class: What Will We Do When the Survivors Are Gone?   | Journal #13 due 5/7  |
| 15 | Last Week of Class                                      |  |  |
|    | T May 9   | To be determined....   |  |
|    | T May 11  |  |  |
|    | <b>MAY 17</b>   | <b>FINAL PAPER/PROJECT DUE</b>   |  |