REPRESENTING THE HOLOCAUST
Summer 2018 (draft)

Prof. Rachel Baum

Your Teacher

Name: Dr. Rachel Baum
Wants to be called: Rachel, Prof. Baum, or Dr. Baum
Office: Center for Jewish Studies 120 (Greene Museum, next to Sabin)
Phone: 414-229-5156
email: rbaum@uwm.edu
Office Hours: Happy to do Skype chat, phone call, etc.
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 3 days 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.

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 and images help us to confront the Holocaust? To understand it? To prevent other genocides? 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 our image-rich, social-media connected age.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Instructor Info, p 1
Accommodations, p 1
Requirements & Books, p 2
Extra Credit, p 3
Grading, p 3
Don't cheat & other rules, p 4
Where to get help, p 4
How online classes work, p 5
Calendar, p 6 - 12
THE COURSE

WHAT TO DO

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Check D2L regularly. The hardest part of an online class is keeping up with the work, because you don’t have a face-to-face class to remind you. Think of D2L as your classroom, and schedule it (and your course work) in your calendar.

I have based the schedule on the face-to-face schedule of 4-week summer courses. I have given you intense Mon – Thurs schedules, and have left the long weekends for you to either relax or to catch up/work ahead. I think this schedule works the best, because it offers you some flexibility depending on your other commitments and involvements.

Be sure to look ahead on the calendar. If you are a slow reader, for example, you will want to use your weekends to start readings for the following week. If your weekdays are free, but you work weekends, you will want to pack your weekdays with work so that you can take the weekends off from coursework.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

WHAT TO BUY

- 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.

Forum Postings (55 points each; 330 points total). Forums are the online version of in-class discussion. They are vital to our course, because they give you an opportunity to work through the issues of the course, and to engage in discussion about them with your classmates. They also offer me a chance to see your thinking about the issues and to talk with you about some of the key concerns of the course. You must respond to the question I have asked and your post must be a minimum of 300 words.

Forum Responses (30 points each; 180 points total). These are brief (minimum 150 words) responses to the posts made by your classmates. The more thoughtful you make these, the better class discussion will be. Say something substantive about the original post, rather than just using 150 words to say, “Good job!” You might ask for clarification about an issue, ask a question, or share an alternative view. You must respond TWICE in each forum. This can be commenting on TWO classmates’ posts, or responding TWICE in a conversation with one other classmate. Each must be a minimum of 150 words.

Quizzes (350 points). There are five quizzes throughout the semester. These are graded immediately on D2L. Quizzes 1 & 2 are worth 100 points; the rest are worth 50.

Final Project, "The Most Important Thing". (100 points): Due June 27th.

"Dancing Auschwitz" post (first day writing): 40 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 discussion post? 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. Full assignment on D2L.

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, unless I have posted about it.

3. Comment in our optional "thoughts & feelings" discussion forum in D2L.

On the importance of enjoying life

As the class goes 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 -- perhaps especially so with such an intense 4-week schedule.

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 a family member, 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>950-1000</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900-949</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>860 - 899</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>821 - 859</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800 - 820</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>760 - 799</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>721 - 759</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700 - 720</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>650 - 699</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600 - 649</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 600</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jewish 261-201 | 3
Plagiarism (Don't cheat)

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 my course.

Credit Hour Policy

Federal Law requires me to tell you how many hours you will spend on this course. Here is how I think it will break down:
Reading/Watching: 90 hours
Quizzes: 12 hours
Writing/thinking: 30 hours

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 or call 414-229-4040.

2. Make an appointment with me. You are welcome to email me, 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

A student successfully completing this course 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.

How do online classes work? How do I read the calendar?

Because this is a 4-week class, the schedule is intense. I have tried to make this easier by creating a schedule that allows for some flexibility. The course is based on a M-Th schedule, so that you can work hard for 4 days and then take the weekends off. Alternately, you can use the weekends to catch up on your work.

All of the reading and films are online, of course, as are the quizzes. Discussions happen in the discussion forums. You’ll post a 300 minimum word post on a question that I ask, and then you’ll respond to two of your classmates in a 150-minimum response. It’s not exactly like having a face-to-face conversation, but in certain ways it can be better because you can really think about what you want to say.

I think one of my strengths as an online teacher is that my courses are very organized and clearly state what you need to do every day. This doesn’t make the work easy, but I hope that it makes it easier for you to schedule it into your summer lives.
DAY ONE (May 29): CLASS ORIENTATION

Hello! Welcome to the class! I want you to jump right in and get familiar with the D2L site, so you can keep up with the work. This is going to be a great class and you will learn a lot – but only if you keep up! So here's the plan for the first day:

**Buy:** Course books. Because this is a 4 week course, you will need to have the books right away, even if this means paying for shipping.

**Read:** Read the syllabus carefully. Familiarize yourself with D2L. Make sure you understand everything. Post any questions to the “Help!” forum– unless you don’t know how to do that, in which case, email me!

**Read:** “Week one lecture” (on D2L)

**Write:** I am going to ask you to hit the ground running with two assignments for the first day.

1. Introduction. Before Wednesday at midnight, please go to the Discussions section of the site and post your introduction. Click on the blue link, “Introductions.” There you can read my introduction and post your own. Extra credit if you respond to another person’s post by Wednesday, midnight. We won’t have a lot to respond now, but I want you to get used to using D2L.

2. “Dancing at Auschwitz”. Watch the video “Dancing Auschwitz” (on D2L) and write a discussion post on the following question: “Dancing Auschwitz” evoked a controversy when it hit You Tube in the summer of 2010. The short film by artist Jane Korman features her father dancing with his grandchildren at various death camps. Part One is required; parts two and three are optional. Write a response to the film. You might want to consider some or all of the following questions:

What do you think of the video? Do you find it controversial? Why or why not? What do you think the film does (or doesn’t do) for the viewer? What do you think the filmmaker wanted viewers to get out of the film?

In general, your posts must be 300 words, but this first post has no word requirement. Give the question serious thought, though, and respond to the prompt. Due by midnight, June 1, but better to get it done sooner! :

5 points extra credit if you respond to someone else’s post as well.

DAY TWO & THREE (May 30 & May 31): WHAT WAS THE HOLOCAUST?

**Read** Lecture on Holocaust (read first) and Lecture on Death Camps (read second).

**Read:** Michael Berenbaum, *The World Must Know*, pages 2 - 143

**Quizzes:** Quiz #1 (page 2 - 72) and Quiz #2 (73 - 143) on D2L, due June 4, before midnight

**Note:** You probably want to start reading *All But My Life* over the weekend.
DAYS FOUR, FIVE, SIX (June 4 - June 6): ONE SURVIVOR'S STORY

Read: *All But My Life* by Gerda Weissman Klein

Quiz: Quiz #3 on *All But My Life* due before June 7th

Watch: *One Survivor Remembers* (on D2L)

Discuss:
Write a forum post (300 words) in which you respond to the following questions. You do not need to address each question, but do address the issues as a whole: How does Gerda Weissman Klein connect with her audience? How does she build bridges between her unique experience of the Holocaust and the reader, who has not experienced anything remotely similar? To what extent do you find her strategies effective? Are there any potential problems with such strategies? Are the connecting strategies different in the memoir than in the video? Use specific examples and page numbers to support your ideas.

Post (300 words) due by midnight, June 7th. Response (150 words) due by midnight, June 8th.

DAY SEVEN (June 7): IS IT ETHICAL TO LOOK AT HOLOCAUST IMAGES? IS IT ETHICAL TO LOOK AWAY?

Read: Lecture on the ethics of Holocaust images

Watch: *Night and Fog* (on D2L)

Discuss: Write a forum post (300 word min) in which you respond to the following questions:

Do you think it is ethical to show the graphic images of *Night and Fog*? In your response consider the perspective of at least two of the below:

* A Holocaust Survivor
* A family member of someone who was killed in the Holocaust
* A woman who recognizes herself in the images
* A filmmaker
* A young Jewish woman
* A young German woman
* A Holocaust researcher/scholar
* You

Post due June 11; Response (min 150 words) due June 12
DAY EIGHT & NINE (June 11 & 12): SHOAH

**Watch:** Lecture on *Shoah* (video lecture, on D2L)
**Watch:** Clips of *Shoah* (D2L)

**Discuss:** Write a forum post (300 words) in which you respond to the following questions: In *Shoah*, Claude Lanzmann makes the decision to place his film entirely in the present, without any use of archival images. This means that his film has none of the graphic images of emaciated skeletons that are seen in *Night and Fog*. Lanzmann also centers his films around interviews with people who were actually in the Holocaust -- as victims, perpetrators, or bystanders.

Write a response in which you consider the ethical dimensions of Shoah – that is to say, the moral issues raised by the film. In your response consider:

- Lanzmann’s treatment of the victims
- Lanzmann’s treatment of Franz Suchomel, the perpetrator testimony you saw
- The position of the viewer (how does Shoah put the viewer in a different position than *Night and Fog*?)
- The position of the filmmaker (What do you think are Lanzmann’s goals for the film? What would he say about the ethics of the film?)

Post (300 words) due midnight, June 13. Response (150 words) due midnight, June 14th

DAY TEN & ELEVEN (June 13 & 14): THE CHOICELESS CHOICES OF THE VICTIMS

**Read:** Lecture on *The Gray Zone*

**Read:** Tadeusz Borowski, "This Way for the Gas, Ladies & Gentlemen," Sara Nomberg-Pryztyk, "The Block of Death" and "Esther's First Born." (all on D2L)

**Quiz:** Quiz #4 on D2L due June 18th

**Discuss:** Looking at the texts from this unit, write a forum post (300 words min) that responds to all or some of the following questions:

* Did these stories challenge your thinking about the Holocaust? Did they deepen your engagement with the subject? How?
* In what way did the setting & context of these stories shape the behavior of the people in the stories? Would they have made other choices if the situation were different? How does your answer to this question shape your opinion about their actions?
* Do you find Primo Levi’s concept of the “Gray Zone” helpful in thinking about the moral issues raised by these stories? What about Langer’s concept of “choiceless choices”?

Post (min 300 words) due June 18; Response (min 150 words) due June 19th.
DAY TWELVE AND THIRTEEN (June 18 & June 19): WHY DID THE MURDERERS BECOME MURDERERS?

**Read:** Lecture on Perpetrators

**D2L Readings:** Excerpts from *The Good Old Days*, Christopher Browning, "Revisiting the Holocaust Perpetrators: Why Did They Kill?" (read the lecture or watch the video), and Bernard Gotfryd, "Helmut Reiner."

**Quiz:** Quiz #5 on D2L due June 21

DAY FOURTEEN & FIFTEEN (June 20 & 21): CAN THE HOLOCAUST BE REPRESENTED IN A GRAPHIC NOVEL?

**Read:** *Maus II* (If you didn't purchase the book, you can read the excerpts on Ginkgoteam. If you have *Maus I* instead, you may read that.)

**D2L Readings:** Materials about Art Spiegelman & *Maus*

**Discussion Post/Response:** Write a forum post in which you respond to the following question:

Giving specific examples, think about the images do in *Maus*, contrasted with what the words do. To get your thoughts moving, consider:

*How would *Maus* be different without the images?

* What do you understand or know by looking at the images that you would not understand or know otherwise?

* In what ways can the story of the Holocaust be told best with images? Compare and contrast Spiegelman's images with more realistic drawings, or with photographs.

* Use specific examples with page numbers (if available) to make your argument.

Post (min 300 words) due June 21; Response (min 150 words) due June 22.
Read the lecture & materials on D2L

Discussion Post/Response

Write a response (300 words minimum) in which you consider the issues raised by the new technologies of Holocaust memory (such as the Second Life exhibit and the USC hologram) and how they are different and/or similar to other representations we have seen this semester. Here are some questions to frame your response, although you needn't answer them all:

* How would you compare/contrast this representation to others we have seen this semester? You might specifically consider Maus, which represented the victims as mice. Here, the avatars can be human or animal or machine. Is this similar? Different? In what ways?

* What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of a holographic survivor, such as the one being created of Pinchas Gutter by the USC Shoah Foundation? How is this similar or different to seeing the recorded testimony from the Visual History Shoah Foundation?

* Do you think learning about the Holocaust in these digital and virtual ways would add to your learning of the Holocaust? Would you want to learn about other events in this way? Why or why not?

* Based on the videos of Second Life, how “real” did the experience seem? How would you compare it to being in a physical classroom with other students, and/or how would you compare it to the rest of this online class, where you haven't seen other students or the professor in any way?

* Are there issues with learning about the Holocaust in these ways? What are the potential limitaitons to these media?

Post due June 26th; Two responses (150 word min, each) due June 27 (our last day of class is officially June 26th, but I am building in one more day for those who need it.)
EXTRA CREDIT (June 25): *PAPER CLIPS*

**Watch** *Paper Clips* (on D2L)

**Discussion Post/Response**
I generally end this class with *Paper Clips*, which allows us to look towards the future and to have some optimism. The film is about a group of students in Tennessee who embark on learning about the Holocaust and the impact their learning has on their community. Students tend to enjoy this film after a depressing and challenging semester. I am making it extra credit and hope that many of you will do it! To get the extra credit, you must watch the film and write a discussion post and, optionally, a response.

The discussion post is worth 40 points of extra credit. Responses are worth 10.

The topic is open, but questions you might consider are: What do you take away from this film? Does it make you think differently about anything you have learned this semester? Do you see anything controversial about the paper clip project? What do you think of the symbolism of putting the paper clips in a railway car?

**Final project is due June 27th**