

# Holocaust: Literature, Music, Memory, and Representation

**CJS-432: Intermediate Topics in Jewish Philosophy and the Arts  
Meets with  
MUS-497 Special Topics**

Instructors: Prof. Rachel F. Brenner, Assoc. Prof. Teryl L. Dobbs

Date and Time: Wednesdays, 3:30 – 6:00 p.m., Van Hise 579

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## **Course Description**

Although the story of the Jewish genocide will remain forever incomplete, fragments of the Holocaust experience reach us via testimonies, such as diaries, photographs, artworks, and music. The enormous number of Holocaust representations in literature, film, theater plays, visual art, music, and television programs attests to the emotional depth of the reception. This interactive course explores the Holocaust through literature and music as artistic forms of testimonial memory. Throughout the course we shall refer to the universal implications of the Holocaust legacy and the importance of studying the Holocaust in view of the proliferation of genocides in today's world.

## **Requirements and Expectations**

**Attendance:** Due to the active seminar nature of this once-per-week course, your attendance at each class meeting is imperative for creating a successful experience for all members; momentum suffers when members are absent. Hence, you are expected to attend *all* classes. Please make sure that you are **always** on time. Late arrival to class or absence will be excused **only** due to illness or family emergency; all absences must have documentation. If you must be absent, you are to notify each instructor ahead of time. Unexcused absences will affect your grade. It is **your responsibility** to find out and complete the materials you have missed.

**Attitude:** Your attitude is part of your grade. It includes being in class *on time*, deferring from using electronic devices during class time, concentrating on the subject matter, and actively participating in all aspects of the course.

This course relies upon on students' active participation and discussion based on the materials assigned for each class meeting.

There will be two short essays (2-3 pages). We have been fortunate to have been assigned Writing Fellows (WF) who will be working with you on the essays. For each WF essay you submit the **first version** of the essay. We collect these essays in class. The WF will read your essay carefully within a week, make comments, and have a conference with you the following week to discuss your writing and make suggestions for revision. You will revise the essay and submit within two weeks **both the first version and the revised version with a cover page on top explaining the changes.**

The first version of the essay is **typed double-space, appropriately documented**, of quality of what you would turn in for grading. We purposely do not call the text you will be discussing with the WF "a draft;" it will be the best possible **version** of an essay you could produce on your own. When you hand in the **final version**, you will write an explanation how you have rewritten the paper with the WF's comments in mind. Please be sure to show respect for the help you are receiving and treat the meetings with the Fellow very seriously.

### **Final Project**

The final project should draw upon materials studied throughout the semester and your research. It should demonstrate your ability to integrate multiple source materials and media to create a comprehensive product that not only presents your synthesis of the course, but also advances your own original point of view. Using a multimedia platform (PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezzi, etc.), you will make an oral presentation 10 - 12 minutes in length focusing on the issue/problem/idea in the course that you have found of particular interest. The presentations will be open to the public and will take place on the final day of class as part of the *Performing the Jewish Archive: "Out of the Shadows"* festival. Your presentation should raise concepts, ideas and facts for questions and discussion. A panel comprised of international scholars affiliated with *Performing the Jewish Archive* will moderate and participate in your discussions.

### **Special Events and Assignments:**

*Performing the Jewish Archive: "Out of the Shadows" Symposium*

You are required write a report (1 p.) on the following in-class lectures and the Hillel event:

1. Summarize the thesis of the lecture/film,
2. Explain the argument of the lecture/film,
3. How did the lecturer or the film-maker construct his or her argument to "meet" his or her audience?
4. Your general assessment/evaluation of the event and support your argument with evidence.

Note: Your report of the event/film should provide you with the analytic buildings blocks for your final project and presentation.

*See the Course Chronology for dates and places (some venues occur outside Van Hise):*

--- Film screening followed by discussion, Hillel Foundation for Jewish Student Life, 611 Langdon, Madison

*Broken Branches*

A grandmother's retelling of her family's experiences in the Holocaust, utilizing animation to bring her stories to life.

--- Guest lecture, Judith Hess Heilizer, Ph.D., "Resistance"

**Required Texts:**

A course reader is available at Social Science Copy Center, Social Science Building. Sewell Hall, Room 6120, 1180 Observatory Drive

**Please note**

-- We reserve the right to modify the schedule of the **syllabus** and change the **evaluation** scale.

-- Any work that is in violation of the UW Code of Honor will be graded as 0 or Fail. For more information about how to avoid plagiarism and about proper paraphrasing and quoting, see <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html>

-- The use of laptops/iPads should be limited to noting down the main points of the class. No other electronic devices are allowed. Your focus should be on the ongoing discussion and on participation, which is a very important component of our study. We expect you to act professionally and ethically in all aspects of communication and technology usage in accordance with University policies.

-- Extensions on papers, essays, and final project **will not be granted**. No late work will be accepted.

-- Please let us know within the first two weeks of the semester about the dates on which you will need relief due to religious observance.

**If you have special circumstances that you believe will affect your class performance (such as mobility, visual, hearing, learning disabilities, or if English is an additional language), please meet with me to discuss accommodations and disability services:**

"Pursuant to the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)* and *Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination and assured services and accommodations that provide equal access to the activities and programs of the university. To establish that an individual is covered under the ADA, documentation [that individual] must indicate that the disability substantially limits a major life activity. If academic or classroom-based adjustments and accommodations are requested, learning must be one of the major life activities affected" (McBurney Center website: [www.mcburney.wisc.edu/information/documentation/disdopolicies.php](http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/information/documentation/disdopolicies.php)).

**Grading** (The instructors reserve the right to change the grading scale.)

Class participation	10%
Group Presentations	10%
Individual Presentations	5%
Attendance and Attitude	10%
Short essays	20%
Lectures reports	15%
Final project/presentation	30%

## **COURSE CHRONOLOGY**

*(The contents of this chronology can be amended at any time by the instructors.)*

**Students are expected to bring the assigned texts and materials for every class**

### **1. Jan. 20 (All Wednesdays)**

#### **Introduction: The Historical Context of the Holocaust and the Commemoration of the Auschwitz Liberation**

1. Introduction (requirements), Explanation of Procedures and Requirements
2. Prof. Brenner: History introduction to WWII

3. Video clips of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 27, 2015, held at Auschwitz-Birkenau—YouTube  
<http://70.auschwitz.org/index.php?lang=en>
  - a. Watch beginning of ceremony, listen to string quartet, Prof. Dobbs
  - b. 19:06: Halina Birnbaum, speech
  - c. 57:32: Documentary, *Auschwitz*
4. TD: Provide background on Wallfisch's grandmother and women's orchestra in Auschwitz.

#### **Assignment for Next Week:**

- Read Dori Laub, "Bearing Witness or the Vicissitudes of Listening"
- Prepare for discussion:
  - Identify his thesis
  - Describe Laub's argument
  - Select this week's news item, which brings in witnesses' reports or ideas, impressions, statements, etc. Analyze the point of view that this report represents and justify how *you* respond to the testimony and why.
  - This news item can take any form you wish: podcast, video, newspaper article, blog (hard copy or online).
  - If your item is online, send the professors your link by email.
  - Plan a very brief presentation on your news item for next week, 2-3 minutes in length.

## **2. Jan. 27**

### **The Witnesses' Perspectives of the Holocaust Experience**

1. RFB: Begin class with students' presenting their news summaries and how they connect to last week's activities.
2. Dori Laub, "Bearing Witness or the Vicissitudes of Listening." [R]
  - a. Small group/large group discussion
  - b. Begin with small groups of 2 – 3 students,
  - c. Share and discuss Laub's thesis and argument (assigned last week).
  - d. Return to large group and discuss as a class.
3. First clip of Ruth Elias' testimony (Theresienstadt) and discussion
  - a. Worksheets in groups
  - b. Groups present
4. TD: listening lesson: (Regelski, Ch. 6)

- a. Ilse Weber, "Ich Wandere Durch Theresienstadt"  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2StiJNmNSo&list=PLtMJ\\_bQvnDhMnrJ7BgMaCHWP8-eB0WuV9](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2StiJNmNSo&list=PLtMJ_bQvnDhMnrJ7BgMaCHWP8-eB0WuV9)

#### Assignment for Next Week:

- Assign First Essay
- Listening assignment: video of oratorio, *Elijah*, Mendelssohn "Help, Lord! Wilt Thou quite destroy us?" Analyze text/lyrics
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIY8WQ5vLeY>
  - Text-painting: how does the music reinforce the text: use of louds and softs (dynamics), repetition, more voices vs. fewer voices (texture)? What type of mood do you think Mendelssohn intended by using these devices? Explain why you think so.
  - Use the take-home listening map as you listen and refer to it as you answer the questions above.
- Read Charlotte Delbo, "Lulu"
- Draw connections between "Lulu" and the *Elijah* listening assignment.
- Listen closely and discuss the motifs of altruism, benevolence, giving and receiving, suffering and grief, in both Lulu and the above Mendelssohn clip.

### 3. Feb. 3

#### Testimonies of Survival Through Mutual Assistance

- TD: Listening assignment, video of oratorio, *Elijah*, "Help, Lord! Wilt Thou quite destroy us?" Mendelssohn  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIY8WQ5vLeY>
  1. Students present their findings regarding the connections between "Lulu" and *Elijah*: motifs of altruism, benevolence, giving and receiving, suffering and grief.
  2. RFB: Charlotte Delbo, "Lulu" [R] and discussion
  3. Videotapes of testimony that describe the function of helping for survival; discussion
  4. TD: Conclusion: *The Pianist* (Chapter 15, DVD) and summary discussion on the relationship of suffering and benevolence.  
 Youtube clip of W. Szpilman:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9oQEa-d5rU>

#### Assignment for Next Week:

- Read Jan Karski, *Story of a Secret State: My Report to the World: "The Ghetto."*

- Prepare for discussion and research Karski online. Come prepared to answer questions on who he was, what he did during WWII, and what his relationship was to the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto.
- Prepare for presentation a 1/2 page summary of an example of how compassion, love, care, helps someone in need. In what ways does your story relate to the emotions that Karski experienced in the Ghetto?

#### 4. Feb. 10

##### **The View from Outside: Testimonies by Non-Jews, Part I**

1. RFB: Jan Karski, *Story of a Secret State: My Report to the World: "The Ghetto."* [R] Presentation of summaries and discussion
2. Claude Lanzmann's excerpt from *Shoah*, Karski's testimony from the Ghetto
3. Student discussions on Karski, Lanzmann video.
  - a. Small group discussion
  - b. Large group discussion.

##### **Assignment for Next Week:**

- Research the place, Babi Yar, online, both during the Holocaust and now as it exists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Be certain to address its history and its geography.
  - Read both versions of Evgeny Evtushenko's poem, *Babi Yar*: read silently *and* aloud at home. Return to class prepared to discuss: How do the versions differ and why?
  - Which version would you define as more effective and under the political and ideological circumstances, authentic?
  - Come to class with one provocative question for class discussion.
- Read Babel: "The Awakening." Return to class prepared to discuss:
  - In what ways does the poem, *Babi Yar*, relate to Babel's story?

#### 5. Feb. 17

##### **The View from Outside: Testimonies by Non-Jews**

1. RFB: Evgeny Evtushenko, "Babi Yar" [R]
  - a. Watch: Evgeny Evtushenko (video)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJEGrdGzPE>
2. Literary analysis and discussion of both versions: Peterson article.

3. TD: Music: "Symphony #13 in b minor," Dmitri Shostakovich; "Babi Yar" movement:
  - a. Watch:
 

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQccC7ATJbE>
4. RFB: Isaac Babel, "The Awakening" [R]
  - a. Discussion: In what ways does the poem, "Babi Yar," relate to Babel's story?
  - b. TD: Examples of Babel's world and culture:
    - i. Leopold Auer, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QygG9ZFnmfk>
    - ii. Efrem Zimbalist Sr., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9vDJMChiils>
    - iii. Jascha Heifetz, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPcnGrie\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPcnGrie_M)
  - c. Ina Falliks, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p60uWQqGOTk>

#### Assignment for Next Week:

- Read selections from Janusz Korczak's *Diary*.
- Research Korczak online.
- Work with a classmate and prepare a contemplative piece from the diary that raises an ethical question: How does this excerpt/passage relate to Korczak's reality in the Ghetto?
- Read Livia Bitton Jackson "Coming of Age." Think about the issues particular to women in the concentration camp and relate your findings to Delbo's "Lulu."

#### 5. Feb. 24

##### Children in the Holocaust

**\*\*Room change for tonight: School of Music, Mosse Humanities Building (TBA)**

1. RFB: Korczak's *Diary* [R].
2. Selected video clips from film, *Korczak* and discussion
3. Students' presentations of contemplative pieces from Korczak's diary that raises an ethical question: How does this excerpt/passage relate to Korczak's reality in the Ghetto?
4. Livia E. Bitton Jackson, "Coming of Age" and discussion of the gender issues that the testimony raises: How were men's and women's experiences different...or not?



5. TD: Music: Josima Feldschuh, Selected Works
  - a. Zijin Yao, Piano

**Assignment for Next Week:**

- Read Anna Heilman and Rose Meth, “Resistance” (from *Different Voices*)
- Anielewicz letter
- On the basis of what the class has covered so far, contemplate heroism and resistance. Is *physical* heroism the only kind of heroism under the circumstances of the Holocaust?
- Some scholars claim that physical resistance was not the only kind of resistance in the Holocaust. Do you agree? If so, bring three examples resistance other than physical. Explain. Draw upon the readings and films/videos that we have already discussed.
- Begin thinking about this topic and others discussed so far in terms of your final project and presentation.

**7. Mar. 2**

**Resistance**

1. **TD: Guest Lecture: Judith Hess Heilizer, Ph.D.**
2. Discussion of lecture (written assignment).
3. RFB: Anna Heilman and Rose Meth, “Resistance” (from *Different Voices*) [R]
4. Video: Anna Heilman and discussion  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jyTGQvAczY>
5. Anielewicz, letter from ghetto/Warsaw revolt [R] and discussion of various kinds of resistance
6. TD: Music: Songs of Partisans; “Libera me” (from *Requiem*, W. A. Mozart)

**Assignment for Next Week:**

- Assign Second Essay

**8. Mar. 9 Venue change: Hillel**

**Reception of the Holocaust I: Israel**

1. RFB: *Broken Branches* [film]

- a. Watch film
  - b. Discussion
2. RFB: The Jewish Settlement in Palestine and the Holocaust
  3. TD:
    - a. Songs from Haluzim/pioneering songs  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImE\\_loZzHo0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImE_loZzHo0)
    - b. Hava Nagila  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHSNZK4Je-Y>
  4. RFB: Israel facing the Holocaust through the Eichmann trial.
  5. TD: two music videos by Israeli second generation survivors:
    - a. Yehuda Poliker, "Ashes and Dust"  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3jR\\_jduGkk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3jR_jduGkk)
    - b. Yehuda Poliker/Yaakov Gilad: "Here is Treblinka Station"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFVdO5QVs4I>

**Assignment for Next Week:**

- Read and prepare *Maus* (both volumes) for small and large-group discussion on the following themes:
  - The story of the survivor, Vladek: Why does Vladek choose to present his recollection in this particular way? Think about his listener.
  - The story of Art: How does Art present *his* life story and why?
  - Reflect on the relationship between the father/survivor and the son/second generation survivor: what are the tensions and conflicts? When do they arise? What do these encounters between son and father reveal about their emotional relationship?
  - What is the function of the mother and her destroyed diaries?
  - Reflect on the absent presences in the family: the child's death and the mother's suicide.

**9. March 15**

***DATE CHANGE: TUESDAY, MARCH 15: ATTEND SCHRAG LECTURE INSTEAD OF REGULARLY SCHEDULED CLASS.***

**March 19 – 27: Spring Break**

**10. March 30**

### Reception of the Holocaust II: United States

1. RFB: Art Spiegelman, *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* (Volumes 1 and 2) [R]
2. In small groups of two or three, discuss the themes assigned (March 9) for today's class.
3. Return to large group and discuss as large group.
4. *Autumn in Krakow*, Yoram Gross (YouTube) and discussion <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vifjPCMyza8>
5. TD: Music by U.S./North American second-generation survivor:
  - a. Podcast: David Draiman, second-generation survivor. <http://www.ushmm.org/confront-antisemitism/antisemitism-podcast/david-draiman>

#### Assignment for Next Week:

- Read and prepare for discussion: David Grossman, *See Under: Love—Momik's Story*
- Select a scene from *Momik's Story* that you find moving and read aloud and discuss with a partner. Come to class prepared to justify your rationale for choosing this scene.

## 11. April 6

### Reception of the Holocaust III: Israel

1. RFB: Discussion of lecture: what is the premise, lecturer's presentation/argument, what do students think of the presentation?
2. David Grossman, *See Under: Love—Momik's Story* [R]
  - i. Student re-enactment of *Momik* scenes.
  - ii. Discussion
3. Begin preparations for final project.

#### Assignment for Next Week:

- Read and prepare for discussion: Raphael Lemkin: *United Nations Declaration on Genocide*  
[https://www.oas.org/dil/1948\\_Convention\\_on\\_the\\_Prevention\\_and\\_Punishment\\_of\\_the\\_Crime\\_of\\_Genocide.pdf](https://www.oas.org/dil/1948_Convention_on_the_Prevention_and_Punishment_of_the_Crime_of_Genocide.pdf)
- Students should now be meeting with their groups to work on final project presentation.

12. Apr. 13

**Genocide—Legal Definitions**

1. RFB: *Watchers of the Sky*, part 1(DVD, to 1:01:00)
2. RFB: Raphael Lemkin: *United Nations Declaration on Genocide* [R]
3. TD: Music from the shtetl—a vanished world.  
From Michael Levy, *Echoes of the Shtetl* (instrumental)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7ULjRbmlQE>  
Reb Shaya's collection (instrumental)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkMyEAJEmo4>

**Assignment for Next Week:**

- Continue to work on final project.

13. Apr. 20

**Cultural Genocide**

1. 60 minutes: *Watchers of the Sky*, part 2 (DVD, begin at 1:01:33)
2. Discussion
3. Workshop: Final Project

**Assignment for Next Week:**

- Continue to work on final project.

14. Apr. 27

**Final Project Workshop**

**Rehearse presentations**

15. May 4

**Public Presentation of Final Projects:  
*Performing the Jewish Archive* Symposium  
\*\*Location: Pyle Center, Room 235.**

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### Works used in the course

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### Selected Bibliography - Works pertinent to our study

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--- "Teaching the Holocaust in the Academic Setting: Educational Mission(s) and Pedagogical Approaches." *The Journal of Holocaust Education*, vol. 8, n. 9 (Autumn 1999): 1-27.

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---- *German Jews beyond Judaism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.

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Schweber, S. & Findling, D. (in press). *Teaching the Holocaust*. Denver, CO: Alternatives in Religious Education.

Weissman, Gary. *Fantasies of Witnessing: Postwar Efforts to Experience the Holocaust*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004.