

**HIS 392: THE HOLOCAUST – HISTORY AND MEANING
(HIS 692 for Graduate Students)**

I. Required Readings (books to be purchased)

Otto Friedrich, *The Kingdom of Auschwitz* (1994 ed.)
Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (1996 ed.)
Richard L. Rubenstein & John K. Roth, *Approaches to Auschwitz* (rev.ed.)
Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (1998 ed.)
Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness; An Examination of Conscience* (1973)

Required Readings of Gospel Accounts of the Crucifixion of Jesus:

Matthew: Chs. 26-27	Acts: Chs. 2:22-25; 3:113-15; 7:51-53
Mark: Chs. 14-15	Paul First Letter to Thessalonians 2:14-16
Luke: Chs. 22-23	John: 8:42-45
John: Chs. 18-19	

II. General Information:

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Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday – 10:45-12:00 Noon
Thursday 10:45- 12:00 Noon
Thursday: 2:30-3:30 PM

III. Course Information

ATTENDANCE POLICY: The roll will be taken at each class meeting. More than four unexcused absences may lead to being dropped from the course.

Examinations and Quizzes: A mid-term exam will be held on March 5. In lieu of a final exam, a 3-5 page paper on the Browning/Sereny books is required. This paper will be due **no later than Noon on May 12**. Two shorter quizzes are scheduled on the dates noted in the syllabus..

Class Discussions: Contributing to class discussion is essential. Your questions are very much encouraged. Effective participation in class discussion can add a 10% to your grade.

Course Papers: Two short papers of are required: 1) one of 2-4 pages on the Primo Levi book and 2), one of 3-5 pages on the Browning and Sereny books. Prompts for your papers will be provided in timely fashion. (This second paper is in lieu of a regular final exam.

Grading Policy: Mid-Term (25%); Quizzes (15%); Paper # 1 (20%); Final Paper (40%); Class Discussion (10%) I know this comes to 110%. Discussion grade can be bonus!

IV. Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful conclusion of this course, students will be able to –

1. understand the long history of anti-Semitism,
2. understand how religious teachings and modern science have been used to promote anti-Semitic sentiments,
3. explain how someone like Hitler came to power,
4. understand the ideological/intellectual underpinning of modern racism
5. understand how functioning of the Nazi system promoted the escalation of its persecutions,
6. appreciate how variously scholarly disciplines contribute to an explanation of the Holocaust, and,
7. understand how the Holocaust has reshaped understandings about religious doctrines, human psychology, and history.

COURSE OUTLINE

Jan. 20 Course Introduction

Introducing the Holocaust

Reading Assignment: Rubenstein & Roth (R & R) "Prologue"
Friedrich, *The Kingdom of Auschwitz*
Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

Jan. 22 Problems in Studying the Holocaust

Jan. 27 Introducing Auschwitz (Discussion of Otto Friedrich book)

Jan. 29 Life and Death in Auschwitz (Discussion of Primo Levi book)

Why the Jews? And Other Victims?

Reading Assignment: Gospel Accounts of the Crucifixion, Book of Acts and Paul's Letter
R & R: Chapter 1, "The Jew as Outsider: The Greco-Roman World and the
Early Christian Worlds"
R & R: Chapter 2, "The Triumph of Christianity and the 'Teaching of Contempt'"

Feb. 3 Film : "The Longest Hatred" / Discussion

Feb. 5 The Problem of Matthew 27:25; Gospel Accounts of the Crucifixion

Feb. 10 The Charge of Jews as "Christ Killers"; Role of the Church Fathers
Levi Paper Due

Feb. 12 The Middle Ages and the Demonization of the Jews
(Ritual Murder/ Usury/Host Desecration)

Feb. 17 The Bubonic Plague; Ghettoization, Expulsion

Feb. 19 Jews and the Reformation: Luther and Calvin (**Quiz # 1**)
(Luther, *On the Jews and Their Lies*)

Reading Assignment: R.& R. Chapter 3, "The Irony of Emancipation and the Dreyfus Affair"

Feb. 24 The Promise of Enlightenment/ Jewish Assimilation
(The "Jewish Question")

Feb. 26 Science and the Jews ; Birth of Modern Racism; Eugenics
(Can Jews Be Germans? Why Not?)

Mar. 3 Discussion and Review

Mar . 5 MID-TERM EXAM

Why Germany? Why Hitler?

Reading Assignment: R & R. Chapter 4, "Toward Total Domination"
R.& R. Chapter 5, "Rational Antisemitism"

Mar. 17 World War I (1914-1918) Germany's Bid for World Power

Mar. 19 1918 German Defeat and Revolution

Mar. 24 Explaining the Defeat; The Protocols of the Elders of Zion

Mar. 26 The Rise of Hitler
(Film: "The Nazis: A Warning—Helped Into Power")

Mar. 31 1933: Nazi Seizure of Power: What to do with the Jews?
(The Problem of Defining the Jews)

Apr. 2 Is Jewish Emigration a Solution? Why Not?

Apr. 7 November 9, 1938 ; The *Kristallnacht* Pogrom

Apr. 9 The *Kindertransport* (Mr. Jack Hoffmann) (**Quiz # 2**)

Reading Assignment: R. & R. Chapter 6, "War and the Final Solution"

Apr. 14 WWII (1939 -1941) -- Establishing Jewish Ghettos

Reading Assignment: R & R Chapter 7, "A Racial Struggle of Pitiless Severity"
R & R Chapter 8, "Priority Over All Matters"
Browning, *Ordinary Men*
Sereny, *Into That Darkness*

Apr. 16 1941: The Decision for Mass Murder

Apr. 21 The Milgram Experiment (Film: "Obedience")
(Are they "Ordinary Men"?)

Apr. 23 Holocaust Denial

Apr. 28 Can it Happen Again? But it already has!

Apr. 30 Discussion of Leftover Issues

Final Exam: Browning/Sereny paper due Tuesday, May 12 at Noon.