

## **HDS 2293/ Rel 1529 The Holocaust and the Churches, 1933-45**

Kevin Madigan, Winn Professor of Ecclesiastical History

Office Hours: Mondays, 3-4 and Wednesdays, 1-2 and by appointment (to set up an office appointment; please email Ms. Kristin Gunst (kgunst@hds).

*We will confront the facts without reservations. We will not justify, not rationalize, nor assign God's inscrutable will to the atrocities committed by men. We will seek the truth and not dilute its reality with platitudes. The desire to overstate the episodes of kindness and caring and miraculous survival is quite compelling. . . But these exceptions must not be permitted to obscure the general rule. And for six million, death was the rule.*

Rita Botwinick, *A Holocaust Reader*

Tuesday, 2-4 PM  
Spring 2017

This seminar will approach the Nazi persecution of European Jewry from several disciplinary perspectives. Initially the seminar will explore the topic historically. In these weeks, the seminar will use a variety of historical materials dealing with the history of European anti-semitism, German history from Bismarck to the accession of Hitler, the evolution of anti-Jewish persecution in the Third Reich, and the history of the Holocaust itself. Sources to be used will include primary sources produced by the German government 1933-1945, by Jewish victims-to-be or survivors, documentary films, and secondary interpretations. The aims of this part of the seminar will be to understand the basic background to and narrative of the Holocaust, to introduce students to the critical use of primary historical sources, and to familiarize them with some of the major historiographical debates. Then the members of the seminar will ponder religious and theological reactions to the Holocaust. The seminar will also consider the historical question of the role played by the Protestant and Catholic churches and theologies in the Holocaust. The seminar will conclude with an assessment of the role played by the Holocaust in today's world, specifically in the United States. Throughout the seminar, participants will use various literary and cinematographic sources as a way of whether and how the Holocaust can be "represented."

## Requirements

- 1) Regular, informed participation in class discussion. (50% of final grade)
- 2) A substantial final project. Possibilities include: a 15-20 page research paper; a somewhat shorter reflection paper consisting of theological/philosophical/religious reflections on the Holocaust; literary-critical interpretation of Holocaust fiction not assigned for class; fictive, dramatic or filmic projects (e.g., short story, novel chapters with outline of novel, play, documentary, interview, etc.). Each student should meet with the Instructor once during term to discuss his or her project. **Due on the last day of Reading Period.** (50% of final grade)

## Required Texts

All books, with one exception (Kidder) are available at the Harvard Coop. **All books are on reserve at the Reserve Desk of the Andover Newton Library.**

Browning, C. R. Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland. New York: HarperPerennial, 1993.

Cohn-Sherbok, Dan. Holocaust Theology: A Reader. NYU Press.

Crowe, David M. The Holocaust: Roots, History, and Aftermath. Boulder: Westview, 2008.

Gross, Jan T. Neighbors. Penguin, 2002.

Hochstadt, Steve. Sources of the Holocaust. Palgrave Macmillan.

Heschel, Susannah, and Robert Ericksen. Betrayal: German Churches and the Holocaust. Fortress, 1999.

Kidder, Annemarie. Ultimate Price: Testimonies of Christians Who Resisted the Third Reich (buy used from Amazon or other online vendor)

Niewyk, Donald L. The Holocaust: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

Sereny, G. Into That Darkness: an Examination of Conscience. New York: Vintage Books, 1983.

Spiegelman, A. Maus: Boxed Edition. New York: Pantheon Books, 1992.

Wiesel, E. Night. New York: Bantam Books, 1986. Please acquire the **Bantam** edition of this book. Hundreds of used copies, beginning at 1 cent per copy are available on Amazon ([https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=Elie+Wiesel+Night+Bantam+edition](https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=Elie+Wiesel+Night+Bantam+edition))

Wiesenthal, S., H. J. Cargas, et al. The Sunflower: on the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness. New York: Schocken Books, 1998.

### Film Reserves and Purchases

We will discuss a number of films this term. Each of them is available on reserve at the Andover Library Reserve Desk. The Instructor also has copies he can lend you. The first three are on Amazon.com for under \$10. I recommend you purchase these, or purchase them with a group of fellow students:

“Europa, Europa”

“The Pianist”

“Schindler’s List”

“The Quarrel”

We will also be viewing “Au Revoir les Enfants” and “Sophie Scholl: The Final Days” both of which are available for free in their entirety at links indicated below.

View assigned films before class days on which they will be discussed, except where indicated.

## Calendar

1/25 From National Unification to National Socialism

Lecture by Instructor

Crowe, The Holocaust, 1-3

Hochstadt, Sources of the Holocaust, Part II

Niewyk, The Holocaust (Part I, essay by Weiss)

Recommended: Hochstadt, Sources of the Holocaust  
Sections I-II

Browse through German propaganda archive at

<http://research.calvin.edu/german-propaganda-archive/>

2/1 Anti-Jewish Policy and Legislation, 1933-1938;  
Kristallnacht, War, Ghettoization, 1938-1941

The Holocaust, Crowe, 4-6

Hochstadt, Sources of the Holocaust, Parts II-V

Continue to Browse through German propaganda archive at

<http://research.calvin.edu/german-propaganda-archive/>

View: “Europa, Europa” (in light of German propaganda)

View: first ten minutes of Leni Riefenstahl, “Triumph of the Will  
at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHS2coAzLJ8>

2/8 The Evolution of the “Final Solution,” 1941-45

Crowe, The Holocaust 7-8

Niewyk, The Holocaust, “Chronology of Events,” and  
Glossary,” Map and Tables pp. xix-xxv

Hochstadt, Sources of the Holocaust, VI-VIII (concentrate on  
Minutes of the Wannsee Conference VI. 42, 132-37)

Recommended: Niewyk, The Holocaust, Part III  
Sources of the Holocaust, Parts VII-VIII

2/18 The Motivations of the Perpetrators I

Browning, Ordinary Men (carefully read Afterword; Goldhagen)

Niewyk, The Holocaust [4<sup>TH</sup> edition], Part II (omit Browning)

2/15      The Motivations of the Perpetrators II

Sereny, Into that Darkness (you may skip Part VI and read for 3/1)

2/22      Problems of Interpretation I: Intentionalist/Functionalist Debate

**CONCENTRATE ON “ORIGINS OF THE  
HOLOCAUST,” FROM NIEWYK, 1<sup>ST</sup> ED. (Canvas)**

Niewyk, The Holocaust, Part I (4<sup>TH</sup> ED)

**Send 500 word reflection to Instructor by 9  
AM, 2/21 on which essay you find most persuasive and why.**

Problems of Interpretation II: Jewish Resistance

Niewyk, Parts IV and V  
View: “The Pianist”

3/1      Protestant and Catholic Churches

Heschel, Betrayal  
Niewyk, The Holocaust, Part VI, essay by Phayer  
Madigan, “What the Vatican Knew and When”  
and “Kevin Madigan and Critics” (available through  
Canvas)  
View: “Au Revoir les Enfants” at  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2c95VtFzUJ0>

3/8      The Holocaust, the Covenant, and God

Dan Cohn-Sherbok, Holocaust Theology: A Reader, Chs. 1-13  
(pick 1-2 essays on 1 theme and send 500 word reflection to  
Instructor by 9 AM on 3/7) [Chs. 14-16 will be considered next wk.]

View: “The Quarrel”

3/15      **NO CLASS    SPRING RECESS**

3/29

Neighbors? Forgiveness?

Jan Gross, Neighbors

Niewyk, The Holocaust, Section V (essays by Gutman/Krakowski and Lukas)

Wiesenthal, The Sunflower

Recommended: Dan Cohn-Sherbok, Holocaust Theology: A

Reader (do read essay by Longford, 372-376), Chs. 14-16.

Madigan, "A Survey of Jewish Reaction to 'We Remember' (available through Hollis)

4/5

Rescue, Rescuers and the Question of Religious Motivation

Kidder, Ultimate Price

Niewyk, Part V 5 (article by N. Tec, "Righteous Gentiles")

Niewyk, The Holocaust, Part VI (articles by Rubinstein and Laqueur)

View: Sophie Scholl: The Final Days at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXtC08tWxqA>

View: "Weapons of the Spirit" (short excerpt at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdlJql-TY6c>)

4/12

Representation

Spiegelman, Maus

Wiesel, Night (Bantam edition)

4/19

Representation II

"Schindler's List" (view first 2 hours by class)

4/26

Justice? Nuremberg and the Trial of Adolf Eichmann

Sources of the Holocaust, Part IX

(concentrate on IX. 76 on Nuremberg)

"The Trial of Adolf Eichmann"

Retrospective

(at Instructor's home, with dinner)