

The Holocaust in American Culture

Dr. Hannah Pollin-Galay

Gilman 305

Tuesdays, 14:00-16:00

Office hours: Rosenberg 215, Tuesdays 10:00-12:00 or by appointment

hpgalay@tauex.tau.ac.il

Though the Holocaust took place in Europe, it has had a distinctive impact on American culture—in literature, film, television and politics. Likewise, American culture continues to shape what the world thinks and feels about this European catastrophe. In this course, we will read works by authors such as John Hersey, Sylvia Plath, Hannah Arendt, Art Spiegelman, Philip Roth, Isaac Bashevis Singer and Nicole Kraus. Films by Alfred Hitchcock, Fred Zinnemann, Steven Spielberg and Alan Pakula will illuminate questions about cinematic representation and the politics of Hollywood. Special attention will also be devoted to the analysis of video testimonies created in the United States.

Students are expected to:

- a. Come to class on time and prepared
- b. Listen attentively and actively participate in class discussions, **without the use of the internet or cellular phones during class. Computer use is highly discouraged.**
- c. Send in a discussion question **three times** over the course of the semester. Discussion questions will be sent to my email by 12:00 midnight the night before class.
- d. Submit a 5-7 page take-home exam at the end of the course.

Grade breakdown:

25% Participation and class questions

75% Take-home exam

All reading and viewing items are to be accessed through Moodle and prepared at home, except the items marked "In Class," which we will see or read together in class.

1. **5.3.19** Introductory lecture
2. **12.3.19** Living with Memory
Cynthia Ozick, *The Shawl*
3. **19.3.19** Introducing the American People to the Holocaust
Fred Zinneman, *The Search*
In class clip: Alfred Hitchcock, *Spellbound* (1945)
4. **26.3.19** Holocaust Literature as Minority Literature
Yakov Glatshiteyn, "Goodnight World," "Without Jews"
Isaac Bashevis Singer, "The Cafeteria"

5. **2.4.19** Survivors and American Social Tensions
Film: *The Pawnbroker*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYnCVj6ldH4>
6. **9.4. 19** Compare and Despair?
Sylvia Plath "Daddy," "Lady Lazarus," "Sheep in Fog," "The Applicant," "Mary's Song,"
"Fever 103°," "Edge," "Words" (from book *Ariel*, 1961)
In class: Joshua Oppenheimer, *The Act of Killing*
- 16.4.19 Pesach**
7. **30.4.19** The Holocaust Enters the Mainstream
Elie Wiesel, *Night*
In class: Wiesel with Oprah Winfrey
8. **7.5.19** In Search of a Story
Philip Roth, *The Ghostwriter*
Guest lecturer: Dr. David Hadar
9. **14.5.19** Holocaust Memory Decentralized
USC Shoah Foundation Video Testimonies
In class: Steven Spielberg, *Schindler's List*
10. **28.5.19** Between Parents and Children, Words and Images
Art Spiegelman, MAUS I
11. **4.6.19** Remembering into the 21st Century
Nicole Kraus, *The History of Love*
12. 11.6.19 Concluding discussion