

Syllabus Template for German 3254H: Representations and Memory of the Holocaust in Film

(1) Instructor: Professor Robert C. Holub

Office: 340 Hagerty Hall

Phone: (614) 292-0821

Email: Holub.5@osu.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

(2) NA

(3) TBD

(4) German 3254H Representations and Memory of the Holocaust in Film

(5) Fulfills GE Culture and Ideas, Visual and Performing Arts, Historical Study, Diversity (Global Studies)

Expected Learning Outcomes:

- 1. Students analyze and interpret major films dealing with the Holocaust, thereby investigating various modes of human thought, culture, and expression. Students will be dealing in a sophisticated fashion with visual materials, and with historical material dealing with the Holocaust and its fate in postwar Europe and the United States. They will learn how to interpret film and to explore historical phenomena that are multi-faceted. They will deal with a significant amount of material from non-US culture and come to understand the traditions and reactions of different nations.**
- 2. Students evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior. They will come to understand the reactions of individuals in different countries to atrocities committed in Europe (mostly in Poland by Germans), and recognize how these attitudes inform contemporary discussions. They will actively participate in interpretation and analysis of filmic representation and its historical determinants and dimensions.**

Students will view major filmic representations of the Holocaust from a variety of countries and decades from the 1940s through the 1990s. Through lectures, class discussions, papers, and examinations students will be familiarized with how these films have contributed to our understanding of a complex phenomenon of the Second World War and how the directors have coped with the thorny issues of representing something that many people consider to be unrepresentable.

(6) Course Description: This course is designed to investigate various strategies for

representing the unrepresentable. Because of its enormity the Holocaust has often been viewed as an event that defies representation, yet it has continuously been the topic of films in the postwar era. Focusing primarily on films produced in the United States, we will examine films from the 1940s until the 1990s for their representational strategies and their dealings with memory and commemoration. In the first few weeks we will look at how Jews and the Jewish Question in Germany was portrayed in the 1940s. Then we will take up films during the first few decades following the war, before turning to the TV documentary *Holocaust* as a turning point in representation for the United States and in particular for German audiences. The last part of the course will be devoted to three very different filmic documents from the post-*Holocaust* era: *Shoah*, *Schindler's List*, and *Life is Beautiful*.

(7) **Required Course Materials:** I would like to see about having these films available for streaming. I will use the Secured Video Library for them. Films will occasionally be supplemented with written materials: for example, I will put on reserve in the library the *Diary of Anne Frank* so that students can read sections of it along with the viewing of the film. The same holds true for Lanzmann's *Shoah*, which is largely a transcript of the film.

(8) **Assignments:** Average viewing per week will be approximately two hours. The assignments for the course are as follows:

1. One short paper (4-6 pages), due after the eighth week of classes

2. Students will be required to be part of a group presentation. In these presentations students, in groups of three or four, will view an additional film about the Holocaust and present it to the class. These presentations will occur after the eighth week of the course.

3. A final examination

(9) **Grading based on the following percentages:** paper (25%); presentation (30%); class participation (10%); final examination (35%).

(10) Grading Scale:

100-93 A	79-77 C+	
92-90 A-	76-73 C	
89-87 B+	72-70 C-	
86-83 B	69-67 D+	
82-80 B-	66-63 D	below 63 E

(11) Final examination during the regularly scheduled finals period.

(12) Class attendance policy: Students are expected to attend class, and will be penalized for failure to attend more than three sessions per term.

(13) Weekly Outline

Week	Topic	Film
Week One	Introduction to the Holocaust as a historical event, to theories of representation of the Holocaust, and to controversies involving memory and commemoration	None
Week Two	The Nazi's Representation of Jews: Anti-Semitism in the Third Reich	Harlan's <i>Jud Süß</i> (1940)
Week Three	The US takes notice of anti-Semitism in Germany: American Policy Toward the Jews of Europe	Chaplain's <i>The Great Dictator</i> (1940)
Week Four	French Response in Documentary Mode; What are Documentary Films of the Holocaust?	Resnais' <i>Night and Fog</i> (1955)
Week Five	Broadway to Hollywood: The Focus on the Innocent Individual	Steven's <i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i> (1959)
Week Six	View of the Holocaust in Italy: An Ally of Germany Responds to the Jewish Question	De Sica's <i>Garden of the Finzi-Continis</i> (1970)
Week Seven	A Jewish Response from Germany: Resigned Humor and Tragic Fate/Fatatic Tragedy	Beyer's <i>Jakob, The Liar</i> (1974)
Week Eight	The Aftermath of the Holocaust as Haunting Memory: Escaping the Horrors	Pakula's <i>Sophie's Choice</i> (1982)
Week Nine	Made for TV: Made for TV: Popularizing the Holocaust for the American Viewer	Chomsky's TV Docudrama <i>The Holocaust</i> (1978)
Week Ten	Made for TV: Popularizing the Holocaust for the American Viewer	Chomsky's TV Docudrama <i>The Holocaust</i> (1978)
Week Eleven	Explorations of Memory as Representation: Documentation without Representation	Lanzmann's <i>Shoah</i> (1985)
Week Twelve	Explorations of Memory as Representation: Documentation without Representation	Lanzmann's <i>Shoah</i> (1985)

Week Thirteen	The Good German and the Hollywood Epic: Survival and Remembrance	Spielberg's <i>Schindler's List</i> (1993)
Week Fourteen	Humor and the Holocaust: Thwarting Expectations of Representation	Benigni's <i>Life is Beautiful</i> (1998)

(14) **“It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the [Code of Student Conduct](#)**

(15) **“Students with disabilities that have been certified by the [Office for Disability Services](#) will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901.”**