

HISTORY 224 / JEWISH STUDIES 231 (3 CREDITS)

The Holocaust

Fall 2018

Prof. Amos Bitzan

MWF 9:55-10:45 AM in Humanities 1101

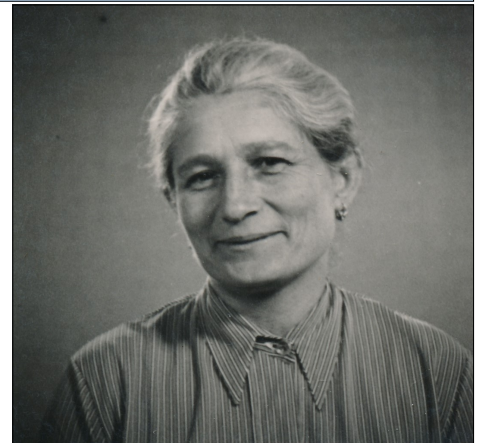
Teaching Assistant: Chad S.A. Gibbs

Course Learning Objectives

References to the Holocaust abound in contemporary political debates and in our popular culture. But most people know very little about the history of the Holocaust, despite the mountains of superb historical scholarship that experts in the field have produced over decades of dedicated research.

Through concentrated reading, analysis of major issues, and explaining your insights in writing, this course will help you build in-depth knowledge of the Nazi genocide of European Jewry during

WWII. You will learn how and why the Nazis and their collaborators were able to carry out a program of persecution and ultimately extermination against the Jewish communities of Europe, leading to the murder of an estimated 6 million Jews. After taking this course, you will know the events, processes, ideas, organizations, and individuals behind these crimes. You will also gain an understanding of the everyday experiences of victims of the Holocaust in order to appreciate the limited options for survival available to them.



This course is dedicated to the memory of Sara Spira (1887-?), who perished in the Holocaust. We know of her experiences through a series of postcards that she sent from Nazi-occupied Poland to her daughter and son-in-law who had fled Europe and settled in Racine, Wisconsin. You will study these postcards and have a chance to talk to Spira's grandson, Michael Stern '65, a Wisconsin alum, who discovered the correspondence. We will use her letters and our study of the larger events around her to reconstruct the experiences of an ordinary family swept up in the Holocaust.

DISCUSSION SECTIONS

301: Th 8:50-9:40 AM in Humanities 2619

302: Th 9:55-10:45 AM Humanities 2121

303: Th 12:05-12:55 PM Humanities 2211

304: Th 1:20-2:10 PM Humanities 2631

OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT

BITZAN: W 1-3 PM in 4134 Humanities
abitzan@wisc.edu - (608) 263-1812

GIBBS: M 11-12 & Th 2:30-3:30 PM in 4220 Humanities
cgibbs4@wisc.edu

Requirements

Paper 1 (20%) DUE OCTOBER 17 at 9 PM on Canvas

Thesis-driven paper of 1,050-1,750 words (3-5 pages).

Most Germans between 1933 and 1939 did not share Hitler's ideology of redemptive antisemitism. Drawing on lecture, section, and your readings from weeks 1 to 6, explain why anti-Jewish persecution nevertheless intensified so radically over the course of this period. Organize your paper around three specific instances or types of anti-Jewish persecution to illustrate your argument and be sure to define "redemptive antisemitism." Use Chicago Style footnotes to provide citations for all statements requiring a reference. HINT: Read the introduction to Saul Friedländer's *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, Vol. 1, for useful insights before you construct your own argument.

Midterm Exam (10%) ON OCTOBER 26 in class

Cumulative in-class midterm on key concepts and facts from readings, lectures, and section discussions covering Weeks 1 to 8.

Paper 2 (25%) DUE DECEMBER 14 at 9 PM on Canvas

Thesis-driven paper of 1,400-2,100 words (4-6 pages).

How did the middle-aged men of Reserve Police Battalion 101 and countless other Holocaust perpetrators become killers of innocent men, women, and children? Draw on Christopher Browning's *Ordinary Men*, Friedländer's *The Years of Extermination*, lecture and section discussions, and other readings from the course to make your case. Organize your paper around several different events, policies, or sites of mass murder. Use Chicago Style footnotes.

Final Exam (15%) ON DECEMBER 17 from 7:25-9:25 PM

Cumulative exam on key concepts and facts from readings, lectures, and section from Weeks 9 to 15.

Section Participation (20%)

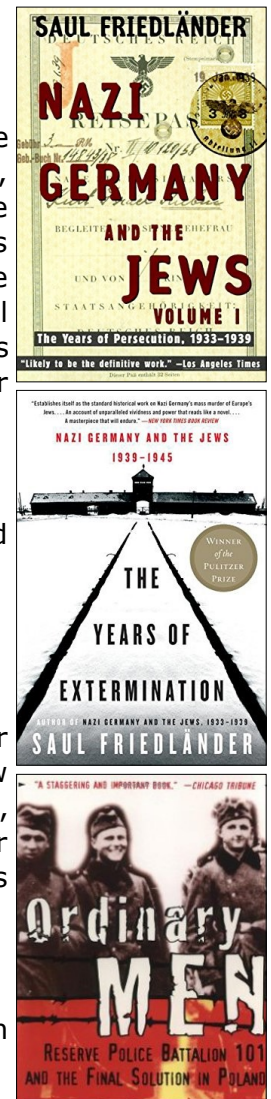
See Discussion Section Syllabus, which you will receive from your TA in section.

Lecture Discussions and Q&A (10%)

Every week, on the days marked as "Discussion on ...," we will have a discussion in lecture on the assigned selection from Saul Friedländer's *Nazi Germany and the Jews* or *The Years of Extermination*. You should prepare for this discussion by figuring out the central argument or arguments of the assigned text. Sometimes, I will also send out a specific question to think about ahead of class that you should be ready to discuss. You should prepare rigorously for every class, since I may call on you to participate without advance notice. I will also occasionally pose questions and open a discussion in other lectures not marked as "Discussion on" If you are absent, you will earn a zero for that class. If you are called on and participate in a given class, you will earn a grade of at least 70% for that day's participation. I would provide further details about participation assessment in class. I will call on you multiple times over the course of the semester.

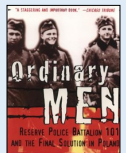
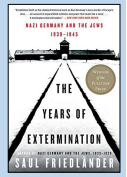
Reading

Please bring the assigned book and/or printed PDF to your lectures and sections.



Week 1 W 9/5 T 9/6 F 9/7	Introduction Course Overview Section - Introduction Lecture Complete each reading BEFORE the day indicated. In Week 2, you need to have read Chapter 3 before lecture on Wednesday, September 12 and Moeller #9 before your section on Thursday, September 13.
Week 2 M 9/10 W 9/12 T 9/13 F 9/14	The Nazis' Rise to Power (1918-1933) NO CLASS Discussion on <i>Nazi Germany and the Jews</i> : Chapter 3, pp. 73-112. Section: Moeller ed., <i>The Nazi State and German Society</i> : #9 (PDF). Lecture
Week 3 M 9/17 W 9/19 T 9/20 F 9/21	The Nazis' First Steps in Power (1933) Discussion on <i>Nazi Germany and the Jews</i> : Chapter 1-2, pp. 9-72. NO CLASS Section: Moeller: #23 and #26 (PDF). Lecture
Week 4 M 9/24 W 9/26 T 9/27 F 9/28	Exclusion Enshrined in Law (1933-1935) NO CLASS Discussion on <i>Nazi Germany and the Jews</i> : Chapter 4-5, pp. 113-173. Moeller: Read in this order: #31 and #32 followed by #30 (PDF). Lecture
Week 5 M 10/1 W 10/3 T 10/4 F 10/5	Radicalization in Peacetime (1935-1938) NO CLASS Discussion on <i>Nazi Germany and the Jews</i> : Chapter 6-7, pp. 177-240. Section: Moeller: #33 (PDF). Lecture
Week 6 M 10/8 W 10/10 T 10/11 F 10/12	Expropriation & Emigration (1938-1939) Discussion. <i>Nazi Germany and the Jews</i> : Chapter 8-10, pp. 241-333. Lecture Section: Moeller: #42 and #44 (PDF). Lecture: The Sara Spira Story I

Week 7 M 10/15 W 10/17 T 10/18 F 10/19	Racial Policy and Terror (1939-1940) Discussion on <i>The Years of Extermination</i>: Ch. 1, pp. 3-64. Lecture. PAPER 1 due on Canvas at 9 pm. Section: Sara Spira Docs #1-7; Sandy Stern "Family Story" (PDF). The Sara Spira Story II: Michael Stern Guest Lecture
Week 8 M 10/22 W 10/24 T 10/25 F 10/26	Expulsion as "Final Solution" (1940) Discussion on <i>The Years of Extermination</i>: Chapter 2, pp. 65-128. Lecture Section: Sara Spira Documents #8-13 (PDF) MIDTERM EXAM
Week 9 M 10/29 W 10/31 T 11/1 F 11/2	The Ghettos (1940-1941) Discussion on <i>The Years of Extermination</i>: Chapter 3, pp. 129-194. Lecture Section: "Gorlice," <i>USHMM Encyclopedia of Camps & Ghettos</i> (PDF). Lecture: The Sara Spira Story III
Week 10 M 11/5 W 11/7 T 11/8 F 11/9	The Invasion of the Soviet Union (1941) Discussion on <i>The Years of Extermination</i>: Chapter 4, pp. 197-260. Lecture Section: <i>Ordinary Men</i>, Chapters 1-6. Lecture: The Sara Spira Story IV
Week 11 M 11/12 W 11/14 T 11/15 F 11/16	Mass Killing on the Eastern Front (1941) Discussion on <i>The Years of Extermination</i>: Chapter 5, pp. 261-328. Lecture Section: <i>Ordinary Men</i>, Chapters 7-10. The Case of Byelaya Tserkov. Read: PDF Selection on Canvas.
Week 12 M 11/19 W 11/21 T 11/22 F 11/23	The Final Solution Formulated (1941-1942) Discussion on <i>The Years of Extermination</i>: Chapter 6, pp. 329-395. Lecture NO SECTION. Read <i>Ordinary Men</i>, Chapters 11-13 NO CLASS



Week 13	The Extermination Camps I (1942-1943)
M 11/26	Discussion on <i>The Years of Extermination</i> , Chapter 7-8, pp. 399-538.
W 11/28	Lecture
T 11/29	Section: <i>Ordinary Men</i> , Chapters 14-17.
F 11/30	Lecture by Chad Gibbs
Week 14	The Extermination Camps II (1943-1944)
M 12/3	Discussion on <i>The Years of Extermination</i> : Chapter 9, pp. 539-600.
W 12/5	Lecture
T 12/6	Section: <i>Ordinary Men</i> , Chapter 18 and Afterword.
F 12/7	Final Exam Review Bowl
Week 15	Relentless Destruction (1944-1945)
M 12/10	Discussion on <i>The Years of Extermination</i> , Chapter 10, 601-663.
W 12/12	Lecture.
F 12/14	Paper 2 due on Canvas at 9 PM.
M 12/17	Final Exam 7:25-9:25 PM.

Books to Purchase

- Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, Vol. 1: *The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998). ISBN: 0060928786.
- Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, Vol. 2: *The Years of Extermination, 1939-1945* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2008). ISBN: 0060930489.
- Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998). ISBN: 0060995068.

Please purchase these books used if you can. Print editions only. Do not buy the abridged edition.

Credit Hours and Workload

This class meets for three 50-minute class periods each week over the spring semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, researching, and writing) for about 2 hours out of classroom for every class period. The syllabus includes additional information about meeting times and expectations for student work.

Late Policy

Please contact me in advance if you believe that you might need an extension for an assignment. Unless you have previously arranged an extension with me, grades for late submissions will be lowered by one grade category for each day they are late.

Laptops

Not allowed in class.

Grading Scheme	
A	≥93%
AB	87-92%
B	80-86%
BC	75-79%
C	70-74%
D	60-69%
F	≤59

Goals of the History Major

The goal of the history major is to offer students the knowledge and skills they need to gain a critical perspective on the past. Students will learn to define important historical questions, analyze relevant evidence with rigor and creativity, and present convincing arguments and conclusions based on original research in a manner that contributes to academic and public discussions. In History, as in other humanistic disciplines, students will practice resourceful inquiry and careful reading. They will advance their writing and public speaking skills to engage historical and contemporary issues.

To ensure that students gain exposure to some of the great diversity of topics, methodologies, and philosophical concerns that inform the study of history, the department requires a combination of courses that offers breadth, depth, and variety of exposition. Through those courses, students should develop:

1. Broad acquaintance with several geographic areas of the world and with both the pre-modern and modern eras.
2. Familiarity with the range of sources and modes through which historical information can be found and expressed. Sources may include textual, oral, physical, and visual materials. The data within them may be qualitative or quantitative, and they may be available in printed, digital, or other formats. Modes of expression may include textbooks, monographs, scholarly articles, essays, literary works, or digital presentations.
3. In-depth understanding of a topic of their choice through original or creative research.
4. The ability to identify the skills developed in the history major and to articulate the applicability of those skills to a variety of endeavors and career paths beyond the professional practice of history.

Skills Developed in the History Major

DEFINE IMPORTANT HISTORICAL QUESTIONS

1. Pose a historical question and explain its academic and public implications.
2. Using appropriate research procedures and aids, find the secondary resources in history and other disciplines available to answer a historical question.
3. Evaluate the evidentiary and theoretical bases of pertinent historical conversations in order to highlight opportunities for further investigation.

COLLECT AND ANALYZE EVIDENCE

1. Identify the range and limitations of primary sources available to engage the historical problem under investigation.
2. Examine the context in which sources were created, search for chronological and other relationships among them, and assess the sources in light of that knowledge.
3. Employ and, if necessary, modify appropriate theoretical frameworks to examine sources and develop arguments.

PRESENT ORIGINAL CONCLUSIONS

1. Present original and coherent findings through clearly written, persuasive arguments and narratives.
2. Orally convey persuasive arguments, whether in formal presentations or informal discussions.
3. Use appropriate presentation formats and platforms to share information with academic and public audiences.

CONTRIBUTE TO ONGOING DISCUSSIONS

1. Extend insights from research to analysis of other historical problems.
2. Demonstrate the relevance of a historical perspective to contemporary issues.
3. Recognize, challenge, and avoid false analogies, overgeneralizations, anachronisms, and other logical fallacies.