

Professor James E. Young
English 319, Jud 319
TA's: Pam Williams & Claire Wilson

U.Mass.Amherst
Fall 2006
Tues 2:30, Herter 227

REPRESENTING THE HOLOCAUST

Required Books (available at Amherst Books):

The Destruction of the European Jews, by Raul Hilberg
Survival in Auschwitz, by Primo Levi
Night, by Elie Wiesel
Auschwitz: True Tales from a Grotesque Land . . ., by Sara Nomberg-Przytk
This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen, by Tadeusz Borowski
Maus (vols. I & II), by Art Spiegelman
Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust, by James E. Young
The Texture of Memory, by James E. Young

Other required readings include selections from Chaim Kaplan's diary, as well as poetry from Nelly Sachs, Paul Celan, Jacob Glatstein, Abraham Sutzkever, Yitzchak Katzenelson, Chaim Nachman Bialik, Uri Zvi Greenberg, Dan Pagis, Charles Reznikoff, and Sylvia Path, copies of which will be distributed in class.

Written work for this course includes two (5-7 page) papers, due 26 October and 7 December respectively, an essay midterm (7 November) and a final take-home thought question. Paper topics will be announced in advance.

Course Outline, week by week:

September 12-14

I. Writing, Interpreting, and Understanding the Holocaust.

Readings: Introduction and Chapter 1 in Young; Chapters 1-3 in Hilberg.

September 19-21

II. The Holocaust in Historical Continuum and Jewish Literary Tradition.

Readings: Bialik (handout); extracts from Kaplan's diary (handout).

September 26-28

III. Defining the Period of the Holocaust: Naming and Understanding

Readings: Levi; Chapter 5 in Young.

October 3-5

IV. What is Holocaust Literature? Why the Writers Write.

Readings: Wiesel; Chapters 2-3 in Young.

October 10-12

V. Representing the Persecutors: The Architects of Destruction.

Reading: "Looking into the Mirrors of Evil"; Film (Tuesday): "The Architecture of Doom." (continued . . . 2)

October 17-19

VI. Engendering the Holocaust: Women's Experiences and Memory.
Readings: Nomberg-Przytyk.

October 24-26

VII. Religious Interpretations of the Holocaust.
Readings: Borowski. **First Paper Due Thursday.**

October 31 - November 2

VIII. Poetry and the Holocaust (Part I).
Readings: Celan, Sachs, Sutzkever, and Pagis (handout);
chapters 7-8 in Young.

November 7-9

IX. Poetry and the Holocaust (Part II).
Readings: Glatstein, Reznikoff, and Plath (handout). **Midterm Tuesday.**

November 14-16

X. Telling the Holocaust: Video Testimony.
Viewings: Video Testimonies from Yale.
Readings: Chapter 9 in Young.

November 21-23 (Thanksgiving).

XI. The Holocaust in Film: Claude Lanzmann's "Shoah." (Tuesday).

November 28-30

XII. Popular Culture: From Holocaust Rock to Comix.
Readings: Spiegelman; "Because of that War" (handout).

December 5-7

XIII. The Landscape of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History.
Readings: Chapter 10 in Young.
Slide Presentation: Memorials and Museums.
Video: Yom Ha'Shoah. **Second Paper Due Thursday.**

December 13

XIV. The Arts of Holocaust Post-memory: Art and Architecture.
Slide Presentation: Contemporary Holocaust Art and Architecture.

Office Hours: 12:00 - 1:30 Tuesday, Thursday, and by appointment, 737 Herter.