

Women and the Holocaust

Spring 2015

GSD 341F (37480) cross-listed as

CL 323 (33140) EUS 345(35675) JS 363 (39410) WGS 340 (46670) RS 357 (44265)

Time: TTh 9:30-11:00

Classroom: GRA 114

Instructor: Prof. Pascale R. Bos

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Office hours: T and TH 12:30-1:30 or call or email for appointment

Purpose of Course: Writing Flag

This is a class with a writing flag, and your writing assignments for this class in terms of both composition and content are as important as the primary class content. Throughout the course, you will receive writing hand-outs (general information on certain skills) and writing prompts (detailed descriptions of an assignment). Keep all of these together in a folder or a binder and refer back to this information while writing. We spend some class time each week discussing assignments and general issues of composition, as well as specific problems, and you will receive elaborate feedback on your assignments. If you need more individual writing help, visit my office hours and/or visit the UT undergraduate writing lab (see below).

Purpose of Course: Global Cultures Flag, Understanding Gender and Self-Representation under Nazi Reign

This course is meant to serve as an introduction to the *history* of women during WW II and the Holocaust and to women's *narratives* and *self-representations* of this period. *There are thus two foci:*

1. Investigate the *historical* role of Western and Eastern European women (Jews and non-Jews) during WW II and the Holocaust through autobiographical narratives, films, and historical analyses. In doing so, we simultaneously explore what doing *gender history* looks like. How did fascism define the gender roles of non-Jewish women in Germany? How did the Nazis treat Jewish women and other female "enemies of the state"? Did the experience of persecuted (Jewish) women differ from that of (Jewish) men?

2. We examine autobiographical narratives by women as self-representations that attempt to negotiate the different (and shifting) discourses on femininity and masculinity, and the role of women in the public and private sphere during the Third Reich. Although the texts sketch a picture of the experiences and gender constructions that we seek to examine, we will not just use them as "eyewitness" documents but critically investigate *how* to interpret them. *How* are they produced, *when* were they produced, how much time elapsed between the event and the writing about it? What is the role of the interviewer or editor, what is the role of time and aging? How do texts relate to "lived experience?" Is memory gendered, or are narratives?

Course Requirements

Lectures

Depending on the content of the week's assignments and student presentations (see below) most classes will end or start with a short lecture and a brief in-class assignment to aid discussion. To prepare for the assignment, you will need to have read the assigned reading and it is strongly recommended that you bring the reading with you.

Presentations

You are responsible for doing a presentation on one of the week's assigned readings. You work on these presentations in pairs. Divide up the reading, read the texts carefully, and provide a question or a topic for the rest of the class to respond to. The presentation should be 10 minutes per person (20 total), and will be followed by questions from the class and a discussion. It is recommended that you use a hand out - I am not a big fan of Powerpoint! At the end of the semester you will also give a 3-5 minute presentation on your final paper – on your thesis and the progress you have made thus far (prepare at most 1-2 index cards for this purpose).

Writing Assignments

There are *three* different writing assignments: 1 film *précis*, 1 brief book report, and a final paper which is broken up into several components.

Film précis A brief (1-2 page) analysis of a film that we will view in class will be based on a specific writing prompt. This assignment is meant as a practice exercise (summarizing and analyzing skills) for your final paper, it is due on March 3rd.

Book report A brief (2-3 pages) book report on Ruth Klüger's *Still Alive* is due on March 26 and should contain a full, but brief argument about the memoir based on one or more of the questions in the provided prompt. Write an intro with a simple thesis, a short summary of the text, and an analysis of the text (your own), an end in a concrete conclusion).

Final Paper A final research paper, discussing a choice of the readings and/or one or more of the issues raised during this course, ranging 6-8 pages is due on May 13th, 5 days after our last day of classes. A one-page proposal is due the eleventh week of class, April 9th. You are also required to compile a short bibliography, due April 16th, a draft working thesis, due on April 21st, and a one-page outline with thesis and opening paragraph by April 28th. The final paper must be typed, double spaced, and free of grammatical or typographical errors. One page equals *no less* than 300 words. The paper should comply to MLA, APA, or Chicago style. Papers should be sent to me by the set due date, and saved as "Lastname Final Paper W and H."

Attendance

You are expected to attend all sessions, do the background reading, and participate in discussions, many of which will be based on the readings. Because much of the class consists of small group work, attendance is mandatory and reflected in your grade. Unless there are documented medical or personal reasons (about which you have notified me), *final grades will be lowered by one letter for every 5 unexcused absences*. Some make up work may be made available for legitimate absences.

Texts

You are *required* to purchase the following: Ruth Klüger *Still Alive* and a course pack (also referred to as the class reader), available from Speedway Copies/Abel's Copies, 715 W. 23rd street (ground floor of parking garage for University Towers Dormitory, Phone: 512-478-3334).

Films

We will watch the following films in class. If you are unable to attend the session, you will need to watch them on your own: Ray Muller *The Horrible, Wonderful Life of Leni Riefenstahl*, Helke Sander *BeFreier, Befreite*.

Grading

Attendance/participation	20%	film précis	15%
Class presentation	10%		
Book report	15%		
Final research paper, includes: proposal 5%, biblio 5%, outline, thesis, opening ¶ 5%, paper 25%	40%		

Disabilities

The University of Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 512-471-6259, 512-471-6441 TTY.

Writing Center

I strongly encourage you to use the Undergraduate Writing Center, FAC 211, 512-471-6222: <http://uwc.fac.utexas.edu/>. The Undergraduate Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Their services are not just for writing with "problems." Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a successful writing project. Consultants help students develop strategies to improve their writing.

A note on scholastic dishonesty

While doing research on the internet, it is tempting to copy and paste when you find a text that suits your need. However, this constitutes plagiarism, a form of scholastic dishonesty that we take very seriously at UT. Please quote properly, or paraphrase (while disclosing your original source). For more information: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis_plagiarism.php as well as on scholastic dishonesty more broadly: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis.php>

Use of cell phones and computers

Cell phones must be put away during class, and computers may be used only for note-taking. Students who use gadgets for non-class related activities will be marked absent and asked to leave for the remainder of that class.

Grading criteria**An A student:**

Always comes to class, on time, and has their materials with them
 Has done the reading and is prepared to have an informed discussion about it in class
 Works well with other students in small groups
 Asks questions when s/he does not understand something
 Volunteers to answer open questions in class
 Has prepared (writing) assignments on time
 Has followed the directions of the writing assignments and tests carefully and has prepared accordingly
 Adds significant new information to the class presentation
 Knows how to use the library resources, and asks the librarian for help
 Spends just as much time on the form of the writing (revise, revise!) as on the content
 Displays significant original and critical thought in the content of their writing
 Visits office hours a few times during the semester

A B student:

Is almost always on time, almost always present, and has their materials with them
 Is mostly prepared for class
 Works well with other students in small groups
 Does their best in working with other students in small groups
 Sometimes volunteers to answer open questions in class
 Has prepared almost all (writing) assignments on time
 Follows most directions of the writing assignments and tests and prepares accordingly
 Adds some new information to the class presentation
 Knows how to use the library resources, and/or asks the librarian for help
 Spends nearly as much time on the form of the writing (revise, revise!) as on the content
 Displays some original and critical thought in the content of their writing
 Visits office hours at least once during the semester

Calendar-Syllabus

Readings are listed on the day they will be discussed so read them before you come to class. Always bring the assigned text to class on days we discuss it. *Note: All readings can be found in the class reader with the exception of Ruth Klüger's memoir.*

Week 1 **Class introduction**

T Jan 20 Brief discussion of analytical framework, structure of class, syllabus, course packet, bio, and survey

Assignment: write bio and do survey, think of which presentation you would like to do.

Th Jan 22 NO CLASS

Assignment: get your reader, read texts for week 2

Week 2

T Jan 27 NO CLASS

Th Jan 29 **Short history of WW II**

Bio due! Survey due! Sign up for presentations!

Basic history/geography of WW II (discussion of survey)

Assignment: read texts for wk 3

Week 3

T Feb 3

Short history of WW II continued

Bio due! Survey due! Sign up for presentations!

Basic history/geography of WW II (discussion of survey)

Th Feb 5

Short History of the Holocaust/Interpretive Frameworks

Chronology (22-33) (finish up survey)

Discussion: WW II = "A war against the Jews," and overarching framework:

Victims, Perpetrators, Bystanders (no texts in reader)

Assignment: read texts for week 4.

Week 4 **What is Women's/Gender History? I**

T Feb 10

Joan Gadol *The Social Relation of the Sexes: Methodological Implications of Women's History*

Th Feb 12

What is Women's/Gender History? II

Kathleen Canning *Feminist History after the Linguistic Turn* (excerpt)

Assignment: read texts for week 5.

Week 5	Germans: Victims or Willing Perpetrators?
T Feb 17	Christopher Browning, <i>Preface & Ordinary Men</i> Daniel Goldhagen, <i>Introduction Hitler's Willing Executioners</i> Presentation: and
Th Feb 19	Women in Germany: Victims or Perpetrators? I Gisela Bock <i>Racism and Sexism in Nazi Germany</i> Claudia Koonz <i>Consequences: Women, Nazis, and Moral Choice</i> Presentation: and

Week 6	Women in Germany: Victims or Perpetrators? III
T Feb 24	Alison Owings Introduction to <i>Frauen</i> Leni Riefenstahl: victim or perpetrator? Watch documentary in class + film precis hand out <i>The Horrible, Wonderful Life of Leni Riefenstahl</i> (Ray Muller, 1993) Assignment: work on film precis
Th Feb 26	Women in Germany: Victims or Perpetrators? III <i>Film précis on Riefenstahl due</i> Frau Mathilde Mundt- <i>The History Lesson</i> , Frau Anna Fest- <i>A Job in Its Own Category</i> Presentation: and Assignment: read texts for week 7

Week 7	Personal Positionality: How to Interpret Testimony and Scholarship
T Mar 3	Penny Summerfield <i>Introduction to Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives</i> Presentation: and
Th Mar 5	German Women as Victims? German Women and Wartime Rape Watch <i>BeFreier, Befreite</i> (Liberators Take Liberties) (Helke Sander, 1993) get hand-out of questions Assignment: read texts for week 8

Week 8	Revising Views on Women and National Socialism
T Mar 10	Stuart Liebman and Annette Michelson <i>After the Fall: Women in the House of Hangmen</i> Presentation: and
Th Mar 12	Atina Grossmann <i>Feminist Debates about Women and National Socialism</i> Gisela Bock <i>Ordinary Women in Nazi Germany: Perpetrators, Victims, Followers...</i> Presentation: and Assignment: read Ruth Klüger over the break!

March 12-16	Spring Break Read Ruth Klüger <i>Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered</i> Assignment: start writing book report on <i>Still Alive</i>
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Week 9	Jewish Women in Germany and Austria
T Mar 24	Discussion of Ruth Klüger <i>Still Alive</i> Presentation: and
Th Mar 26	Jewish Women during the Holocaust: Background <i>Book report on Ruth Klüger Still Alive due!</i> Henry Friedlander and Sybil Milton <i>Surviving</i> Sheryl Robbin <i>Life in the Camps: The Psychological Dimension</i> Presentation: and
	Assignment: read texts for week 10

Week 10	Jewish Women in Nazi Germany
T Mar 31	Marion Kaplan <i>Jewish Women in Nazi Germany: Daily Life, Daily Struggles</i> Presentation: and
Th April 2	Women's Resistance to the Nazis Vera Laska <i>Women in the Resistance</i> Anna Heilman and Rose Meth Presentation: and
	Assignment: read texts for week 11 and write a 1-page proposal for final paper

Week 11	Women's Memoirs of the Holocaust I
T April 7	<i>Are Survivor Narratives Gendered?</i> Marga Minco <i>Sabbath</i> In class: compare Primo Levi, Judith Magyar-Isaacson, Isabella Leitner
Th April 9	<i>Hand in proposal final paper!</i> Charlotte Delbo <i>Arrivals, Departures</i> Charlotte Delbo <i>Days and Memory</i> Presentation: and
	Assignment: read texts for week 12, create bibliography for final paper.

Week 12	Women's Memoirs of the Holocaust II + How to create a bibliography
T April 14	Discussion: <i>How do I create a MLA/Chicago/APA bibliography?</i> Gisella Perl <i>A Doctor in Auschwitz</i> Presentation: and
Th April 16	How do we Interpret Holocaust Literature? <i>Hand in brief bibliography for final paper!</i> James Young (optional) <i>Narrative and the Consequences of Interpretation</i> , (required) <i>On Rereading Holocaust Diaries and Memoirs</i> Presentation: and
	Assignment: work on thesis and outline for final paper.

Week 13 Writing workshop

T April 21 *Bring draft of working thesis for final paper to class*
In class discussion of (and work on) working thesis

Assignment: finish up working thesis and create draft of outline

Th April 23 *Bring draft of outline for final paper to class*
In class discussion of (and work on) outline and first paragraph

Assignment: work on final paper

Week 14 Interpreting Gender Difference

T April 28 *Intro paragraph, thesis, and outline for final paper due!*
RR: Joan Ringelheim *Women and the Holocaust: A Reconsideration of Research* (373-418)
Presentation: and

Th April 30 Pascale Bos *Women and the Holocaust: Analyzing Gender Difference*

Assignment: finish up final paper, prepare for presentation.

Week 15 Final Presentations (I)

T May 5 Final presentations students 1-15
Presentations (5 minutes) of final paper in class. Questions and discussion.

Th May 7 Last Day of Class Final Presentations (II)

Final Presentations students 16-30
Presentations (5 minutes) of final paper in class. Questions and discussion.

Finals' week No Final

W May 13 **Final papers are due. Electronic copies have to reach me by email by 5 PM.**