

## **HISTORY 200: Mass Violence in Europe, 1900-1950**

Professor Kathryn Ciancia

Fall 2015

Office Hours: Mondays, 9:50-11:50am, 4133 Mosse Humanities

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Seminar: Wednesdays, 11am-12:55pm

Mosse Humanities Building 5257



### **Course Description**

Why did Europeans kill one another in such numbers and with such brutality during the first half of the twentieth century? To what extent was violence the result of political ideologies, developments in Europe's colonies, bureaucratic pressures, ancient ethnic hatreds, or even "human nature"? In this class, we'll use a wide range of secondary and primary sources—including photographs, memoirs, eyewitness accounts, movies, sound recordings, and propaganda posters—to puzzle through these questions as a group. The class will be based on several case studies, including events in German South-West Africa, Armenia, France, Germany, Poland, and the Soviet Union.

The class is divided into several parts:

**Weeks 1-2** deal with broad discussions of violence and source analysis, allowing us to build up a set of theoretical frameworks to which we can refer throughout the semester.

**Weeks 3-8** focus on the origins and course of European violence before 1939. In this part of the class, we'll explore both primary and secondary sources, debating the differences between historical interpretations and engaging in our own analysis. In Week 6, we'll make a trip to the unique primary sources at Special Collections.

**Weeks 8-10** delve into three perspectives on the Holocaust—that of the perpetrators, the collaborators, and the victims. We'll look at how scholars have tried

to make sense of what governed people's behavior and how that behavior was subsequently evaluated and remembered.

**Weeks 11-14** will shift our focus toward the repercussions of mass violence—including acts of revenge, changes in international law, and attempts to create sites of memory in those places where atrocities were committed.

**Week 15** will consist of a student debate in which we'll explore how our opinions have changed since week 1.

### **Class Questions**

The questions that we'll focus on in each class depend on the specific source material, but there are some common questions that will reoccur throughout the semester. As you read the sources, here are some questions you might have in mind.

#### **Basic historical questions:**

- ❖ What kind of violence occurred? What is the most appropriate label for the violence that we are studying (genocide, ethnic cleansing, massacre, etc.)?
- ❖ Why and how did the violence occur? What were the short and long-term causes?
- ❖ Who carried out the violence (you might think in terms of individuals and groups of people)?
- ❖ Were people other than the victims and direct perpetrators involved (e.g. bystanders, international bodies, other states) and in what ways?

#### **Questions of memory and interpretation:**

- ❖ What do the primary sources tell us? What kinds of questions can they help us to answer? What kinds of questions do they not help us to answer? What do they reveal and what do they obscure?
- ❖ How have various historians analyzed and interpreted this incidence of mass violence? To what extent can we question aspects of their interpretation?
- ❖ Which—if any—of the theoretical readings that we discussed in week 2 help us to understand this violence?
- ❖ How has this incidence of mass violence been remembered, both individually and collectively?

### **Course Objectives**

By the end of the class, students should be able to:

- Discuss how their views about the reasons for mass violence have changed or become more nuanced through engagement with class materials;
- Create historical questions that lead to effective and engaging class discussions;
- Understand and communicate the basic arguments put forward by historians in their texts, as well as discuss and critique those arguments;
- Identify how primary sources can help us to answer particular historical questions and the ways in which their usefulness is limited;
- Present their ideas clearly in both written and oral form.

## Methods of Assessment\*

- **Seminar participation (30% of total grade):** In addition to participating each week, students will work in a pairs to lead the first 30 minutes of one seminar. For rubric, see Appendix B.
- **Source Analysis paper (20% of total grade):** You'll have the choice of writing a traditional essay or a more imaginative and creative assignment (1400-1600 words).
- **Special Collections Assignment (5% of total grade).** You should write about how the sources you find at Special Collections help to illuminate the debates that we have been having in class (400-500 words).
- **Reflection paper (15% of total grade):** You'll have the chance to critically reflect on how your views have changed since week 1 (800-1000 words).
- **Final paper (30% of the total grade):** You'll have the choice of writing a traditional essay or a more imaginative and creative assignment (1800-2000 words)

\*Specific questions and guidelines for assignments will be distributed separately.

## Assigned Readings

All readings are marked with a symbol to help you to locate them:

**UB/R:** For purchase and on reserve in College Library

**CR:** Course Reader

**L@UW:** Uploaded document or link provided at our Learn@UW site

The course reader for this class can be purchased from the Letters and Science Copy Center in the Social Science Building (see below for more information). Please note that a copy of the course reader will also be available on reserve at College Library.

Located at:

Sewell Hall, Room 6120  
1180 Observatory Drive  
Madison, WI 53706  
262-5396

Email:

[copycenter@ls.wisc.edu](mailto:copycenter@ls.wisc.edu)

The following books are available for purchase/on reserve:

1. Ernst Junger, *Storm of Steel* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2004) ISBN-13: 978-0142437902
2. Jan Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (New York: Penguin Books, 2002) ISBN-13: 978-0142002407

3. Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the final solution in Poland* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1998) Reprint edition. ISBN-13: 978-0060995065
4. Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (New York, Touchstone, 1996), ISBN-13: 978-0684826806
5. Norman M. Naimark, *Stalin's Genocides* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011) Reprint edition. ISBN-13: 978-0691152387
6. Sarah Farmer, *Martyred Village: Commemorating the 1944 Massacre at Oradour-sur-Glane* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000) ISBN-13: 978-0520224834

### **Streaming Digital Films**

The links to the movies are provided on the course's Learn@UW website.

## Weekly class schedule

### **Week 1 (09/02): Introduction to the Class**

No assigned readings

### **Week 2 (09/09): Theories of Modern Mass Violence**

#### Readings:

1. Stanley Milgram, "Behavioral Study of Obedience," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 67, no. 4 (1963): 371-378. **CR**
2. Maria Konnikova, "The Real Lessons of the Stanford Prison Experiment," *The New Yorker*, June 12, 2015. **CR**
3. Jonathan Glover, "Close Combat," in his *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 47-57. **CR**
4. Ervin Staub, "Internal and External Bystanders," in his *Overcoming Evil: Genocide, Violent Conflict, and Terrorism*, pp. 195-206. **CR**
5. Eric D. Weitz, "The Modernity of Genocides" in Kiernan and Gellately, eds., *The Specter of Genocide*, pp. 53-73. **CR**
6. Mark Mazower, "Violence and the State in the Twentieth Century," *American Historical Review* 107, no. 4 (October 2002): 1158-1178. **CR**

### **Week 3 (09/16): Colonial Violence and European Violence**

#### Readings:

1. Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide from Sparta to Darfur* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 364-390. **CR**
2. Isabel Hull, "German Military culture and the Colonial War in Southwest Africa, 1904-07," in Wayne Lee (ed.), *Warfare and Culture in World History* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 142-164. **CR**
3. Jonathan Hyslop, "The Invention of the Concentration Camp: Cuba, Southern Africa and the Philippines, 1896-1907," *South African Historical Journal* 63, no. 2 (2011): 251-276. **CR**

### **Week 4 (09/23): The First Genocide of the Twentieth Century?: The Armenians**

#### Readings:

1. Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, pp. 395-415.
2. "Posthumous Memoirs of Talaat Pasha," *Current History* (New York Times) 15, no. 2 (Nov 1921): 287-95. **L@UW**

3. James Bryce and Arnold Toynbee, eds., *The Treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-1916*, pp. xv-xlii; p. 79; 88-93; 221-227; 246-254; 511-520. **CR**
4. Official statement from Turkey's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. **CR**

If you are interested in finding out more, you can also watch the following documentary:  
The Armenian Genocide (Andrew Goldberg, 2006). **L@UW**

### **Week 5 (09/30): World War One on the Western Front**

Readings:

1. Ernst Junger, *Storm of Steel*. **UB/R**

### **Week 6 (10/07): Class Session at Special Collections in Memorial Library**

No assigned readings

**\*Special Collections assignment due by 5pm on Friday (10/09)\***

### **Week 7 (10/14): The Concentration Camp**

Readings:

1. Anne Applebaum, *Gulag: A History* (New York: Anchor, 2003), pp. xv-xli; pp. 3-17; pp. 73-115; pp. 256-306. **CR**
2. Christian Goeschel and Nikolaus Wachsmann, "Before Auschwitz: The Formation of the Nazi Concentration Camps, 1933-9," *Journal of Contemporary History* 45, no. 3 (2010), pp. 515-534.

**\*Junger assignment due by 5pm on Friday (10/16)\***

### **Week 8 (10/21): Perpetrators: The Case of Ordinary Men—and Women**

Readings:

1. Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the final solution in Poland*. **UB/R**
2. Wendy Lower, *Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013), pp. 120-144; pp. 157-166. **CR**

## **Week 9 (10/28): Collaborators: The Case of Poland**

### Reading:

1. Jan Gross, *Neighbors*. **UB/R**
2. Antoni Macierewicz, "The Revolution of Nihilism," from Antony Polonsky and Joanna Michlic, eds., *The Neighbors Respond: The Controversy over the Jedwabne Massacre in Poland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 93-102. **CR**

## **Week 10 (11/04): Survivors: Remembering the Camps**

### Readings:

1. Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*. **UB/R**
2. This American Life, "197: Before It Had a Name." Act I: Mr Boder Vanishes. **L@UW**
3. Lawrence L. Langer, *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. ix-xv. **CR**
4. Testimony at the Yale Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies. **L@UW**

## **Week 11 (11/11): Reprisals and Rape at the End of the War**

### Readings:

1. Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: a history of the Soviet Zone of occupation, 1945-1949* (Cambridge, Mass. : Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 69-140. **CR**
2. Movie: *A Woman in Berlin* (Max Färberböck, 2008) **L@UW**
3. Fabrice Virgili, *Shorn Women: Gender and Punishment in Liberation France* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002), pp. 75-111; pp. 177-217. **CR**

## **Week 12 (11/18): Legal Changes? Applying the Concept of Genocide**

### Readings:

1. Norman Naimark, *Stalin's Genocides*. **UB/R**

**\*Reflections essay due by 11am on Wednesday (11/18)\***

## **Week 13 (11/25): NO CLASS: Student independent work**

### Tasks:

- Prepare questions for next week's guest panel;
- Start reading Sarah Farmer book;
- Begin planning final assignment.

## **Week 14 (12/02): Special Guest Panel**

### Panel members:

- **Anja Jovic-Humphrey** (Department of English; PhD, Brown, 2015) is working on a project entitled *Black and Balkan: A Comparison of African-American, Caribbean, African and Balkan History, Theory and Art*.
- **Patrick William Kelly** (Department of History; PhD, Chicago, 2015) is working on a project entitled *Salvation in Small Steps: Latin America and the Making of Global Human Rights Politics*.
- **Golnar Nikpour** (Department of History; PhD, Columbia, 2015) is working on a project entitled *Prison Days: The History of Prisons and Punishment in Modern Iran*.

### Readings:

- I. Sarah Farmer, *Martyred Village: Commemorating the 1944 Massacre at Oradour-sur-Glane*. **UB/R**

## **Week 15 (12/09): Concluding Debate**

*No assigned readings*

**\*Final Papers due by 11am on Wednesday (12/09)\***

## **APPENDIX A: Class Policies and Further Resources**

### **Office Hours**

My office hours are posted at the top of the syllabus. Please come by! These hours are set-aside specifically for students, and I would be happy to discuss any aspect of the class with you. If you are unable to make these times, please send me an email so that we can set up a mutually convenient appointment time.

### **Class Etiquette**

There is no laptop use in class and you must make sure that all devices with a screen are switched off or put on silent for the duration of the lecture. Come and speak with me if you are concerned about this policy.

We will begin our seminar on time, so please make sure that you arrive a few minutes early. Persistent tardiness (as well as going AWOL!) leads to a lower participation grade.

If you cannot attend class, it is your responsibility to get in touch with Professor Ciancia in order to find out about make-up work.

Please bring assigned readings with you to class.

### **Papers and Assignments**

Papers should be turned in on time to avoid a grade penalty. If there is a problem, it is important that you speak to Professor Ciancia in plenty of time prior to the deadline. Late papers will be penalized by a half-grade per day.

All assignments should stick to the word limit to avoid a grade penalty. Please indicate the word count for your paper on the cover/first page or at the end of the document. Historians tend to use the Chicago Manual of Style, which can be found online at [www.chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org).

All assignments should be submitted by the deadline marked on the syllabus in electronic copy. The electronic copy should be uploaded as a Word document onto the course's Learn@UW site. Email submissions will not be accepted.

### **Academic Honesty**

There is information about what constitutes plagiarism here ([http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA\\_plagiarism.html](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html)), but please come and speak with Professor Ciancia or Sarah during office hours if you have questions or concerns.

### **Disabilities**

Disability guidelines for course accommodations may be found at the UW McBurney Disability Resource Center site: <http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/>  
Please come and see Professor Ciancia if you would like to talk further about disability issues.

### **Religious Observance Policy**

Students must notify Professor Ciancia within the first two weeks of class of the specific days or dates on which they request relief.

### **Writing Resources**

The University's Writing Center is a wonderful resource that allows you to work with a consultant to improve your written work. Take a look at the website (<http://www.writing.wisc.edu/index.html>) for more information.

New this semester, the History Lab is a resource center where experts (PhD students) will assist you with your history papers. No matter your stage in the writing process, the History Lab staff is here to help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. Sign up for a one-on-one consultation online: <http://go.wisc.edu/hlab>

### **Email protocol**

If you have questions for Professor Ciancia, you should first read the information on this syllabus carefully to see if the answer you're looking for is included. If you still cannot find an answer, you may ask the question in an email. Please be courteous and professional and allow 24 hours for an email response.

## **APPENDIX B: Participation Grading Scale**

- A:** You participate enthusiastically and regularly in classroom discussions and small group-work, listening to your peers and articulating your own ideas as clearly as possible. Your comments are thoughtful and demonstrate that you have done the reading carefully, considered your own approach to it, and/or articulated how it fits in with the general themes of the class
- B:** Your contributions show that you have done the reading, but they show a less thoughtful response to what you have read. You have thought about how the reading fits into wider themes that we have been discussing, but on a more superficial level. You participate in classroom discussions and small group-work, listening to your peers and articulating your own ideas, although not with the regularity or depth of a student achieving an “A.”
- C:** Your comments in class do not show that you have done the reading in any depth and/or are poorly or vaguely articulated. You include your own thoughts, but do not raise relevant questions or link the materials to the themes of the class. You contribute only rarely to class discussions and/or make comments that do not demonstrate that you have completed the readings or are engaged fully with your classmates.
- D:** Your comments are very irregular and you show no evidence that you have completed and understood the reading.
- F:** You do not attend discussions regularly.