

History 20I: The Historian's Craft Civilians and War on WWII's Eastern Front

Professor Kathryn Ciancia

Spring 2015

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11:15am-1:15pm, or by appointment

Office: Mosse Humanities Bldg, Room 4133

Email: ciancia@wisc.edu

Lecture times: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 9:30-10:45am, COMP S&ST Bldg, Room 1263

TA: Sarah Messer

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10am-12pm, or by appointment

Office: Mosse 4272 (Phone: 263-1939)

Email: semesser@wisc.edu

Sections times:

Tuesdays, 11:00am-11:50am (COMP S&ST Bldg, Room 1289)

Wednesdays, 1:20pm- 2:10pm (Mosse Humanities Bldg, Room 2121)

Thursdays, 4:35pm-5:25pm (Mosse Humanities Bldg, Room 2125)



Course Description

This class introduces students to the rewarding work of historians through an in-depth investigation into a difficult, controversial, and often painful, topic: the Eastern Front during World War II. We'll begin by thinking about what it means to "think like a historian" and by discussing how we should sensitively approach this particular topic. We'll then dive into three weeks of primary source analysis, looking at the experiences of a range of people under Nazi and Soviet rule. In the third part of the class, we'll explore three key questions that historians continue to debate: How did the Nazis carry out the Holocaust in Eastern Europe? To what extent did local people collaborate? And can we conceive of German victimhood? Finally, we'll discuss questions of memory and historical judgment. How can historians analyze the ways in which various people, both collectively and individually, have remembered and memorialized the violent experiences of war through postwar trials, oral testimonies, monuments, and museums? The class will use the topic of the Eastern front as a lens through which to debate issues of

collaboration, resistance, memory, trauma, and historical empathy, as well as wider questions about how studying history can help us to make sense of the world in which we live.

Course Objectives

Since this is a Communications B class, as well as a gateway class for the History Major, we'll spend a lot of time focusing on *process* as well as *content*. There is no exam here, so you will not be asked to memorize and then regurgitate content from lecture. Instead, I have designed the class so that each of the assignments builds upon the previous one, allowing you to walk through the process of doing historical research and writing, step-by-step. All of this work will culminate in a final research paper in which you will demonstrate the skills of summarizing and analyzing sources, creating historical questions, carrying out original research, and persuasively presenting your own ideas. The final paper will also give you the exciting opportunity to choose the topic that most interests you and to act as a historical detective as you track down sources and make a contribution to key debates. As you'll see from the syllabus, lectures will be complemented with discussions, trips to the various resources on campus, including the Wisconsin Historical Society and Memorial Library, an in-class movie screening, and a panel of graduate students who will talk about the challenges of carrying out archival research into what is often a highly emotional topic.

Methods of Assessment

Your work for the class will be assessed in four ways:

1. **Several short assignments (25% of total grade)** that help you to develop the skills necessary for completing the research paper.
2. **Two oral presentations (15% of total grade)** that you will deliver in section. The first will be delivered in Week #10; the second will be delivered in either Week #14 or #15.
3. **Discussion participation (30% of total grade).** Sarah will discuss her participation grading criteria with you during section. You will also be expected to take part in small-group work and class discussions during lecture time.
4. **Final research paper (30% of total grade)** that you will submit in both draft and final form. More details will be provided as the semester progresses. The final grade will take into account the quality of the final paper, your responsiveness to feedback, and your ability to articulate what you have learned through the process.

Accessing course materials

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

UB/L: For purchase and on reserve in College Library

CR: Course Reader

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

Hours:

7:45am-11:45am; 12:30pm-4:00pm.

Required book for purchase:

- Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Classic, 2006)

Optional book for purchase:

- Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2012). NB: 7th edition.
(This book is recommended, but not required, reading. It's a handy guide to many of the topics that we'll be discussing in our course and a great reference to have next to you when you plan and write your work.)

Weekly Schedule and Reading Assignments

Part I: What do Historians do?

Week 1: Introductions

Lecture 1 (01/20): Why the Eastern Front? Course Introductions

Lecture 2 (01/22): What Does it Mean to “Think Like a Historian”?

No sections and no assigned readings

Week 2: Listening and Reading with a Purpose

Lecture 1 (01/27): The Pre-History of the Eastern Front

Readings for section:

- Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2012): vii-xix. **(CR)**

Assignment for section:

SHORT ASSIGNMENT #1:

- In around 300 words, *SUMMARIZE* the argument made by Timothy Snyder in the excerpt from *Bloodlands* without analyzing or evaluating his argument.

Lecture 2 (01/29): “They Say....”: The DNA of a Good Argument

Reading for lecture:

- Tim Parks, “A Weapon for Readers,” *New York Review of Books* blog, December 3, 2014:
<http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2014/dec/03/weapon-for-readers/> **(CR)**

Part II: Primary Sources

Week 3: Primary Source Analysis I

Lecture 1 (02/03): The Germans in Poland: 1939-1941

Readings for section:

- Robert Moeller, ed., *The Nazi State and German Society: A Brief History in Documents* (Boston: Bedford Books, 2009): 112-115. **(CR)**
- Yitzhak Arad, Yisrael Gutman, Abraham Margaliot, eds., *Documents on the Holocaust: selected sources on the destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland, and the Soviet Union* (Jerusalem: New York: Ktav Pub. House in association with Yad Vashem [and the] Anti Defamation League, 1981): 192-195; 198-99; 216-228. **(CR)**

Assignment for section: **SHORT**

ASSIGNMENT #2:

- Read *ALL* of the sources for discussion. Choose *ONE* source for your analysis. Write (a) two-three sentences summarizing the source’s content; (b) two-three sentence analysis, stating what you know about the context in which the source was produced and how it may affect the source’s approach.

Lecture 2 (02/05): Primary Sources and Creating Historical Questions

Week 4: Primary Source Analysis II

Lecture 1 (02/10): The Soviets in Poland, 1939-1941

Readings:

- Irena Grudzińska-Gross and Jan Tomasz Gross, eds., *War Through Children’s Eyes: The Soviet Occupation of Poland and the Deportations, 1939-1941* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1981): xxi-xxviii; 3-27; 64-69; 70-73; 84-87; 130-132; 147-150; 160-164; 234-237. **(CR)**

Assignment for section:

SHORT ASSIGNMENT #3:

- Write ONE historical question for the collection of children's depositions as a whole. Explain briefly (two-three sentences) why you think this is a good historical question, using the criteria that we discussed in Week 3, Lecture 2.

Lecture 2 (02/12): Trip to Memorial Library (with Lisa Saywell)

Please bring your laptops to this session so that you can work on an in-class assignment.

Week 5: Primary Source Analysis III: The War after 1941

Lecture 1 (02/17): A Front Ripe for Atrocity

Readings for section:

- Moeller, ed., *The Nazi State and German Society*, 117-124. **(CR)**
- Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham, eds., *Documents on Nazism, 1919-1945* (New York: The Viking Press, 1974): 616-630. **(CR)**
- Antony Beevor and Luba Vinogradova, eds., *A Writer at War: Vasily Grossman with the Red Army* (London: The Harvill Press, 2005): 3-64. **(CR)**

Assignment for section:

SHORT ASSIGNMENT #4:

- Hand in completed library assignment from Week #4.

Lecture 2 (02/19): Analyzing Primary Sources from the Web

Part III: Historical Debates: Collaboration, Resistance, Victimhood

Week 6: The Holocaust in German debates

Lecture 1 (02/24): How did the Holocaust happen?

Readings for section:

- Michael R. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2000), 8-54. **(CR)**
- Moeller, ed., *The Nazi State and German Society*, 139-147. **(CR)**
- Arad et al., eds., *Documents on the Holocaust*, 22-30. **(CR)**

Assignment for section:

SHORT ASSIGNMENT #5:

- In 150 words, summarize the “functionalist v. intentionalist” debate. Then choose ONE of the documents from either of the document collections and—in another 150 words—explain the extent to which your document supports one side or the other.

Lecture 2 (02/26): Trip to the Historical Society Library and Archives

Week 7: Local Agency?

Lecture 1 (03/03): Collaboration: The Case of Jedwabne

Readings for section:

- Jan T. Gross, “Annals of War,” *The New Yorker*, March 12, 2001, 64 -71. **(CR)**
- Antony Polonsky and Joanna Michlic, eds., *The Neighbors Respond: The Controversies over the Jedwabne Massacre in Poland* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004): 103-113. **(CR)**
- Wojciech Roszkowski , “After "Neighbors:" Seeking Universal Standards,” *Slavic Review* 61, no. 3 (2002): 460-465. **(CR)**

Assignment for section:

SHORT ASSIGNMENT #6:

- In your opinion, what is the most important point of contestation between Gross and his critics? Use at least one quotation from the texts within your discussion. (300 words in total).

Lecture 2 (03/05): Resistance: Two Uprisings in Warsaw

Week 8: German Victims?

Lecture 1 (03/10): Were the Germans Victims too?

Readings for section:

- Anonymous, *A Woman in Berlin* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2005): ix-xxi; 44-120. **(CR)**
- Atina Grossmann, “A Question of Silence: The Rape of German Women by Occupation Soldiers,” *October*, Vol. 72 (1995): 42-63. **(CR)**

Assignment for section:

DRAFT PROPOSAL:

- Come to section with a provisional research proposal. Your proposal should include: a) your research question, as well as a three sentence explanation of why you think this is a good research question; b) a short annotated bibliography with at least two secondary sources and two primary sources that you think might be helpful. The annotated bibliography should include a short description of the source and an explanation of how it will help you to explore your historical question.

Lecture 2 (03/12): Postwar: A Brutalized Population

PART IV: Postwar Reckonings and Memorialization

Week 9: Judgments

Lecture 1 (03/17): In the Courtroom: The Nuremberg and Eichmann trials

Readings for section:

- Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Classic, 2006): 1-150; 206-298. **(UB/L)**
- “Book Portrays Eichmann as Evil, but Not Banal,” *New York Times*, September 2, 2014. **(CR)**
- “Fifty Years Later, Why Does ‘Eichmann in Jerusalem’ Remain Contentious?” *New York Times*, November 26, 2013. **(CR)**
- “No Banality in this Evil,” *Tablet Magazine*, November 13, 2014. **(CR)**

Lecture 2 (03/19): Guest Panel: Carrying out research on WWII

Maya Holzman, PhD candidate, working on Soviet partisans on the Eastern Front

Roberto Carmack, PhD candidate, working on WWII in Kazakhstan

David Harrisville, PhD candidate, working on the German Army in the USSR

Week 10: Memory and Victims

Lecture 1 (03/24): Holocaust testimonies: Written and Oral accounts

Assignment for section:

- **REVISED RESEARCH PROPOSAL:** *Using feedback, bring in a revised proposal. Include a couple of sentences explaining what you have revised.*
- **ORAL PRESENTATION #1:** *Students spend section briefly presenting their revised research proposals.*

Lecture 2 (03/26): Discussion on Testimony

Reading for lecture-based discussion:

- Pam McClean, “To be Hunted Like Animals: Samuel and Joseph Chanesman remember their survival in the Polish countryside during the Holocaust,” in *Remembering Genocide*, eds., Nigel Eltringham and Pam McClean (London and New York: Routledge, 2014): 71-91. **(CR)**

****SPRING BREAK****

Week 11: Collective Memory I: The Soviet Union and Russia

Lecture 1 (04/07): Remembering the “Great Patriotic War”

Readings for section:

- Amir Weiner, “When Memory Counts: War, Genocide, and Postwar Soviet Jewry,” in *Landscaping the Human Garden: Twentieth-Century Population Management in a Comparative Framework*, ed., Amir Weiner (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003): 167-188. **(CR)**
- Catherine Merridale, *Night of Stone: Death and Memory in Twentieth-Century Russia* (New York: Viking, 2001): 211-240. **(CR)**

Lecture 2 (04/09): Memory in Poland/Planning Your Paper

Assignment for lecture:

- **PLAN OF PAPER:** *You should bring a plan of your essay to lecture. It should include a provisional thesis statement and plans for each paragraph, including supporting evidence/quotations/paraphrasing for at least one paragraph.*

Week 12: Collective Memory II: Poland

Lecture 1 (04/14): In-class Movie Screening: *Ida* (Paweł Pawlikowski, 2013)

Reading for lecture:

- “An Innocent Awakened: ‘Ida,’ About an Excavation of Truth in Postwar Poland,” *New York Times*, May 1, 2014. **(CR)**
- “‘Ida’: A Film Masterpiece,” *The New Yorker*, May 27, 2014. **(CR)**

Lecture 2 (04/16): NO LECTURE (Work on papers and/or individual consultations).

EXTRA OPTIONAL EVENT (4pm, located TBA)

Lecture by Prof. Michael Meng, Department of History, Clemson University:
“The Evil of Blind Obedience: Arendt's Interpretation of Nazism in Historical
Perspective”

FIRST DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE ON FRIDAY, APRIL 17, AT NOON

Week 13: Collective Memory III: Memorials and Monuments

Lecture 1 (04/21): Physical Spaces in Eastern Europe

Readings for section:

- Omer Bartov, *Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007): 13-41; 50-70. **(CR)**
- James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994): 155-184. **(CR)**
- “Polish Museum Repairs a Tie to a Jewish Past,” *New York Times*, April 18, 2013. **(CR)**

Lecture 2 (04/23): Memorials beyond the Region/Oral Presentation Discussion

Week 14: Revisions and Improvements

Lecture 1 (04/28): How to Revise a Paper

Assignment for section:

- **ORAL PRESENTATION #2:** Students spend section briefly presenting their research.

Lecture 2 (04/30): NO LECTURE (Work on papers and/or individual consultations).

Week 15: Conclusions

Lecture 1 (05/05): Back to the *Bloodlands*?

(Re)read before lecture:

- Snyder and Gross articles from Week 2.

Assignment for section:

- **ORAL PRESENTATION #2:** Students spend section briefly presenting their research.

Lecture 2 (05/07): Final Class Activities

FINAL PAPER DUE ON MONDAY, MAY 11, AT NOON

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 lectures 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 there are any assigned readings for lecture, please bring them 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 or Sarah in plenty of time prior to the deadline. Late papers will be penalized by a half-grade per day.

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

You should clearly post the word limit (along with your name, section day/time, etc.). All assignments should stick to the word limit to avoid a grade penalty.

Academic Honesty

There is information about what constitutes plagiarism here (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 or Sarah 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 and Guidelines

All papers should conform to the specified page or word limit.

Historians tend to use the Chicago Manual of Style, which can be found online at www.chicagomanualofstyle.org. Also see *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* for more details.

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 their website (<http://www.writing.wisc.edu/index.html>) for more information.

APPENDIX B: **The Historian's Craft: Objectives for All Classes**

Please find below the official criteria for *The Historian's Craft*. As we go through the class, I will highlight the various skills that we are working on. Please remember that you won't be able to work on all of these skills at once, so I have sequenced them in a way that makes sense.

1. Ask Questions: develop the habit of asking questions, including questions that may generate new directions for historical research.

- a) Develop historical questions through engagement with primary sources, secondary literature, and/or broader ethical, theoretical, or political questions.
- b) Ask historical questions to guide individual research.
- c) Pose questions to prompt productive group discussion.

2. Find Sources: learn the logic of footnotes, bibliographies, search engines, libraries, and archives, and consult them to identify and locate source materials.

- a) Identify the purposes, limitations, authorities, and parameters of various search engines available both through the library and on the world-wide web.
- b) Take advantage of the range of library resources, including personnel.
- c) Locate printed materials, digital materials, and other objects.
- d) Be aware of, and able to use, interlibrary loan.

3. Evaluate Sources: determine the perspective, credibility, and utility of source materials.

- a) Distinguish between primary and secondary material for a particular topic.
- b) Determine, to the extent possible, conditions of production and preservation.
- c) Consider the placement of sources in relation to other kinds of documents and objects.
- d) Identify the perspective or authorial stance of a source.
- e) Summarize an argument presented in a text.
- f) Distinguish between the content of a source and its meaning in relation to a particular question.

4. Develop and Present an Argument: use sources appropriately to create, modify, and support tentative conclusions and new questions.

- a) Write a strong, clear thesis statement.
- b) Revise and rewrite a thesis statement based on additional research or analysis.
- c) Identify the parts of an argument necessary to support a thesis convincingly.
- d) Cite, paraphrase, and quote evidence appropriately to support each part of an argument.

5. Plan Further Research: draw upon preliminary research to develop a plan for further investigation.

- a) Write a research proposal, including a tentative argument, plan for research, annotated bibliography, and abstract.

b) Identify the contribution of an argument to existing scholarship.

6. Communicate Findings Effectively: make formal and informal, written and oral presentations tailored to specific audiences.

a) Write a clearly argued, formal academic paper, using appropriate style and bibliographic apparatus.

b) Deliver a concise, effective, formal verbal presentation with appropriate supporting material.

c) Contribute constructively to discussion, whether proposing or responding to an idea.