Marion Kaplan

Jews and Other Minorities in Nazi Germany

THIS IS A PROVISIONAL SYLLABUS

The destruction of European Jewry has been a central focus in studying Nazi extermination policies. This course will look at Nazi policies towards the Jewish people and examine how the “racial state” (or racist state) dealt with those it deemed “racially unfit” to belong to the German Volk. It will analyze the ways in which the Nazis sought to create a nation based on invented categories of “blood and race.” By studying policies towards the so-called “enemies” of the Third Reich -- including Jews, Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), the physically and mentally disabled, homosexuals, Afro-Germans, “asocials,” etc. -- the course will also highlight how these policies interacted with each other. It will examine measures that the government enacted to delegitimize, isolate, rob, incarcerate, sterilize, and/or murder many of these minorities as well as measures intended to increase and strengthen the “Aryan” population. The course will also look at theories as to why many German perpetrators and bystanders participated in or allowed discrimination or murder to occur.

BOOKS TO PURCHASE:
Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, The Racial State: Germany 1933-1945

Robert Gellately and Nathan Stoltzfus, Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany [This book is only available on Amazon and other websites, not at the bookstore.]

Marion Kaplan, Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany

Two of these books are available at the NYU Bookstore, at Book Culture (112th St. near Broadway) and online. Half price books can be found at Abebooks.com as well as Amazon and B&N.com. The books are also available at the reserve desk at Bobst Library: http://bit.ly/1SVEv1n

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
Serious and consistent class participation (including regular oral introductions of the homework readings). This is a seminar in which you will do much of the presenting and discussing; 20% four short papers; 30% final paper 25% and final exam. 25%
Surprise quizzes only if I deem them necessary.

Late papers will be docked a grade a week unless you have a doctor’s note.
1. INTRODUCTION

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
Robert Gellately and Nathan Stoltzfus, “Social Outsiders and the Construction of the Community of the People,” in Gellately and Stoltzfus, Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany (pp. 3-19)

[For those students observing the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah, write a 3-page review of this assignment to email me on Sept. 17. Also be sure to have read and to write the assignment for class #2 when you come on Sept. 21.]

2. Excerpts from Race and Membership in American History: the Eugenics Movement [Classes] and
Richard Evans, “Social Outsiders in German History: From the Sixteenth Century to 1933,” in Gellately and Stoltzfus, pp. 20-44
and
Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, The Racial State, pp. 1-4, 23-74
and
(NY Times, Oct. 13, 2014)
and
“A Mosaic of Victims” from USHMM:

First short paper due (3 pages): Did Nazi racism have a historical background in Germany and elsewhere? If so, where/how did Nazi racism overlap with other racisms and where/how did it differ?

George Fredrickson, Racism: A Short History
[what Nazis learned from US racism]

3. JEWISH LIFE IN NAZI GERMANY
Marion Kaplan, Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany
Intro. and chaps. 1-2 (pp. 3-73), chaps. 4 – Conc. (pp. 94 -237) (we will read chap. 3 later)

Prompt for 2 para. written response (due today).

What is "social death?" Can you trace its stages?

What do we learn about Jewish life in Nazi Germany by understanding gender dynamics? In what ways does a gender analysis illuminate daily life? What other lenses might we use?
Recommended: Saul Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*

4. (HETERO)SEXUALITY AND RACISM

Nazi Policies towards Women
Burleigh, pp. 242-266

and


Nazi Policies towards Youth
Burleigh, 199-241

**Optional short paper (3 pages):** Was it easy to be an “Aryan” in Nazi Germany? Make an argument for either “yes” or “no.”

5. SINTI AND ROMA (Gypsies)

We will meet for half of the class on this day, starting at 12:45 PM. Thereafter, please view one of the films about the Sinti and Roma at Bobst (see list of films at end of syllabus). And please email me this assignment on Oct. 17.

Burleigh, 113-128

and

Gilad Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies*, pp. 25-55 [Classes]

and

Sybil Milton, “Gypsies as Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany,” in Gellately and Stoltzfus, pp. 212-232

and


and


and

US Holocaust Memorial Museum article, “Genocide of European Roma”:

**Second short paper (4 pages)**
Choose a film about Sinti/Roma. Then write a report comparing and contrasting the film with the readings you did on this topic. Your report should:

Contrast the readings and the film. What did you see as the main points in your readings and in the film? How did the readings portray the Sinti/Roma experiences as compared to the
film? Did the film challenge or confirm your other readings? In what ways? Did the film offer you any advantages over the essays? Or vice versa?

4 pages, typed and carefully edited.

Recommended:


Gilad Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies: A Post-Auschwitz Ordeal* (chaps. 1-2) at https://getit.library.nyu.edu/go/9302245

Donald Kenrick and Grattan Puxon, *The Destiny of Europe’s Gypsies*

6. HOMOSEXUALS


7. THE PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY DISABLED

Henry Friedlander, “From Euthanasia to the Final Solution” from *Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race*, 2004 [on Classes] and Burleigh, pp.148-167 and Friedlander, Registering the Handicapped in Nazi Germany,” *Jewish History* (Fall, 1997) [available online through NYU “research” and JSTOR] and Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide* (1995), chap. 11 and Conclusion [Classes] and NY Times article on new monument to the disabled, 2014:
8. MIXING “Races”
Class will not meet today, but you are to watch the film “Rosenstrasse” (DVD 2934) at your convenience at Bobst Library (or on Netflix) and write a 3-page paper putting the film into the context of the 3 articles, below. How does the film highlight the issues that you learned about in these articles? What does the film leave out?
This is the third short paper.

and
Kaplan, chap. 3 on “Jewish and ‘Mixed’ Families”
and

Recommended:
Gisela Bock, “Racism and Sexism in Nazi Germany,” in Renate Bridenthal, Atina Grossmann, Marion Kaplan, eds., When Biology became Destiny: Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany (New York, 1984)

Journal of the History of Sexuality also available at
https://getit.library.nyu.edu/go/9302350?umlaut.institution=NYU

9. AFRO-GERMANS
May Opitz, Katharina Oguntoye and Dagmar Schultz, “African and Afro-German Women in the Weimar Republic and under National Socialism,” in Showing our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out, pp 41-76 [Classes]
and
Raffael Scheck, “‘They are Just Savages’ German Executions of Black Soldiers from the French Army,” Journal of Modern History, June 2000 [Classes]

Recommended:
Hans Massaquoi, Destined to Witness: Growing up Black in Nazi Germany
Clarence Lusane, *Hitler’s Black Victims: The Historical Experience of Afro-Germans, European Blacks, Africans, and African Americans in the Nazi Era* (New York/London, 2003) [See me before you use this book. There are a number of mistakes in it.]


Youtube: Afro-Germany: Being Black and German [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcfPvJ5qR1E] 42 minutes.

10. FOREIGN WORKERS
Burleigh, pp. 295-303
and
Robert Gellately, “Police Justice, Popular Justice, and Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany: The Example of Polish Foreign Workers,” in Gellately and Stoltzfus, pp. 256-272
and

See this 5-minute documentary film that depicts the public shaming of a Polish girl and German boy in a Silesian village in 1941. http://www.ushmm.org/online/film/display/detail.php?file_num=5565

THE “ASOCIAL” AND “HABITUAL CRIMINAL”
Burleigh, pp. 48-49, 167-182
and
Nikolaus Wachsmann, “From Indefinite Confinement to Extermination: “Habitual Criminals” in the Third Reich,” in Gellately and Stoltzfus, pp. 165-191
and
and

4th short paper (3 pages): How did the plight of Afro-Germans and foreign workers differ from that of German “asocials” or “habitual criminals?” Were there any similarities?

11. RACE WAR AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN PEOPLE
and
and
Recommended: Omer Bartov, *Hitler’s Army: Soldiers, Nazis and War in the Third Reich*
G. Hirschfeld, ed., *The Policies of Genocide: Jews and Soviet Prisoners of War in Nazi Germany*
T. Schulte, *The German Army and Nazi Policies in Occupied Russia*

12. THEORIES OF “WHY?”: PART I

“When good people do evil: the Milgram experiments revisited,” *Yale Alumni Magazine*, Jan/Feb. 2007 [Classes -- see Milgram]
and
“Famous ‘Nazi in us all’ Manipulated,” *The Australian* (Oct. 8, 2013)
and
[Classes -- see Zimbardo]
and
Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, chaps. 2 and 3 “Modernity, Racism, Extermination” [Classes – see Bauman]

Prompt for **2 para. written response (due today):**

1) USING BAUMANN, ZIMBARDO AND KOONZ, ARGUE AGAINST THOSE WHO INSIST THAT MASS HATRED (LIKE ANTISEMITISM) AND MURDER ARE "NATURAL" AMONG HUMANS (CRUSADES, TURKS/ARMENIANS, etc.) IN DOING SO, BE SURE TO ALSO EXPLAIN WHY BAUMANN DOES NOT ACCEPT THE NOTION THAT THE HOLOCAUST WAS A BREAKDOWN OF "CIVILIZATION" OR A "FAILURE OF MODERNITY."

13. THEORIES OF “WHY?”: PART II

and
Christopher Browning, “Holocaust Perpetrators: Ideologues, Managers, Ordinary Men,” (March 6, 2002 lecture at US Holocaust Memorial Museum [available online
www.ushmm.org/genocide/analysis/details/2002-03-06/browning.pdf] OR at:
and
Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, “Racial War at Home” (chap. 10, pp. 253-274) [Classes]

14. Oral presentations of term papers

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**Term paper:**
You will be given an identity by lottery (Sinti/Roma, Jewish teenager, handicapped person, soldier, “Aryan” person, etc.) and will be expected to explain how this person fared starting slightly before 1933, but concentrating on Nazi Germany until 1945. You will be asked to read a book, some articles and some life histories about this person or group. The books are usually under “recommended” after each week’s assignment on this syllabus.

10 pages typed and carefully edited.