

**Whose Responsibility?: Genocide & Education**  
Wednesdays 5-8pm, Location TBD, Winter Quarter 2010

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Course Rationale: Northwestern has not offered a comprehensive class on the history of genocide, anti-genocide activism, and education. We propose this student led seminar as an enhancement to the current Northwestern curriculum in the hopes that students who take this course will become better prepared to discuss, act, and teach about genocide.

Course Objectives:

- Develop a working understanding of the term 'genocide' and its implications for international action, education, and activism
- Explore causes and responses to genocide and how to apply this knowledge to current cases of oppression and genocide
- Examine the history of particular genocides; compare and contrast these historical lessons through discussion of resistance, international reactions, and the role of everyday people as bystanders, rescuers, and/or collaborators
- Analyze political, historical, and social situations at the time of the genocide, as well as successes and failures in preventative action
- Develop an understanding of pedagogical challenges in genocide education, with focus on high school students.

Grading:

- 50% Attendance & Participation
- 50% Final Project

Attendance is mandatory.

Weekly Question Submission: Each week, students are tasked with submitting two questions resulting from that week's reading on blackboard. These questions will provide stimulus for discussion and will help to ensure continuous engagement from all students. We encourage students to draw links between different weeks in their question submissions as we envision this course as a cumulative learning experience.

Weekly Activities: The seminar will employ discussions, guest speakers, panels, and organized activities with the aim to engage students in the lessons. For example, during the first lesson the students will share their previous knowledge about the genocides that will be discussed in this course. This will be formatted in an activity in which each student will fill out information they know about genocides on posters that will be hanging around the room. When this activity is complete, we will compare the assumptions and extent of knowledge students have about each genocide to enhance our introduction into the topic. Another example of an activity for this

course would involve students taking the perspective of the media in Week Five by writing a press headline and short article about a given genocide occurrence or topic.

**Final Project:** Students are tasked with the creation of a project that shows an understanding of the course objectives of the class, particularly the combination of historical understanding of genocide and the education framework with which it is taught. This project can range from a lesson-plan on teaching about the Cambodian genocide for a high school class, a design for a museum exhibit on the Bosnian genocide, a new activism campaign, etc. Student instructors and faculty advisors must approve all projects.

**Required Reading:**

- *A Problem from Hell: America in the Age of Genocide*- Samantha Power
- Selected readings available on Blackboard

*No Prerequisites*

*All Guest Speakers are Tentative*

### **Course Schedule**

#### **Wednesday, 1/6/10 Week One—What is Genocide?**

- What do you know about genocide?
- Why do we know more about particular instances of genocide than others?

#### **Wednesday, 1/13/10—Week Two—Lemkin**

*Assignment:* Power, Chapters 2-5 (p. 17-85)

“Genocide and Mass Killings: Origins, Prevention, Healing and Reconciliation”- Ervin Staub, *Political Psychology*

8 Stages of Genocide:

<http://www.genocidewatch.org/aboutgenocide/8stagesofgenocide.html>

- Develop understanding of the term ‘genocide’ & history of its’ development
- Why does Lemkin care if we use the label ‘genocide’? Does the international community feel the same way? Do we agree?

#### **Wednesday, 1/20/10 Week Three—Armenia & Retroactive Labeling**

*Assignment:* Power, Chapter 1 (p. 1-16)

Blackboard: The Armenian Genocide: An Interpretation, Stephan Astourian, *The History Teacher*

NY Times article on Turkey & Armenia Relations:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/09/world/europe/09iht-turkey.1.20693986.html?scp=1&sq=turkey%20refuses%20to%20recognize%20armenian%20genocide&st=cse>

Examine Educational Perspective of <http://www.armenian-genocide.org/>

- Why does Turkey refuse to acknowledge the Armenian genocide? What is at stake and for whom?
- What is the value, if any, of retroactively labeling genocide?

#### **Wednesday, 1/27/10 Week Four—Holocaust & Perspectives of Portrayal**

*Assignment:* USHMM Guidelines:

<http://www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/guideline/>

Selections from <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/>

Blackboard:

\*Excerpts from Elie Wiesel, "A Plea For The Dead"

\*Excerpts from Cynthia Ozick, "Who Owns Anne Frank?"

*Potential Guest Speaker: Danny Cohen*

- How can we ensure that teachers are exposed to different ways of teaching the Holocaust?
- Discussing value of different perspectives: perpetrators, targets and victims, bystanders, rescuers, liberators, collaborators, adults v. children, survivors

### **Wednesday, 2/3/10 Week Five—Cambodia & Role of the Media**

*Assignment:* Power, Chapter 6 & 7 (p. 87-170)

PBS Frontline: A Class Divided

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/divided/>

*Final Project Proposal Due*

*Potential Guest Speakers: Cambodian Survivor-- Leon Lim, co-founder of the Cambodian American Heritage Museum and Killing Fields Memorial; Medill Professor*

- Understanding and critiquing Jane Elliot's teaching method
- Can Cambodia be classified as 'genocide' under current definition?

### **Wednesday, 2/10/10 Week Six—Rwanda & Writing about Genocide**

*Assignment:* Power, Chapter 10 (p. 329-389)

NYU Legal and Political Science Professor Stephen Holmes' literary criticism of Power's A Problem from Hell: America in the Age of Genocide:

<http://www.iijl.org/courses/documents/StephenHolmesReviewSamanthaPowers.pdf>

Chaim Kaufmann: Book Review of Power, *Foreign Affairs*

Blackboard:

\*Excerpt from *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories From Rwanda*- Philip Gourevitch

Overview of ICTR- David Scheffer, "It Takes a Rwandan Village", *Foreign Policy*

*Potential Guest Speaker: Professor Lassner—seminar on how to write about genocide (For example: importance of specificity and active voice in writing)*

- Why were 10 Belgian peacekeepers used as bait to lure the UN peacekeeping mission out of Rwanda? Was this an effective strategy for the genocidaires?
- Were there warning signs of the impending genocide? How could the international community have responded more effectively? What impeded such a response?

### **Wednesday, 2/17/10 Week Seven—Darfur, Sudan & Activism**

*Assignment:* Power, Chapter 14 (p. 503-516)

Darfur is Dying: <http://www.darfurisdying.com/>

"Darfur & The Genocide Debate"- Scott Straus, *Foreign Affairs*

*Potential Guest Speaker: Richard Williamson*

- Is education activism/vice versa?

- How has the activist movement, spearheaded by faith-based organizations and students, affected policy, if at all?

**Wednesday, 2/24/10 Week Eight— The Role of Museums in Genocide Education**

*Assignment:*

\*Virtual tour of Auschwitz

[http://en.auschwitz.org.pl/z/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=6&Itemid=8](http://en.auschwitz.org.pl/z/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=6&Itemid=8)

Armenian Genocide Museum Mission Statement & Virtual Tour

<http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/statement.php>

Varied Online Exhibits

Excerpts from *Museum Politics: Power Plays at the Exhibition*-  
Timothy Luke

*Potential Guest Speaker (or Panel): Holocaust Museum Employee(s) or Professor Reiser*  
*Potential Field Trip to Holocaust Museum*

- What's in a title?
- How do museum field trips enhance a classroom experience?

**Wednesday, 3/3/10 Week Nine—Contentious Cases**

*Assignment:*

*BBC News Article entitled "Anti-gay attacks on rise in Iraq"*

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8204853.stm>

*Excerpts from When I Was a Slave: Memoirs from the Slave*

*Narrative Collection by Norman Yetman*

*Human Rights Watch article: "United Nations: U.S. Aligned With Iran in Anti-Gay Vote"*

<http://www.iglhrc.org/cgi-bin/iowa/home/index.html>

- Should government-sanctioned oppression, incarceration, and murder of transgender, lesbian, gay, and bisexual people be considered genocide? What would be the implications for such a naming?
- Should the American enslavement of African peoples be considered genocide? What would be the implications for such a naming?

**Wednesday, 3/10/10 Week Ten/Reading Week—Presentation of Final Project**

**Finals Week (3/15/10-3/19/10)—Final Project Due**

Suggested Readings (this list is not yet complete):

Armenia:

Holocaust:

*The Last Butterfly*

"The Pianist" (film)

"Fateless" (film)

\**Soundless Roar*- Ava Schieber

Cambodia:

*First They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers*- Loung Ung  
US Holocaust Museum website, "A View on the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts  
of Cambodia" video

<http://www.ushmm.org/genocide/analysis/details.php?content=2009-08-27>

Bosnia:

Rwanda:

*We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families*- Philip  
Gourevich

*Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*- Lt. Gen. Romeo  
Dallaire

Darfur, Sudan:

*The Translator*- Daoud Hari

*Emma's War*- Deborah Scroggins

*Darfur: A Short History of a Long War*- Julie Flint & Alex De Waal

*Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide*- Gerard Prunier

*Tears of the Desert*- Halima Bashir

Education about Genocide:

\*Robert Eaglestone and Barry Langford, "Problems of Pedagogy"

\*Phyllis Lassner (*The Writing Program, Jewish Studies, Gender Studies*) & Danny Cohen  
(*Learning Sciences*), Spring 2009, "Designing Holocaust Education / Writing and Teaching  
About Children and The Holocaust," *Teach\_Ed 351 / English 205*.