

History 648 Tolerance and Persecution

Spring 2008

Thursday 6-9:15 PM, 234 Drake Library

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Office: Brown/Faculty Office Building 123

Office Hours: T 10-12, W 11-12 and 1:30-2:30 and by appointment

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Course Description and Overview:

In his controversial study of the Holocaust, *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (1997), Daniel Goldhagen argued that ordinary Germans' acceptance of Hitler's deadly program against the Jews of the Third Reich traced its roots back to medieval German anti-Semitism, indeed to the anti-Semitism inherent in Christianity itself. This controversial book stimulated debate among European historians concerning such questions as: how and why does society create its outcasts? Is persecution an omnipresent function of organized society, or does it have specific historically contingent catalysts and endpoints? These are the questions we will engage in this course, using the Middle Ages—a period often (somewhat misleadingly) characterized as especially violent, brutal, and “backward”—and the groups that experienced persecution in that period as case studies. We will look closely at medieval anti-Semitism, but we will also look at other “marginal” groups such as gays, heretics, and women, who were in various ways understood in medieval society to be inferior, deviant, and even dangerous to the well-being of the “body social.” We will also examine the dynamics of power that unfolded as social authorities and ordinary people alike thought about and acted toward these perceived dangers. This course draws on readings in medieval history to pursue the issues of tolerance and persecution, but it also touches on sociology, anthropology, literature, religion, gender studies, and politics, and thus is designed not only for students of history, but also for students from the above-mentioned disciplines and related ones.

REQUIRED Readings, available at the College and Liftbridge Bookstores:

R.I. Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society*

David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*

Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*

Carol Lansing, *Power and Purity*

Ruth Mazo Karras, *Common Women*

Lyndal Roper, *Witch Craze*

Additional readings provided in class as handouts

ASSIGNMENTS

- 20%** **Oral Assignments—Assignment #1, Discussion Leadership.** On *three* occasions this semester, each student will take the lead in discussing topics of his/her choice.
- 10% each, 40% total** **Written Papers—Assignments 2, 3, 4, 6, 7—** (see schedule for specific details for each.)
- 20 each, 40% total** **Take-home exams—Assignments 5 and 8—**questions will be distributed in class with time to discuss and ask questions

INFORMATION AND COURSE POLICIES

Class Participation: You are expected to attend class regularly, and are responsible for the content of all lectures, discussions, readings, handouts, quizzes (administered upon the discretion of the instructor) and announcements made in class. Every student must participate in class in a prepared and engaged manner to receive full credit for class attendance and participation. More than two unexcused absences will adversely affect your class participation grade.

Getting Help: Come see me if you have questions, need assistance in understanding the material, or feel that you are having difficulty keeping up with your work in the course *as soon as you feel there is a problem!* It's easier to correct problems as they come up than to deal with a big crisis late in the semester.

Emergencies: If you become ill during or outside of class or some other emergency arises that affects your participation in the class, please contact the instructor and make her aware of your situation. Please note: a doctor's note or other written documentation is generally necessary to help the instructor establish the need for special consideration under extenuating circumstances.

Classroom Etiquette and Civility: A positive, energized, and welcoming class environment depends on the commitment of every class member to nurture that environment. Therefore, you will want to attend class regularly, arrive on time, and remain attentive, engaged, and respectful during all class meetings. Please do not schedule interviews, doctors' appointments, or other meetings during class times; these will not be treated as excused absences. Leave your cell phone at home, or keep it turned off during class. Please do not talk, sleep, read the paper or textbooks, or do other work during class time—all these actions are distracting and detract from the integrity of the classroom environment.

Accessibility and Disability Concerns: If at any time you need course adaptations because of a documented disability, or have concerns relating to a medical condition or disability to share with me, please come see me as soon as possible with your documentation so that we can make any necessary adjustments. Students with documented disabilities may be entitled to specific accommodations. SUNY Brockport's Office for Students with Disabilities makes this determination. Please contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 395-5409 or osdoffic@brockport.edu to inquire about obtaining an official letter to the course instructor detailing approved accommodations. The student is responsible for providing the course instructor with an official letter. Faculty work as a team with the Office for Students with Disabilities to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Late Work: Occasionally we might move deadlines at the discretion of the class, but generally deadlines will be firm unless otherwise arranged with the instructor. Late work will be downgraded by ½ a letter grade per day.

Dropping the Course: During the initial add/drop period, you do not need the instructor's permission to drop the course. After the initial add/drop period, you need to have a current passing grade in order to withdraw from the course without penalty. Under very rare circumstances, a student who is failing the course may elect to withdraw in order to repeat the course in the future with better results. Such arrangements are limited and must be made in consultation with the instructor; no student is guaranteed the instructor's permission for sanctioned withdrawal.

Academic Integrity: refers to the honesty and originality of all your work in the class. "Your own work" means: not composed of extended quotations taken from your textbooks, not written by a fellow student, not written by a paper-writing service, and not material taken off the Web, or from any other source other than you. All work submitted for grading in this course is expected to be the sole effort of the student submitting the work. A failure to adequately cite printed or Internet sources, as well as any unauthorized exchanges of information during examinations or quizzes, will be considered academic dishonesty ("cheating"). Students will receive no credit (grade of 0) for work in which any cheating is detected. Moreover, episodes of deliberate cheating and/or plagiarism may result in an "E" grade for the course. Please be aware that the course instructor will also submit a report to the College file on academic dishonesty whenever cheating is observed and a grade penalty is applied.

Citing your Work: All course work should follow the History Department Style Sheet (distributed in class), which uses the *Chicago Manual of Style* format. Whenever you are citing information that is not common knowledge within the field of study, make sure you cite the source. If you are explaining the ideas in a primary or secondary source in your own words, make sure you use your own language and phrasing ("paraphrase completely") rather than inserting whole phrases of someone else's work into your analysis without adequate citation (i.e. quotations). This latter problem occurs often in student papers; while it is not deliberate plagiarism, it isn't good writing style and becomes an especially big problem if you don't cite your source. Work that shows signs of plagiarism, whether deliberate or inadvertent, may not be accepted for credit. Deliberate plagiarism (use of someone else's work that you present as your own) or cheating in any other form may result in failure in the course.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP

Plan on limiting your initial comments to ca. 10 minutes. As part of your presentation, consider the following:

1. Identify your reading, including author, title, and context for the work.
2. Briefly identify what you think are the main topics, arguments, strengths and weaknesses, and particular contributions of the reading
3. Briefly describe what the author asserts (i.e. his/her thesis). What is novel, interesting, relevant about the piece? If you are commenting on a primary source, you may not be able to identify a thesis, but you might suggest the main ideas and perhaps also your suspicions about the intentions of the author, uses of the piece, and reception by its contemporary audience.
4. Explain selected details from the piece that illustrate broader points raised by the author. This is just as important for primary sources as for secondary ones.
5. Discuss how the reading relates to other works we have read and discussed in class.

To stimulate discussion, you should offer questions that:

1. prompt others to comment on, complement, or critique points in your own presentation; in other words, strive for open-ended questions that are likely to elicit a response from the class.
2. Ask how the author's account relates to your own (and others') "commonsense" understanding of the problem. This is particularly important when we are dealing with works influenced by theoretical models. Do such theoretical models hold true as we critique them, or do they fall like a house of cards when we introduce issues like personal agency, or historical particulars and contingencies?
3. Address particular details of the reading—how does the author construct his or her argument? Might others see this process and
4. Elicit connections between some aspect of the current reading and previous ones
5. Scrutinize the way the author of the piece uses evidence. Is it professional, persuasive, convincing?
6. Scrutinize the way the author unfolds his or her narrative—is the author's personal style worthy of particular comment? This can be especially important and interesting if you are working with a primary source

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK AND DATE	WEEK'S TOPIC	COURSE BOOK READINGS	E-RESERVES READINGS and/or HANDOUTS	ASSIGNMENTS TO BE HANDED IN
Week 1 January 31	Introduction and overview			Discuss in-class presentations (assignment #1): each student will choose 3 individual chapters and/or articles from the course syllabus. On the day the seminar covers those readings, s/he will initiate class discussion on that reading with a concise and organized account of its main topics and arguments. The presenter should also offer questions about the reading that will spark and sustain class discussion.
Week 2 February 7	Anti-semitism and persecution Christians and Pagans		Daniel Goldhagen, <i>Hitler's Willing Executioners</i> , pp. 27-53 (ANGEL) Drake, "Lambs into Lions: Explaining Early Christian Intolerance," <i>Past and Present</i> 153 (1996), pp. 3-36 (ANGEL, JSTOR) <i>Passion of SS Perpetua and Felicitas</i> (ANGEL)	

Week 3 February 13	A Persecuting Society Formed, 950-1250? Crusades: Infidels, Anti-Semitism, and Persecution	Moore, Introduction through Persecution chapter, stopping at beginning of “Lepers” section Nirenberg, pp. 3-40, 69-92, 200-230	Sermon of Pope Urban II urging the First Crusade (ANGEL)	Assignment #2. Due February 13. Students will write a thoughtful, well-supported, and carefully edited paper (3+ pages) that identifies the main topics and arguments of <i>one</i> of the assigned readings for this week.
Week 4 February 21	From “Salvation History” to “Blood Libel”	Rubin, <i>Gentile Tales</i> , pp. 1-69	ANGEL: Excerpts from 1171 Ritual Murder Accusation ANGEL: Life of William of Norwich	
Week 5 February 28	Quo Vadis? Blood Libel as a path to modern anti-Semitism	Rubin, <i>Gentile Tales</i> , 70-195	Cohen, “The Friars and the Jews” (ANGEL) Chaucer, “Prioress’ Tale” (ANGEL)	Assignment #3. Due February 28. Students will write a thoughtful, well-supported, and well-edited paper (3+ pages) that identifies how the topics and arguments of any <i>two</i> of the readings assigned for this week complement or contradict one another.
Week 6 March 6	Spiritual Dissent: Medieval Heresy I	Moore, 66-00 Lansing, <i>Purity and Power</i> , to p. 134		Assignment #4. Due March 6. Students will write a thoughtful, well-supported, and well-edited paper (3+ pages) that identifies how the topics and arguments of <i>three</i> of readings complement or contradict one another, taking as a basis the two assigned for this week, and one relevant early piece we have read.

WEEK AND DATE	WEEK'S TOPIC	COURSE BOOK READINGS	E-RESERVES READINGS (primary and secondary sources)	ASSIGNMENTS TO BE HANDED IN
Week 7 March 13	Spiritual Dissent: Medieval Heresy II	Lansing, <i>Power and Purity</i> 137-end	From the "Inquisitional Manual" of Bernard Gui (ANGEL)	Questions for Assignment #5, due March 27 , will be distributed in class.
Week 8 March 20	Spring Break! Class does not meet			
Week 9 March 27	Ritual Purity: Lepers, the Poor, Women	Moore, 100-124 Nirenberg, 93-165		Assignment #5. Due March 27. First Synthesis Paper (7-9 pages).
Week 10 April 3	The Case of Prostitution	Karras, <i>Common Women</i> (whole book—it's relatively short!)		
Week 11 April 10	Homosexuality: The Boswell Thesis	Boswell, Chapters 1-7	Selections from the <i>Book of Gomorrah</i> of Peter Damian	Assignment #6. Due April 17 or 24, as per student preference. Students will write a thoughtful, well-supported, etc. paper that identifies the relevance of Roper, or <i>one</i> of the other approaches we have investigated in this course, to explaining pre-modern persecution to a modern-day topic—how can such an approach inform our understanding of a contemporary problem? 3+ pages.

Week 12 April 17	Homosexuality: Historical Change and Historiographical Perspectives	Boswell, Chapters 8- Conclusion	Mathew Kuefler, “Male Friendship and the Suspicion of Sodomy in Twelfth-Century France.” (ANGEL)	Assignment #6. Due April 17 or 24, as per student preference.
Week 13 April 24	Art and the Other in Medieval Visual Culture Meet at Rochester Memorial Art Gallery, 6:30-9 PM	Hint: start reading Roper this week, as we will discuss the whole book next week.		Assignment #7. Art Response paper due on or before May 8. Students will write a paper explaining how a work of medieval or early modern art in the Rochester Memorial Art gallery employs themes of marginality, discrimination, race, or other form of social difference in a meaningful context. As always, papers will be well-supported, edited, etc. :)
Week 14 May 1	Witches and Witchcraft	Roper, <i>Witch Craze</i> (all)	Excerpts from the <i>Malleus Maleficarum</i> (ANGEL)	Questions for Assignment #8 Second Synthesis paper will be distributed in class on May 1, due to instructor by May 15.
Week 15 May 8	Conclusions	Moore, 124-156 Nirenberg, 231- 250		Assignment #7 due May 8
Week 16 May 15	Finals Week			Second Synthesis paper due May 15