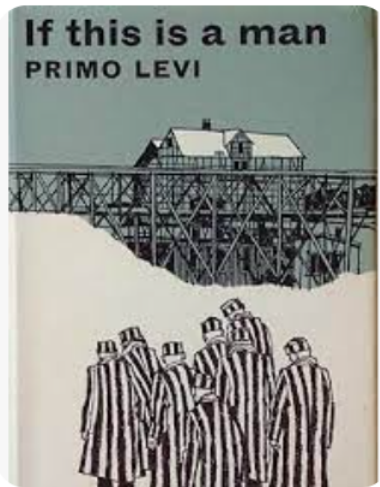


## LITERATURE & THE HOLOCAUST

Engl 4660, SPRING 2023 / MW 3:30-4:50 / LANG 209



Prof: Deborah Armintor (Dr. A)

Pronouns: She/They

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My Zoom Classroom & Zoom Office:

<https://unt.zoom.us/j/6837842372>

Links to an external site.

Zoom by phone (audio only): 1 346-248-7799

Meeting ID: 683 784 2372

How to contact me with a question or to schedule an Office Hours appointment:

Email or Text me with your question or Office Hours appointment request at the email address or cell phone number listed above. Please do not attempt to reach me via Canvas chat, messenger, or any other Canvas interface. Be sure to state in the subject heading of every email and the body of each text: your full name, the name or number of the course, and your course section number.

## Course Description:

The German philosopher Theodor Adorno once said, “After Auschwitz it is barbaric to write poetry.” Misguided as Adorno’s statement might be (he later retracted it), the questions it raises continue to resonate in literature and film about the Holocaust. How do nonfiction or fiction writers attach words and images to the Holocaust and its aftermath? How do differences in genre (memoir, narrative fiction, nonfiction prose), style, subject matter, and issues of authorial identity affect—or not affect—the “meaning” of Holocaust literature? How do these aspects of Holocaust literature affect how these narratives are taught and circulated? Through close readings of various literary texts, we will discuss these and other questions about language and trauma, literature and genocide, storytelling and history.

## Course Content Warning / Trigger Warning for All Course Content:

Genocide, Racism, Suicide, Physical and Psychological Abuse, Depression, Death of Parents, Death of Children, References to Sexual Assault.

## Working Course Definition of the Holocaust:

“The Holocaust refers to a specific genocidal event in twentieth-century history: the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims—6 million were murdered; gypsies, the handicapped, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons.

Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny.” (from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum)

## Required Texts:

Eli Wiesel, *The Night Trilogy: Night, Dawn, Day* (Hill & Wang, 2008)

Primo Levi, *The Drowned and The Saved* (Vintage, 1989)

Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (Touchstone, 1996)

Art Spiegelman, *Maus I & II* (Pantheon, 1986)

Anne Frank, *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* (Mass Market Paperback, 1993)

Cynthia Ozick, *The Shawl* (Vintage, 1980)

Stefan Maechler, *The Wilkomirski Affair*

#### Course Requirements & Grading:

Take-Home Essay Tests 1 (2/27-3/9), 2 (4/10-4/20), and 3 (5/1-5/12):

(open book, open notes, worth 33% of course grade each): In each of these 4-page (or more) essays, you will be asked to respond to a prompt based on the readings and class discussions in the first, second, and third sections of the course. In each paragraph, be sure to quote directly and selectively from the texts you're discussing, and to analyze those passages closely and creatively, with attention to detail and context. Avoid dwelling on points we've already covered in class, unless it's a point that you made in class yourself. You may freely refer to any point or passage already covered in class if (and only if) you're using it as a springboard to saying something new. In every point you make, be sure to move beyond the obvious.

Formatting: essays must be 1.5- or double-spaced, in a reasonable font (11 or 12-point Times New Roman, for instance), and with 1 inch margins all around, submitted electronically via the course CANVAS page.

Making it through the semester (worth 1% of course grade): Congrats in advance. You got this!

## COURSE POLICIES

### Attendance & Participation:

Regular attendance is mandatory to succeed in this course. If you don't attend, it will be impossible to do well on the graded assignments. In addition to regular attendance, I expect active participation of all students. Active participation manifests itself differently in everyone, depending on your learning style, personality, introversion, or extroversion, etc., but always includes having the day's assigned reading with you (either a physical copy, or an electronic copy), following along in the reading as we discuss various passages, and being visibly and/or audibly engaged in the discussion at hand (knitting, doodling, etc., or moving about/fidgeting in the classroom is perfectly fine, whatever it takes for you to be comfortable and stay engaged, as long as you're respecting the boundaries, health, and safety of others!).

### Plagiarism Policy:

Any student who plagiarizes will receive an automatic "F" for the course. For UNT's full Academic Integrity Policy, see: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>  
Links to an external site.

### Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act:

The right to equal access and accommodation for people with disabilities is guaranteed under federal civil rights law by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), regardless of student status or UNT Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) registration. Reasonable accommodation and equal access for students with disabilities are important to me regardless of ODA status, and I will seek to accommodate you however I can; just let me know. Students seeking specific accommodations at UNT through ODA, however, must first register with the ODA to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that the ODA requires that students obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website:  
<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>.

### Reading & Assignment Schedule:

Readings & assignments are due on the days listed below. Readings are subject to change based on pace of class discussion. Any changes to the reading will be announced in class on the class day prior and adjusted in the CANVAS syllabus accordingly.

#### Week 1:

M, 1/16: MLK DAY (no class)

W, 1/18: Intro to the course (no reading)

#### Week 2:

W, 1/23: In-Class Screening & discussion of Night and Fog (no reading)

W, 1/25: Langer, Preempting the Holocaust: Link:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1\\_1yZBDkCtyQ0gVhkG9l5bxm-dRBgVsP-/view?usp=drivesdk](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_1yZBDkCtyQ0gVhkG9l5bxm-dRBgVsP-/view?usp=drivesdk)

#### Week 3:

M, 1/30: Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl (1st half)

W, 2/1: Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl (finish)

#### Week 4:

M, 2/6: Levi, Survival in Auschwitz (1st half, including author's preface:  
[http://courseresources.mit.usf.edu/cas/woh2022/m10\\_2/story\\_content/external\\_files/SurvivalAuschwitz.pdf](http://courseresources.mit.usf.edu/cas/woh2022/m10_2/story_content/external_files/SurvivalAuschwitz.pdf) )

W 2/8: Levi, Survival in Auschwitz (finish)

Week 5:

M, 2/13: Levi, The Drowned & the Saved (Chapters 1 & 2)

W, 2/15: Levi, The Drowned & the Saved (Chapter 3)

Week 6:

M, 2/20: Levi, The Drowned & the Saved (Chapters 4 & 5)

W, 2/22: Levi, The Drowned & the Saved (Chapters 6, 7, and 8)

Week 7:

M, 2/27: Take-Home Essay Test 1 Announced & Discussed Today in Class

W, 3/1: Wiesel, Night (1st half)

Week 8:

M, 3/6: Wiesel, Night (3rd fourth)

W, 3/8: Wiesel, Night (finish)

\*Thursday, 3/9: Take-Home Essay Test 1 Due on CANVAS by 11:49pm\*

Week 9: Spring Break: No Classes 3/14-3/18

Week 10:

M, 3/20: Wiesel, Dawn (1st half)

W, 3/22: Wiesel, Dawn (finish)

Week 11:

M, 3/27: Wiesel, Day (1st half)

W, 3/29: Wiesel, Day (finish)

Week 12:

M, 4/3: Ozick, The Shawl (1st half of entire book)

W, 4/5: Ozick, The Shawl (finish entire book)

Week 13:

M, 4/10: Take-Home Essay Test 2 Announced & Discussed Today in Class; Spiegelman, Maus I (1st half)

W, 4/12: Spiegelman, Maus I (2nd half)

Week 14:

M, 4/17: Spiegelman, Maus II (1st half)

W, 4/19: Spiegelman, Maus II (2nd half)

\*Friday, 4/20: Take-Home Essay Test 2 Due on CANVAS by 11:49pm\*

Week 15

M, 4/24: Fragments, from Wilkomirski Affair, pp. 375-496. [Note before reading: Fragments is a fabricated memoir that was later exposed as a fraud, as was its author's assumed identity.]

W, 4/26: Wilkomirski Affair: Foreword, pp. vii-ix; A Global Literary Event, pp. 111-128; A Plunge into the Abyss, pp. 129-164 [Optional: Tracking Down the Truth--The Historical Research," pp. 165-262.];

Week 16:

M, 5/1: Take-Home Essay Test 3 Announced & Discussed Today in Class

W, 5/3: Review, Q&A, SPOT Evaluations (Note: The SPOT Evaluation link will be provided here when available).

\*FRIDAY, May 12: TAKE-HOME ESSAY 3 DUE ON CANVAS BY 11:59 PM\*

(Note: There is no final exam in this course.)