

Dr. Eric Kligerman: [ekligerm@ufl.edu](mailto:ekligerm@ufl.edu)  
GET 3930, Eng4133, JST3930  
Office: 206 Walker Hall  
Office Hours, T6, R6 or by appointment  
Classroom: Tur2334, T periods 4, R 4-5  
Screening: Tur 2334, T periods E1E3 (7:20pm-10:10pm)

### **From Nuremberg to South Park: Representations of Nazism In Film and Literature**

This course examines the representation of the Nazi epoch in pre- and postwar visual culture and literature. In addition to exploring the historical, political and ideological implications of how National Socialism is recollected and represented, we will also track the transformation of the Nazi perpetrator in the cultural imagination of Europe and America. This course shifts attention from the debates regarding the commodification of the victims of the Holocaust, which has led to the provocative terms “Shoah business” and “Holocaust industry,” to what Susan Sontag describes as “fascinating fascism”: our commercial fascination with the perpetrators of genocide. How have those responsible for the crimes of the Third Reich been represented, theorized, turned into metaphors as well as clichés through the space of film and literature? By shifting our attention from the tragic images of the victims to the figure of the perpetrators, we will examine the ethical implications as well as moral ambiguities behind various representations of Nazism.

Beginning with Riefenstahfs documentary films, we will examine the circulation of the Nazi aesthetic and its associations with questions of beauty, power, gender and eroticism. How has this aesthetic been re-circulated in postwar cinema? How does the Nazi figure function in documentary films, German cinema (the rubble films, New German Cinema and contemporary German film), Italian neorealism, and American popular culture? Does the representation of Nazism in shifting periods and forms critique, explain or bring about an understanding of those who committed the crimes of the Third Reich? Or, do they perpetuate the spectator’s obsession with the horrors of Nazism while circumventing issues of guilt, responsibility and historical comprehension? Our probing of the Nazi aesthetic along with the stereotype of unimaginable evil will be conjoined to how such concepts like Arendt’s “banality of evil” and Sontag’s “fascinating fascism” are treated in films that focus on iconic Nazi imagery and the central perpetrators: Hitler, Himmler, and Eichmann.

Interrogating the boundaries of representation, where the figure of the Nazi is not outside the frame of the imagination but occupies our day-to-day world, our objective is to explore how these films position the spectator in relation to the Nazi past. What moral and aesthetic complexities arise when the Nazi figure inhabits such genres as documentary, comedy, horror and erotica?

#### **Grading**

Class participation/attendance: 20/5%=25%  
Research paper: 25%  
Midterm exam: 25%  
Final take home exam: 25%

**Required texts: All students must purchase the two books and course reader for the seminar. This material can be procured at Goerings Bookstore.**

Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*

Don DeLillo, *White Noise*

Course Reader with essays (purchase at Xerographic Copy—375-0797, 927 NW 13<sup>th</sup> st)

1) Students are allowed 2 unexcused absences. 1/2 point will be deducted from your final grade for each unexcused Tuesday absence and 1 point for each Thursday absence thereafter. **Excessive absences will result in an automatic failing grade regardless of other scores (7 absences is a failing grade).** Participation will play a major part of the final grade and students are expected to partake and contribute daily to class discussions. If you do not bring your texts to class, this too will count as an absence. Finally, film screenings are mandatory. You must watch the film before its discussion in class. If you miss class, please inform me, if you can, ahead of time. You are responsible for keeping up with classwork,

2) There will be one 10page double-spaced research paper on a topic related to representations of Nazism. You are responsible for doing a close reading of the representation, linking it to our theoretical discussions. Topics for the final paper will be student-generated and must be pre-approved by me.

4) There will be a take home midterm and final exam comprised of identification and short answer essay questions.

**Academic Integrity:**

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. Violations of the honor code include, but are not limited to: plagiarism, cheating, bribery, misrepresentation, fabrication, and conspiracy. Such violations may result in the following: lowering of grades, mandatory 0 on assignments, redoing assignments, a final failing grade in the course, expulsion from the course, referral to the student-run Honor Court. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: *On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.* For more information, refer to: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/>

**Students with Special Needs:**

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

**(Syllabus subject to change)**

**Week One: Introduction**

8/22:

**Readings:** Himmler's Posen Speech (handout)

Mary Fulbrook, "Democracy and Dictatorship, 1918-45"

Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism"

Thomas Elsaesser, "Leni Riefenstahl: The Body Beautiful, Art Cinema and Fascist Aesthetics"

## Week Two: Riefenstahl and the Third Reich

8/27: Discuss 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich History/Fulbrook. Himmler's Posen Speech, Sontag and Riefenstahl.

**Screenings** *Triumph of the Will* (Riefenstahl, 1935)

8/29: Discuss Riefenstahl, Sontag and Elsaesser

**Readings:** Lawrence Douglas, "Film as Witness: Screening *Nazi Concentration Camps* before the Nuremberg Tribunal"

Alan Mintz, "The Holocaust at the Movies: Three Studies in Reception"

## Week Three: Nazi Concentration Camps

9/3: Discuss Riefenstahl, Sontag and Elsaesser

**Screenings:** *Nazi Concentration Camps* (Stevens, 1945), and *Judgment at Nuremberg* (Kramer, 1961)

9/5: **No Class**

## Week Four: Rubble Films

9/10: Discuss *Nazi Concentration Camps*, Douglas  
*Judgment at Nuremberg*, Mintz

**Screening:** *Murderers are Among Us* (Staudte, 1945)

**Readings:** Robert R. Shandley, "Coming Home through Rubble Canyons"

9/12: Discuss *Nazi Concentration Camps*, Douglas essay  
*Judgment at Nuremberg*, Mintz

Discuss *Murderers are Among Us* and Schandley

## Week Five: Representing Hitler

9/17 Discuss *Murderers are Among Us* and Schandley

**Screening:** *To Be, Or Not To Be* (Lubitsch, 1942),

**Reading:** Annette Insdorf, "Black Humor"

9/19: Discuss *To Be, Or Not To Be*, Insdorf

**Readings:** Eric L. Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg"

Gordon A. Craig, "Hitler and the New Generation"

## Week Six

9/24: Discuss Santner and Craig

**Screening:** *Our Hitler, A Film From Germany* (Syberberg, 1978)

**Reading:** Anton Kaes, "Germany as Myth"

9/26: Discuss *Our Hitler*, Kaes and Santner

Week Seven

10/1: Continue *Our Hitler*

**Screening** *Downfall* (Hirschbiegel, 2005)

**Readings:** Fest Joachim C. Fest, "Prologue: Hitler and Historical Greatness," "Götterdämmerung," and "Conclusion: The Dead End"

10/3: Discuss *Downfall* and Fest

Week Eight: The Banality of Evil

10/8: Discuss *Downfall* and Fest

**Screening:** *The Specialist* (Sylvan, 1998)

**Reading:** Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem*

10/10: *Eichmann in Jerusalem*

**Reading:** *Eichmann in Jerusalem*

Week Nine

10/15: Discuss Arendt, *The Specialist*

**Screening:** *Mr. Death: The Rise and Fall of Fred A. Leuchter, Jr.* (Morris, 1998)

**Reading:** : *Eichmann in Jerusalem*

10/17: Discuss Arendt, *The Specialist*, *Mr. Death*

Week Ten: Nazi Erotica

10/22: Arendt, *The Specialist*, and *Mr. Death*

**Screening:** *Night Porter* (Cavani, 1974)

**Readings:** Teresa De Lauretis, "Cavani's Night Porter: A Woman's Film?"  
Saul Friedlander, from *Reflections of Nazism Kitsch and Death*

**Midterm sent on 10/20 and due on 10/23 at 1pm**

10/24: Discuss *Night Porter*, De Lauretis and Friedlander

Week Eleven: American Representations of Nazism

10/29: *Night Porter* and Friedlander

**Screening:** *Schindler's List* (Spielberg, 1993)

**Reading:** Omer Bartov, "Spielberg's Oskar: Hollywood Tries Evil"

10/31 : Discuss *Schindler 's List*

Week Twelve

11/5: Discuss *Schindler 's List*

**Screening:** *Apt Pupil* (Singer, 1998)

11/7: Discuss *Schindler 's List* and Bartov

**Readings:** Caroline Joan S. Picart and David A. Frank, “Apt Pupil: The Hollywood Nazi-as-Monster Flick”

Week Thirteen

11/12: Discuss *Apt Pupil* and Picart on horror

**Screening:** *Inglourious Basterds*

11/14: Discuss *Basterds*

**Reading:** Delillo's *White Noise*

Week Fourteen

11/19: Discuss *Basterds*

cont. reading *White Noise*

11/21: Discuss *White Noise*

Week Fifteen: Laughing at Hitler

11/26: Discuss *White Noise*

**Screening:** *Twilight Zone* and *South Park*

**11/28: Thanksgiving**

Finish reading *White Noise* over the break

Week Sixteen

12/3: **Conclusions**

Discuss *Twilight Zone*, *Hogan's Heroes* and *South Park*

**Final exam will be sent on 12/1 and are due by 12/5 at 1pm.**

**Final paper is due on 12/11. Late papers will not be accepted.**