CLARK UNIVERSITY

HIST 236/336

Gender, War and Genocide in 20th Century Europe

Fall 2012

Professor Thomas Kühne
Time: Mon 2:50-5:50 pm
Place: Strassler Family Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Cohen Lasry House, Kent Seminar Room, 1st fl.
Office Hours: Mon 12:00-12:30 pm, Jeff 318; Mon 12:30-1:00 pm Lasry House 2nd fl, and by appointment
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Description

Boys become real men through military service and by participation in war. For girls it is not killing and dying for the fatherland, but giving birth and taking care of children, i.e., motherhood, which serves as central marker of true womanhood. Gender stereotypes were questioned but also reinforced in the Age of Total Wars. Focusing on Germany and Central Europe, the course includes comparative views on other European countries. We will discuss the impact of gender on mass violence and vice versa from World War I to the World War II, and from the Holocaust to the Wars in former Yugoslavia. These wars mobilized men as well as women, and they increasingly blurred the boundaries between men and women. On all fronts and sites, masculinities and femininities structured propaganda and emotions, fighting morals and antiwar movement, warfare and murder, perpetrators, bystanders and victims, the preparation of minds for mass violence, and its remembrance. We will examine the making of a deeply gendered war culture and its radicalization into the Holocaust, as well as its transformation into a peace culture after 1945, and the return of genocide and war to Europe in the 1990s.

Objectives

The purpose of this course is to investigate the different and often hidden ways gender images and gender regimes shaped the radicalization of mass violence in Germany and Europe in the first half of the 20th century and how these gender images and gender regimes were itself shaped by war and genocide. The course covers WWI and WWII, national differences of war memories, the aftermath of the Holocaust, and the return of genocide in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Special attention will be paid to various approaches to gender history, such as the analysis of discourses and images, or the
analysis of gender practices. We will attempt to do this by critical analysis of scholarly work, written testimonies, literature, films, and propaganda materials.

Requirements

This course will be taught in the spirit of a tutorial: once you decide to take the class, you are expected to stick to it, come to the sessions and be well prepared.

- In order to facilitate informed discussion, you are required to write a short paper in conjunction with the assigned books and essays for each class. The papers are due in class and must be handed in to the instructor at its end or emailed before class starts. Please note that the type of paper varies from session to session. However, each paper includes the author’s name, the date of the related class, and a title.

- Second, each student takes minutes of one session and presents them at the beginning of the following session. Please type them out and provide photocopies for the class. The minutes are not supposed to cover the seminar discussion comprehensively or chronologically but rather to summarize the contents of our discussion, its findings and controversies in a readable, well organized and non-partisan fashion so that somebody who has not attended the class is yet able to grasp the basics of our proceedings; bullet points or abbreviations are not appropriate.

- Finally, a research paper of 20 pages (undergraduates) or 40 pages (graduates) text, including title and bibliography, double-spaced, is due in the last session. Think about a topic and discuss it with the instructor by the end of October. If you are not familiar with how to write and submit such a paper, you may wish to consult J. R. Benjamin, *A Student’s Guide to History* (10th ed., Boston, 2007) or Ch. Lipson, *How to Write a BA Thesis* (Chicago, 2005). They offer valuable assistance, not least regarding the formal shape of your paper. A one-page outline of the paper is due in class on Dec 10.

Undergraduate research papers are based on at least two scholarly books and four scholarly articles in addition to those mentioned in this syllabus. Graduate papers include at least four additional scholarly books and six scholarly articles. Instead of a book you can choose three articles. Start searching for this literature early in the semester and submit a preliminary bibliography including the preliminary title of your paper electronically to tkuehne@clarku.edu no later than Monday after Thanksgiving.

Grading and Practical Arrangements

A maximum of 100 points can be achieved with

- 4 points for each short paper, 40 in total: only the ten best papers will count for your grade; late papers cannot receive more than 2 points
- 10 points for the minutes: 5 points for content, 5 points for organization
- 10 points for the outline of the final paper (due in class Dec 10)
- 30 points for the final paper: 15 points for the content, 4 points for the range of consulted literature, 4 for the writing style, 4 for the organization, 3 for quotation and citation style (due Dec 17, noon, Main Office of Strassler Center or via email to tkuehne@clarku.edu; electronic submission counts as accepted if you receive a confirmation within 24 hours)
- 10 points for continuous participation in class discussion.

You are supposed to attend class on a regularly basis. One absence will not inflict your grade. (You still have to submit the related paper). Further absences without sufficient documentation will result in a deduction of five points each.

100-95 points=A, 94-90 points=A-, 89-85 points=B+, 84-80=B, 79-75 points=B-, etc.

All readings are to be completed on the day assigned, before you come to class. Please bring both the readings and the notes you take from the readings to class in order to follow and participate in class discussions.

Apart from inquiring in the history of racism and body politics in modern Europe, this course serves to introduce students more generally to techniques of historical scholarship and practices of academic communication. Great importance is attached to develop or strengthen skills of analyzing both primary and secondary sources critically. The required readings are carefully chosen. However, none of them should be mistaken as comprising a final truth. Consider them as one of many options to look at a certain topic. Try to understand the basic assumptions, the main arguments, and the limitations of any text you read. Critique is the oil of knowledge. In class, you are invited to speak up and to articulate your thoughts and ideas, whether or not they comply with those of your classmates and the professor.

Checking emails on a regular basis and staying connected with friends and the rest of the world is very important. Do not do it in class, though. Laptops, cell phones, iPods, gameboys, DVD players and other electronic devices are inclined to distract you or others from class discussions. They are to be switched off during class.

Books Recommended for Purchase:

- Dagmar Herzog (ed.), Brutality and Desire. War and Sexuality in Europe’s Twentieth Century (Houndmills, 2009)
- Marion Kaplan, Between Dignity and Despair. Jewish Life in Nazi Germany (New York, 1998)

All other texts will be available electronically or as provided as photocopies.
Course Outline:

1) August 27

Introduction

2) September 10

Gendering War, Gendering Genocide


Assignment: Write down three questions you would like to discuss in class, related to the four readings, and add some thoughts on possible answers; one-page, single-spaced.

3) September 17

World War I – the Catalyst of Women’s Emancipation?


Assignment: based on both readings, summarize the various ways WWI challenged and stabilized the pre-existing gender order; bullet points allowed; one-page paper, single-spaced.

This class will be attended by Professor Benjamin Ziemann, University of Sheffield, U.K. Professor Ziemann, one of the leading historians of the First World War, will give a brief presentation on “Gender and the Aftermath of World War I” and contribute to our discussion.
4) September 24

**War Experience and the Search for Masculinity in Interwar Europe**


Assignment: summarizing response paper, one-page, single-spaced; topic of your choice but try to catch on all articles.

Selections of the 1930 movie *All Quit on the Western Front* to be watched in class.

5) October 1

**Male Bonding and Mass Murder, 1933-45**


Assignment: imagine you had the chance to interview some of the perpetrators or bystanders dealt with in this book. Pick three of them and articulate two distinctive questions to each of them.

Selections from BBC-Documentary *Auschwitz—Inside the Nazi State* (2005) to be watched in class.

6) October 15

**Sexual Violence and the Holocaust**


Assignment: three questions related to the readings to be discussed in class.

This class will be held as a symposium with three guest speakers, all of them renowned specialists in the field of sexual violence during the Holocaust: Professor Dagmar Herzog, City University of New York; Dr. Regina Mühlhäuser, Hamburg Institute for Social Research, Germany; and Professor Pascale Bos, University of Texas, Austin.

7) October 22

Jewish Families During the Holocaust

Reading: Marion Kaplan, Between Dignity and Despair. Jewish Life in Nazi Germany (New York, 1998).

Assignment: response paper, one page, topic of your choice.

8) October 29

Female Empowerment in the Third Reich


Assignment: one-page paper on “Women in Nazi Germany—Emancipation or Subjugation?”

Selections from movie The Bitch of Buchenwald (2009) to be watched and discussed in class.
9) November 5

Women in the Red Army, 1941-1945


Assignment: three questions related to the readings to be discussed in class; feel free to draw parallels (or to denote differences) to present experiences of, and debates on, American female combat soldiers.

10) November 12

Fraternization, Retribution, and Gender in Europe, 1940-45


Assignment: three questions related to the readings you wish to discuss in class.

11) November 19

The “Remasculinization” of Germany after 1945


Assignment: response paper (two pages), comparative thoughts on “homecomings” in Germany after 1945 and in contemporary U.S.

12) November 26

**Females and Femininity in Holocaust Memory**


Assignment: *summarize* the readings in a three-page essay on the topic of this session. (Do not summarize each article separately!)

Selections from movies *Rosenstrasse* and *The Reader* to be watched and discussed in class.

13) December 3

**Rape and Genocide in Former Yugoslavia and the Continuities of the 20th Century**

Assignment: based on the readings (and possibly further material), put together a one to two page synopsis of the basic facts of mass rape in Bosnia, Germany, and Rwanda; focus on our knowledge about a) the number of victims, b) the motives of the perpetrators, c) the institutional settings that made mass rape possible or even encouraged it; address possible limits of our knowledge about these issues. Bullet points allowed.

14) December 10

**Conclusion and Discussion of Research Papers**