

History 535/615/635

The History of the Concentration Camp: A Global Comparative Approach

Fall 2019

Thursdays, 7:20-10:00pm

Location: Innovation 316

Prof. Steven A. Barnes

Robinson B377A Robinson B349

[sbarnes3@gmu.edu](mailto:sbarnes3@gmu.edu)

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 10:30am-12:00pm or by appointment

**Open Dinners:** Thursday, 6pm, Johnson Center Food Court (Come to talk about class, history, the profession, sports, life, whatever....I'll find a table and just come join me to chat before class.)

### **Course Description:**

Through reading and discussion of memoirs, diaries, novels, official documents, and scholarly studies based on case studies from around the world in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this course will explore the relationship between detention and modern politics. The course will primarily focus on the history of the concentration camp as lived experience.

### **Course Requirements:**

#### 1) Class Participation:

Participation is crucial to the success of this course. Consequently, participation in each week's discussion will contribute substantially to the final grade. Attendance in class is crucial. If you do not attend, you cannot participate and your participation grade will suffer accordingly. At the same time, attendance alone is not enough. I do not "cold call" individuals in class, so you will need to be sure that you make your voice heard. Everybody has something to contribute to the discussion—whether through comments, questions, etc., and we all need and deserve the benefit of many voices.

#### 2) Discussion Leaders:

One and occasionally two students will be required to open the week's discussions with a presentation of the issues raised by the week's topic and will be expected to prepare discussion questions and lead the week's discussion. The opening presentation should last 10-15 minutes. **This should not be a summary of the week's reading.** Rather, it should raise issues or questions particularly relevant for discussion. Presenters are expected to seek out information about their topics beyond the required readings when preparing their presentations. After this, the

presenters should prepare discussion questions around the broad issues and themes raised by the readings.

3) Written Assignments:

Students **will** write and post to Blackboard minimum 3-4 paragraph reactions, questions, criticisms of weekly readings for a minimum of 7 of the 13 class sessions. To count for credit, these responses must be submitted a minimum of 24 hours prior to the class session in question. Students are **expected to** read all contributions submitted by the 24-hour deadline prior to the next night's class discussion. I recognize that on occasion this may not be possible for you given work/family schedules, but you should endeavor to do this on a regular basis. Students are **encouraged to** respond to their fellow students' posts. If a response is substantive, a minimum of 3-4 paragraphs, and submitted at least 24 hours prior to the class session, they can count as one of your required responses.

Students will be graded on the quality of the minimum required 7 contributions. Active participation in the Blackboard discussion can be taken into consideration as a boost to the class participation grade.

When writing these responses, please do not capsule the book. Rather, you should be responding to some aspect of what you have read. Do not feel constrained to expressing well-formed opinions of the readings. Raise uncertainties. Ask questions you would like to see us discuss in the class session. Feel free to share insights related to previous weeks' readings, or to bring to bear anything that you may have read in some other class or on your own.

Additionally, students will write a final paper of 10-12 pages. In consultation with the instructor, students will be asked to choose a concentration camp case study or a particular theme related to the concentration camp experience other than those we will discuss in class. While this is not a research paper as such, you will be expected to find a few key primary and secondary sources and write a paper reflecting on how the readings throughout the course help you to understand your case study and how the case study might help us reimagine ways to study the concentration camp.

In the last four weeks of the course, I will ask students to make brief presentations based on the work that they are doing. Details will be discussed further in class.

The final paper will be **due via Blackboard on Wednesday, December 18.**

**Grade Breakdown:**

Class participation	25%
Required responses to readings on Blackboard	25%
Presentation and leading discussion	10%
Presentation based on final paper project	5%
Final Paper	35%

**Course Policies – READ CAREFULLY:**

**Course Policies – READ CAREFULLY:**

Attendance: Our class meetings are the foundation of everything we do during the term. You cannot afford to miss them. I do not assign a textbook that can be read to cover material from class. You are strongly advised to make a friend in the class with whom you could share notes if you miss a class. Grades in the course strongly correlate with attendance. Although no grade penalties result directly from failure to attend class, I will take attendance. If you have two or fewer absences during the term, I will add ten points to your final grade for the semester. **For purposes of the attendance extra credit, no absence counts as “excused” and late arrivals are considered the same as an absence.**

Enrollment: It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they are officially enrolled in the course. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. (Deadlines each semester are published in the Schedule of Classes available from the Registrar's Website <http://registrar.gmu.edu>.)

Please note that the instructor has no authority to add or drop students after the deadlines. After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.

Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.

Policy on Late Work/Extension Bank: Papers are due on Blackboard at noon on their due date. Grades on late assignments will be reduced by 3 percent for each 24-hour period of lateness or portion thereof. **No papers will be accepted for a grade more than 14 calendar days after their assigned due date** absent truly exceptional circumstances.

Students will each have a 48-hour extension bank that can be used at any time during the semester. If you wish to use a portion of your extension bank on any assignment, please add a comment on Blackboard when submitting the assignment. No extensions beyond the 48-hour extension bank will be granted absent truly exceptional circumstances.

Email Addresses: Mason and the professor use only Mason e-mail accounts to communicate with enrolled students. Students must activate their Mason e-mail account, use it to communicate with their instructor, department and other administrative units, and check it regularly for important university information including messages related to this class. If a class session is canceled, an announcement will be sent to your Mason e-mail account. This will be the only notice that you will receive of a class cancellation.

Students with Disabilities: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the [Office of Disability Services](#) at 703.993.2474 or [ds.gmu.edu](http://ds.gmu.edu). All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

*Cheating and Plagiarism:* Plagiarism at the graduate level should never occur and is a serious offense. This applies to papers you write as well as to discussion on Blackboard. The standard, though, is certainly different. The discussion on Blackboard should be free flowing and something more like the discussions we have in the classroom. You should not become overly bogged down in concerns for finding the exact citation for things you are writing about—especially for things that come from the readings we are doing for class. Just make a good faith effort to note when you are drawing ideas from another source. The standard for the final papers, though, is much higher. You should be very careful about citing sources, as any good historian should be.

For purposes of this course and in accord with George Mason policies, cheating and plagiarism are defined as follows:

- Cheating encompasses the following:
  1. The willful giving or receiving of an unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students.
  2. The above may be accomplished by any means whatsoever, including but not limited to the following: fraud; duress; deception; theft; trick; talking; signs; gestures; copying from another student; and the unauthorized use of study aids, memoranda, books, data, or other information.
  3. Attempted cheating.
  
- Plagiarism encompasses the following:
  1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.
  2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment.

It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades. The Honor Code reads as follows: "To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal and/or lie in matters related to academic work." More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found at the Office of Academic Integrity website at <http://oai.gmu.edu>.

Violators will be referred to the Honor Board. Penalties at the graduate level can be up to and include dismissal from the graduate program.

*Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):* George Mason University's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides a wide range of services to students, faculty, and staff. Services are provided by a staff of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social

workers, and counselors. The Center provides individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs -- experiences to enhance a student's personal experience and academic performance. If you are in a crisis, please contact them via <http://caps.gmu.edu/> or 703-993-2380 or at their office SUB I, Room 3129.

### **Course Reading:**

The readings for the course are listed below. When we are reading less than a full book, I have tried to find a way to make the material available without purchase. Books with a \* have been or will soon be ordered by the GMU Book Store.

### **August 29 Introduction**

USHMM Statement on Holocaust Analogies:

<https://www.ushmm.org/information/press/press-releases/statement-regarding-the-museums-position-on-holocaust-analogies>

Scholar's Response:

<https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2019/07/01/an-open-letter-to-the-director-of-the-holocaust-memorial-museum/>

Timothy Snyder, "It Can Happen Here," *Slate*, July 12, 2019

<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2019/07/holocaust-museum-aoc-detention-centers-immigration.html>

"America's Concentration Camps?," *Code Switch* Podcast, July 3, 2019

<https://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=738247414>

### **September 5 What is a concentration camp? How might we conceptualize the concentration camp as something to study?**

Now defunct Wikipedia entry "Concentration Camp." [Available via Blackboard]

Wikipedia entry for "Internment" which replaced "Concentration Camp,"

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internment>.

Wikipedia "Talk" page for "Internment." [Available via Blackboard]

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, pp 437-459. [Available via Blackboard]

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*. 3-31, 231-256. [Available via Blackboard]

James Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 1-102. [Available via Blackboard]

\*Andrea Pitzer, *One Long Night: A Global History of Concentration Camps*, Introduction. [Available via Blackboard, but please acquire the book as we will be reading the rest of it in other weeks.]

## **September 12 Native American Reservations and Indian Industrial Schools – “Proto-Concentration Camps?”**

For those with no background, these few Wikipedia entries can give you a quick overview.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian\\_Removal\\_Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_Removal_Act)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian\\_reservation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_reservation)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dawes\\_Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dawes_Act)

C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa, *Crooked Paths to Allotment: The Fight over Federal Indian Policy after the Civil War*, 13-28. [Available via Blackboard]

Theodore Roosevelt, “Report Of Hon. Theodore Roosevelt Made To The United States Civil Service Commission : Upon A Visit To Certain Indian Reservations And Indian Schools In South Dakota, Nebraska, And Kansas.” 1893. [Available via Blackboard]

Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Susan D. Rose (eds.), *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories, and Reclamations*, read introduction. [Available as an e-book via GMU libraries. Follow the library link to the ProQuest Ebook Central Edition and download the introduction as a PDF]

Read: *The Red Man: His Present and Future*, Volume 13, No. 8.

<http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/publications/red-man-vol-13-no-8>

## **September 19 Concentration Camps and European Imperialism in Africa**

\*Andrea Pitzer, *One Long Night*, read chapters 1-3.

Aidan Forth, “Britain’s Archipelago of Camps: Labor and Detention in a Liberal Empire, 1871-1903,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 2015, Vol.16(3), pp.651-680. (Available via GMU Library website.)

Jonathan Hyslop, “The Invention of the Concentration Camp: Cuba, Southern Africa, and the Philippines, 1896-1907,” *South African Historical Journal* 63.2 (2011): 251-276. (Available via GMU Library website.)

Elizabeth van Heiningen, “A Tool for Modernisation? The Boer concentration camps of the South African War, 1900-1902,” <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/sajs/v106n5-6/v106n5-6a14.pdf>

**Read LAST PARAGRAPH ONLY** of William L. Alden, “London Letters,” *The New York Times Saturday Review*, July 27, 1901, p. BR16. (Available on Blackboard.)

“In South Africa,” *The Washington Post*, August 29, 1901, p. 6. (Available on Blackboard)

“Cape Colony Revolt,” *The Washington Post*, August 31, 1901, p. 1. (Available on Blackboard)

“Two Kinds of Concentration,” *The Washington Post*, November 18, 1901, p. 6. (Available on Blackboard)

“Miss Emily Hobhouse Proved Malcontent in the Boer War,” *The Washington Post*, November 18, 1916, p. 6. (Available on Blackboard) [Take special note of the date on this article.]

Skim British Parliamentary Documents on Boer Concentration Camps (Available on Blackboard)

### **September 26      The Soviet Gulag I: Corrective Labor and the Concentration Camp as Penal Institution**

\*Andrea Pitzer, *One Long Night*, read Chapter 4.

Steven A. Barnes, *Death and Redemption: The Gulag and the Shaping of Soviet Society*. (Read introduction, chapters 1-3, conclusion. Available as an e-book from GMU libraries.)

Oleg Khlevniuk, *History of the Gulag*, Documents 26-28, 34-39, 46, 60, 67-68. (Selections available on Blackboard.)

Oleg Khlevniuk, "The Gulag and the Non-Gulag as One Interrelated Whole." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, vol. 16 no. 3, 2015, pp. 479-498. (Available via GMU library website.)

Alan Barenberg, “Prisoners Without Borders: Zazonniki and the Transformation of Vorkuta after Stalin.” *Jahrbücher Für Geschichte Osteuropas*, vol. 57, no. 4, 2009, pp. 513–534. (Available via GMU library website.)

Wilson T. Bell, “Was the Gulag an Archipelago? De-Convoyed Prisoners and Porous Borders in the Camps of Western Siberia.” *Russian Review*, vol. 72, no. 1, 2013, pp. 116–141. (Available via GMU library website.)

### **October 3      The Soviet Gulag II: Propaganda, Literature, Memoir**

Maxim Gorky, et al., *Belomor*. [Read selections available via Blackboard.]

\*Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.

\*Fyodor Mochulsky, *Gulag Boss: A Soviet Memoir*

### **October 10      Concentration Camps in the United States: The Japanese-American Camps**

Yamato Ichihashi, *Morning Glory, Evening Shadows*. [Read selections available via Blackboard]

Web Exhibit “A More Perfect Union” <http://americanhistory.si.edu/perfectunion/experience/>  
[View entire exhibit and pick out one piece of material culture and be prepared to talk about what we might learn from such a source.]

Alice Yang Murray, ed., *What Did the Internment of Japanese Americans Mean?*, pp. iii-x, 1-78  
[Available via Blackboard]

Gordon H. Chang, “Social Darwinism versus Social Engineering: The “Education” of Japanese Americans During World War II,” in Amir Weiner (ed.), *Landscaping the Human Garden: Twentieth Century Population Management in a Comparative Framework*, [Available via Blackboard]

Greg Robinson, *A Tragedy of Democracy: Japanese Confinement in North America*, read chapter 4. (Available as an e-book via GMU library. Please download PDF of the chapter.)

### **October 17 Nazi Concentration Camps I**

\*Nikolaus Wachsmann, *KL: A History of the Nazi Concentration Camps*

### **October 24 Nazi Concentration Camps II**

\*Primo Levi, *Survival at Auschwitz*

Michael R. Marrus, “The Uniqueness of the Holocaust” in *The Holocaust in History*, pp. 18-25.  
[Available via Blackboard]

Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, [Selections available via Blackboard]

Andrea Pitzer, *One Long Night*, read chapters 5-6.

### **October 31 North Korea**

David Hawk, *The Hidden Gulag: Exposing North Korea’s Vast System of Lawless Imprisonment, Second Edition, The Lives and Voices of “Those Who are Sent to the Mountains”* Available at [http://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/HRNK\\_HiddenGulag2\\_Web\\_5-18.pdf](http://www.hrnk.org/uploads/pdfs/HRNK_HiddenGulag2_Web_5-18.pdf)

### **November 7 Recent and Current American Issues: American Concentration Camps?**

Andrea Pitzer, read chapters 7-10.

A. Naomi Paik, “Carceral Quarantine at Guantánamo,” *Radical History Review*, 115, 2013: 142-168. [Available via GMU Library e-journals]



Amy Kaplan, "Where is Guantanamo?" *American Quarterly*, 57(3), 2005: 831-858. [Available via GMU Library e-journals]

"Guantanamo Bay: A "Gulag Of Our Times" or a "Model Facility"? A Debate on the U.S. Prison & Amnesty International", Democracy Now,  
[http://www.democracynow.org/2005/6/1/guantanamo\\_bay\\_a\\_gulag\\_of\\_our](http://www.democracynow.org/2005/6/1/guantanamo_bay_a_gulag_of_our) (listen from 41:30)

Anne Applebaum, "Amnesty's Amnesia," *The Washington Post*, June 8, 2005.  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/06/07/AR2005060701497.html>

Bruce O'Neill, "Of Camps, Gulags and Extraordinary Renditions: Infrastructural Violence in Romania," *Ethnography* 13.4 (2012): 466-486. [Available via GMU Library e-journals]

"The Black Flag: Guantánamo Bay and the Space of Exception," Derek Gregory, *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography*, Vol. 88, No. 4 (2006), pp. 405-427 [Available via GMU Library e-journals]

*Additional articles will be added related to current controversies around detention of immigrants.*

## **November 14 Beyond Case Studies: How Can We Think About Concentration Camps, What Can We Think About By Thinking About Concentration Camps?**

### **1) Moral and Ethical Life in Concentration Camps**

\*Tzvetan Todorov, *Facing the Extreme: Moral Life in the Concentration Camps*

## **November 21 Beyond Case Studies 2: Concentration Camps in Memory/Commemoration/Literature/Art**

### **MANDATORY TRIP TO U.S. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM, WASHINGTON, DC BEFORE THIS DATE**

Watch: *Schindler's List*. (Streams via Netflix subscription or for a fee from YouTube, iTunes, Vudu, Amazon Prime, or Google Play)

Steven A. Barnes, "Remembering the Gulag in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan," Forthcoming essay and slide show. (To be made available on Blackboard)

Steven A. Barnes, "Keeping the Past in the Past: The Attack on the Perm 36 Gulag Museum and Russian Historical Memory of Soviet Repression," Forthcoming essay. (To be made available on Blackboard)

\*Art Spiegelman, *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*. (Volumes I and II)

Alison Landsberg, "America, the Holocaust, and the Mass Culture of Memory: Toward a Radical Politics of Empathy," *New German Critique*, 71 (Spring-Summer 1997), 63-86. [Available via

Blackboard]

**December 5 Beyond Case Studies 3: Concentration Camp Social History, Concentration Camp Spatial History, Concentration Camp Cultural History, Concentration Camp Theory?**

Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror: The Concentration Camp*. (Specific selections to be announced. Available as an e-book via GMU libraries.)

“Giorgio Agamben and the Spatialities of the Camp: An Introduction,” Richard Ek, *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography*, Vol. 88, No. 4 (2006), pp. 363-386. [Available via GMU Library e-journals]

London Review of Books, article “Barbed Wire” by Reviel Netz in 20 July 2000 edition. On microfilm in library. Will be provided via Blackboard at a later date.

*Other articles may be added.*