

Workshop for Day Two:
The Educational Implications of Visiting Holocaust Memorial Sites –
On-Site Objectives and Classroom Use

**Study Tours Sponsored by
Richard Stockton College of New Jersey Holocaust Resource Center:
Using Historical Sites as Classrooms**

Our educational activity and presentation is based upon the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey overseas study tours to sites of historical interest focusing on the Holocaust. The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey is a New Jersey public funded college in a rural setting in the southern section of the state 12 miles north of Atlantic City. We know that many of our students are first generation college attendees. Most students have only traveled within the tri-state area. Many students have never been on an airplane.

The purpose of Stockton College offering study tours to Holocaust memorial sites is to give Stockton students the opportunity to gain knowledge outside of the classroom. From our past experiences, traveling overseas provides the students with a first hand introduction to other cultures, new languages, and the ability to view present and past history beyond the textbook. At Stockton College, there is a strong and well recognized undergraduate program in Holocaust and Genocide Studies. A minor in Holocaust and Genocide Studies is offered. The study tours serve as an adjunct for students pursuing this discipline. In addition, the Jewish Studies program and minor are supplemented by this trip. Jewish life in Europe before, during, and after the Holocaust is explored.

The study tours always trace the history of at least one Holocaust survivor. Our most recent study tour in May 2006 traced the history of two Holocaust survivors: Fred Spiegel and Irving Roth. As we visited sites of historical interest Fred and Irving spoke to the students and related their experiences. We visited the concentration camp where both of the Holocaust survivors had family members murdered. Students had the opportunity to ask questions of an eyewitness.

The study tours are only available through a 4 credit course GAH 2119, History and Memory of the Nazi Era. The study tour is a history course with a writing component. The students who enroll in the study tour course are a cross section of the students at Stockton. Many are history majors who plan to be educators. Most of the students are not Jewish. The student group reflects the richness of the multi-cultural student population at Stockton. For most of the students, this is their first experience learning about the Jewish religion.

It is important to note that when we began offering study tours to sites of historical interest only some students enrolled in an independent study course associated with the study tour. We learned that only the independent study students were prepared for the study tour. Many students were not focused on the goals and objectives of the study tour. Therefore it has become mandatory that all students enroll in the 4 credit course (GAH 2119) prior to signing up for the study tour.

The preparation for the study tour is stated on the GAH 2119 syllabus. The syllabus details the goals and objectives for GAH 2119 which has been offered in Stockton's 2006 summer school session. Also included are the texts and evaluation assignments. The 2006 study tour was to Poland with March of Remembrance and Hope (see below)

GAH 2119 – Summer 2006 History and Memory of the Nazi Era – (W2 and H)

Instructors:

Dr. Michael Hayse - michael.hayse@stockton.edu / 609-652-4699

Mrs. Gail Rosenthal – gail.rosenthal@stockton.edu / 609-652-4699

Course goals and description:

The goal of this course is to explore the history and themes associated with World War II. During the class sessions, we will read and discuss the history of the Holocaust. We will read a text and in addition three memoirs. The film *Schindler's List* will be viewed. The primary focus will be on the history of antisemitism, the invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, and the steps that led from racist discrimination to the deportation and systematic mass murder of millions of Jews and other groups, such as Gypsies (Sinti and Roma), homosexuals, and the mentally and physically handicapped in Hitler's Third Reich. Students will probe some of the most vexing questions concerning the Third Reich. The students will have the opportunity to study and analyze life in Poland from the early 19th century to today.

History will be able to be studied first-hand because the students will join The March of the Remembrance and Hope 2006 study tour to Poland. All students will enhance their knowledge about the Holocaust as they travel throughout Poland exploring the historical sites associated with the history of the Holocaust. There will be classroom preparation time prior to the trip and a culminating class session upon returning to Stockton. The core of the course will be in Poland in classroom sessions with Stockton faculty, guided tours of historical sites, and lectures/discussions led by Stockton faculty that will be supplemented by local historians. It is expected that upon their return, the students will share this knowledge with their friends, families, and communities. It is hoped that the students will raise awareness about prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination through public forums discussing the Holocaust as a prime example of prejudice taken to the extreme.

Objectives:

This course is designed to familiarize students with aspects of Polish history and culture relating to the Nazi era. Classroom study will be complemented by a seven-day tour of sights in Poland, thus enhancing traditional study with on-site experiential learning. Students will have a first hand introduction to other cultures, new languages, and the ability to view present and past history beyond the textbook. This course is also a tribute to Holocaust survivors and victims. Students will

participate in a memorial service (Yom HaShoah) at the concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. This study tour will travel throughout Poland. Jewish life in Poland before, during, and after the Holocaust will be explored. There will be on-site learning throughout with emphasis on Holocaust related sites.

Texts:

Bergen, Doris. *War and Genocide*.

Roth, Irving. *Bondi's Brother*.

Spiegel, Fred. *Once the Acacias Bloomed*.

Evaluation:

Based on the following:

Participation/ discussions/ public forum final project and presentation—20%

Memoir book reviews—20%

Research project—15%

Reaction paper for *Schindler's List* —15%

Journal and album entry—15%

Analysis of text with study guide to be provided—15%

These study tours have been operating since 1999 and are designed for Stockton students of all backgrounds. The study tours have focused on an academic study of Poland and Germany: the past history, the present status, and the projections and implications for the future. Jewish life before, after, and during the Holocaust is explored through the study tour. Stockton's study tours have traveled independently as well as participated with groups such as March of the Living and March of Remembrance and Hope.

Stockton study tours honor the victims, survivors, and rescuers of the Holocaust. A memorial service designed by the students is always included. Commemorations are observed at Holocaust related sites. Stockton study tours visit Holocaust related sites including memorials, museums, cathedrals, and castles. The guide often prepares the on-site location for a classroom. This was skillfully accomplished in 2006 by Rita Silber as we toured the historical sites of Poland. In addition to the guide, the students have Stockton educators leading them. A Holocaust survivor always accompanies the group. The Holocaust survivor is also a guide and a mentor. As enrichment the students attend cultural events and sample local cuisine.

It is understood that even though plans are scrupulously made unforeseen situations can occur. There are problems and risks problems that can occur. We have developed a student responsibility form as well as a letter to the family of participant, which reduces problems (see below).

Letter to Family of Participant

To: Families of participants
Stockton Study Tour to Poland—March of Remembrance and Hope

From: Trip Leaders—Dr. Michael Hayse and Gail Rosenthal

Re: Information about the trip

1. If you would like to know the status of the flights (confirmation of arrival in Poland and departure from Poland as well as arrival in New York), call LOT Airlines at 800-223-0593. The flight numbers and times have been given to all participants. Please remember, we are in a different time zone; in Poland they are six hours ahead of New Jersey time.
2. A hotel list with phone numbers, including country codes to be used when calling from the United States will be sent to the students prior to departure. It will be **very difficult** for you to contact your family member in the hotel.
3. Our study tour is fast paced and as you can see on our itinerary we will be traveling daily. It will be **very difficult** for your family member to contact you. Internet service in Poland is poor. **We assure you that if there is an emergency we will contact you immediately.**
4. Michael Hayse will have his cell phone. Cell phone reception and service are limited in Poland, although the phone is supposed to have an answering mode where an emergency message can be left. His cell phone number is 610-203-9632. **Please only call this number for emergencies.** When this number is dialed the phone should ring in Poland. In addition, Gail and Michael will try their best to access their Stockton email account for [messages—
gail.rosenthal@stockton.edu](mailto:messages@gail.rosenthal@stockton.edu) and michael.hayse@stockton.edu
5. In case of emergency and you need to contact a participant:
 - Call March of Remembrance and Hope office at 201-883-1674 **or**
 - Stockton's Office of General Studies at 609-652-4542 **or**
 - Stockton Police at 609-652-4390All of the above contacts will be able to reach us, using the March of Remembrance and Hope security officers.
6. Updates about the study tour will be posted on the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey website: www.stockton.edu. When on the website click onto the top black bar—site map. Then scroll down on the site map to Stockton study tour to Poland—March of Remembrance and Hope
2006, May 22-29, 2006.
7. If you have any questions prior to the study tour, please contact Stockton's Holocaust Resource Center, 609-652-4699.

Student Responsibility Form

**The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
March of Remembrance and Hope 2006**

**SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM TO THE HOLOCAUST RESOURCE CENTER.
POLICIES, RULES, AND CONDUCT**

All participants are expected to adhere to the following policies while on the March of Remembrance and Hope 2006 Study Tour to Poland. These rules are intended to enhance safety and ensure the most enjoyable possible trip for you and all other trip participants. Stockton College retains the right to send home, with partial reimbursement, any participant who fails to abide by these rules or in any way undermines the safety and well-being of the group or any of its members, subjects the college or the group, including the person in question, to risk of liability or harm.

1. Absolutely no non-prescription drugs, firearms, or weapons may be in any participant's possession at any time. Anyone found in violation of this rule will be immediately sent home.
2. It is against school policy and against New Jersey law for anyone under the age of 21 to possess or consume alcoholic beverages. Any participant of any age found in a state of intoxication may be immediately sent home at the discretion of trip leaders.
3. No participant may operate any motor vehicle while on this trip.
4. The trip leaders must be informed in advance of any individual's departure from the established group itinerary.
5. Every participant must inform the trip leaders or other group members of his/her whereabouts at all times, including during free time.
6. When outside the hotel, everyone must travel in groups of two or more. Inform other group members of your intended destination.
7. Every participant must follow the directions of the trip leaders. This includes, but is not limited to, punctual appearance at group meeting times and places.

I have read and understand these policies and agree to abide by them.

Signature _____

Date _____

Name (print) _____

The following are examples of activities and assignments that can be used by educators in the high school or college classroom to prepare students who are visiting Holocaust memorial sites (see below). Please note that the Public Forum final project extends the study tour to the community at-large.

Analysis of Text

GAH 2119: MARCH OF REMEMBRANCE AND HOPE 2006

STUDY GUIDE & QUESTIONS FOR DORIS BERGEN'S *WAR AND GENOCIDE: A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE HOLOCAUST*.

CHAPTER 1

- Contrary to the simplistic racist Nazi portrayal of Jews, how diverse were the Jews of Europe prior to the Holocaust?
- What pre-existing attitudes, prejudices, and ideas prepared the way for the rise of Nazi racial ideology?
- How can World War I be seen as a factor that contributed to, but didn't cause, the rise of Nazism?

CHAPTER 2

- Did Hitler develop a new and unique ideology or world view, or would it be more accurate to say he reflected and borrowed from the culture in which he grew up?
- How was Hitler's racial anti-Semitism central to his broader world view and goals?
- What factors led to the Nazi rise to power? What does Bergen mean when she writes, "Hitler did not need to seize power. It was handed to him"?

CHAPTER 3

- Did the first years of Nazi Rule constitute a "revolution," or were they less radical than the term suggests?

- Explain the gradual escalation of policies toward political and “racial” opponents in the Third Reich between 1933 and 1938.
- What explains the relative lack of resistance against the Nazis in Germany?
- What does Bergen mean when she writes that the Nazi regime became “routinized” in the mid-1930s?

CHAPTER 4

- 1938 marked a turning point toward radicalization. Explain how both foreign policy and the treatment of the Jews became radicalized.
- Why is the Kristallnacht Pogrom an especially important event?
- How did German Jews respond to Nazi Persecution? What were their options, and the limits of their options before the War?

CHAPTER 5

- How did racial policies change with the Nazi’s attack on Poland and the start of World War II?
- What evidence suggests that the war was a different type of war?
- What resistance was offered by Poles and/or Jews in German-occupied Poland?
- What was the so-called “euthanasia” program, and how does it reflect the radicalization of policies during the war?

CHAPTER 6

- How did war with the Soviet Union beginning in 1941 affect German racial policies? Domestic policies?
- When did the Nazis settle on a program of systematic mass murder of the Jews (the so-called “final solution”)? What led to this program?
- What was the purpose of the “Wannsee Conference” in 1942?

CHAPTER 7

- In what ways were the Nazi desire for war and the mass murder program of the Holocaust connected?
- What was the “General Plan East” and how does it reflect the unique nature of the Nazi war aims?
- Consider the similarities and differences between the six killing centers (Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Majdanek, Auschwitz)
- What opportunities and obstacles were there for Jews to escape the Nazi Holocaust during the war? In what ways did geographical location or other factors affect survival chances, and why?
- In what ways was the treatment of other groups, such as Roma (“gypsies”), homosexuals, and other persecuted groups similar or different to that of the Jews?
- What are some examples of resistance in Nazi-occupied Europe? How does recognition of this resistance affect our understanding of the Holocaust?

CHAPTER 8

- What were some differences between the Eastern and Western Fronts in the European theater of war?
- In what ways did the war “come home to roost” in Germany?
- In what ways did the persecution and killing of Jews and other targeted groups change in the final stages of the war, and why?

REFLECTIONS

- Before leaving for Poland, write down some information or ideas from the book that you found especially helpful in understanding the Holocaust.
- After returning from study tour to Poland, reflect on how Bergen’s history sheds light on things you saw, learned, or experienced during the trip.

Book Review

GAH 2119- History and Memory of the Nazi Era

Book Review for both books

Once the Acacias Bloomed: Memories of a Childhood Lost

Fred Spiegel

Bondi’s Brother

Irving Roth

500 words maximum, typed and double spaced for each book review.

A book review analyses aspects of a book in depth. It should give enough information about the book to help decide if it's worth reading. The book reviews for this study tour should include the following information about the work:

1. 1. A general outline of the book without necessarily telling the whole story.
2. 2. An explanation of the historical background revealed in the book and how it relates to our study tour to Poland.
3. 3. A thematic analysis of the work.
4. 4. A brief evaluation of the work that points to aspects of it that are

- interesting. This is strictly your opinion.
5. 5. What new idea or information did you glean from this book?
 6. 6. How did meeting the author enrich your understanding and appreciation of the book?

Journal and Album Entry

GAH 2119 JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT AND ALBUM ASSIGNMENT

You are expected to maintain a journal for this class. Please note, a journal is not a personal diary. The **journal assignment** entries should begin on May 22nd through May 29th. There should be entries every day of the study tour. Please extend your journal entries to include your experiences with friends and family after your return. This journal offers an opportunity to record ideas, experiences, reactions, and observations that are relevant to the material and topics covered in this class prior to the study tour and your experiences while in Poland. Issues related to human rights, prejudice, stereotyping, and genocide are appropriate to include in your journal. Please write clearly.

The nature of the **journal assignment** is personal and objective. You are urged to be entirely candid and uninhibited when writing in your journal. Nothing from your journal will be shared in class without your explicit prior consent. The journal will be graded on the basis of regular entries, depth, and sensitivity to issues related to the class and our study tour to Poland. The journal is based upon your personal observations.

The **album assignment** is based upon your experiences on a certain day of the trip and either the morning, afternoon, or evening experiences of the group. The exact days and times of the individual written report assignments will be discussed prior to the trip. It is expected that a one page report will be written accompanied by a photograph that supplements the study tour description. All of the reports and photographs will be arranged in an album.

Final Project—Public Forum

GAH 2119 – PUBLIC FORUM FINAL PROJECT AND PRESENTATION

The goal of this assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to translate what you have learned into practice. This can be done as an **individual** or as a **small group project (maximum 4 in a group)**. If you choose a **small group project**, each member of the group should contribute equally to the project. Your public forum project needs to be dedicated to the March of Remembrance and Hope 2006 study tour to Poland. A presentation of your forum will be given at our last class session. The presentation is limited to **10 minutes for individual presentations and 20 minutes for small group presentations**. The goal of this project is to share your highlights of the study tour. The lessons you have learned and the experiences you have gained from this study tour should be shared with your audience. Please include where you could present your public forum.

Some possible themes for your project:

- Rescue
- Resistance
- Victims
- Concentration camps
- Ghettos

- Jewish life in Poland before World War II
- Jewish life in Poland after World War II

Some approaches for your project:

- Power point
- Slides
- Video
- Posters
- Photograph collage
- Lecture
- Seminar
- Workshop

Our paper concludes with the educational benefits derived from visiting Holocaust memorial sites with students:

- • Travel is a broadening experience for students as they go beyond the classroom. Learning about different cultures, being exposed to other languages and currencies, and tasting new foods are enriching experiences.
- • Visiting Holocaust related sites gives students the opportunity to view first-hand historical sites. Material gleaned from textbooks comes alive.
- • Unto every person there is a name. Traveling with Holocaust survivors individualizes and personalizes the experience.
- • Group dynamics is an important dimension of the trip. Students are able to interact with their peers as well as their professors.
- • Students will have the opportunity to meet European scholars, professors and students, Holocaust survivors, and World War II eyewitnesses who live in Europe. Students will be directed by museum curators and docents.
- • For many students this will be their first time traveling outside of the United States. This experience will enhance their resumes.
- • Meeting new people and socializing with others from diverse backgrounds are positive elements of the study tour.

Presenters:

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