

HISTORY 300E
CONCENTRATION CAMPS: A GLOBAL HISTORY OF MASS CONFINEMENT

Professor Aidan Forth, aforth@luc.edu
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00-11:15
Crown Center 546, Office Hours TBA



The concentration camp is an emblem of the modern world. From the camps of nineteenth-century colonialism to the Soviet Gulag, Nazi death camps, and more contemporary detention centers for refugees and political prisoners in the War on Terror, this course explores the underlying logic of extrajudicial encampment. Why have modern states—across the ideological spectrum—made use of concentration camps against real and perceived enemies? We examine the deep roots of the camp in 19th-century European politics and society, while exploring the global dimensions of the camp today. With a transnational and comparative lens, we examine memoirs, film, and theoretical and historical scholarship to explore the diverse manifestations of concentration camps over the past two centuries. Why did this system of punishment and terror first develop, and why does it continue to exist in the world today?

This class is cross-listed with **International Studies**. We will read about the following countries: United States, Britain, Australia, France, Germany, Soviet Union, Poland, Algeria, Kenya, South Africa, Namibia, China, North Korea, Israel and Palestine, India, Cuba, the Philippines, Turkey, and we'll mention many others in passing.

EXPECTATIONS

A primary responsibility of students is to **complete the weekly reading before the date of the scheduled class** and contribute their **thoughtful, reflective opinions** in class discussions. Students should allocate enough time to complete the required reading, approximately 50-100 pages per week. The readings can be interpreted in a variety of ways and students should formulate some initial positions and questions to offer in the class discussion.

Students who are disabled or impaired should meet with the professor within the first two weeks of the semester to discuss the need for any special arrangements. Students should keep the professor informed of absences well in advance if possible. Notification of an absence does not excuse the absence; upon returning to classes, students are responsible for contacting instructors, producing appropriate documentation for the absence, and completing any missed work.

All cellphones, smartphones, tablets, MP3 players and any other electronic devices should be turned off during class. **The use of laptop computers in this class is a privilege, which may be revoked at any time.** Laptops may be used for taking notes only. Anyone caught using a laptop for any other purpose will be asked to leave the class, and will no longer be permitted to bring a computer to class.

DISCUSSIONS AND CRITICAL READING

Discussion and class participation is a very important part of your grade and your intellectual development. Incisive, imaginative and thoughtful comments that generate and facilitate discussion are weighed heavily in final grades. **Asking questions, responding to your peers and contributing to an ongoing discussion are a necessary part of the learning experience.** In class reports and presentations will also contribute to your participation grade.

ASSIGNMENTS

Fluent and professional writing is one of the core skills of history. The skills you develop in this class will serve you well in whatever career you choose to enter. We will discuss strategies for writing throughout the semester.

You will have the opportunity to write **TWO SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS** (500-600 words) in which you will respond to questions based on readings and class discussions. These are designed so that you may hone your writing skills in preparation for the **FINAL ESSAY**. In the **FINAL ESSAY** (6-8 pages), you will compare two or more camp regimes that we discuss in class according to a particular theme. Your paper will analyze areas of similarity and account for areas of contrast with reference to the motivations and ideologies that govern each camp system. You should also note the impact of expedient and practical factors. Your paper does not require outside research, but it should make regular reference to relevant readings assigned in class. We will discuss strategies for writing the essay together in class.

The final paper is **due on May 5**. A more detailed assignment sheet with sample topics will be handed out in class.

There will also be **short open-book pop-quizzes** that test your factual understanding of historical events.

GRADING

Short Writing Assignment 1 (3-4 pages)	15%
Short Writing Assignment 2 (3-4 pages)	15%
Open-book Quizzes	15%
Final Essay	35%
Attendance and Participation	20%
Total	100%

Please note that **late assignments or essays will not be accepted**. You will receive a grade of **zero** if the assignment is not turned in on the due date.

READINGS

The following readings are available at the bookstore. They are also widely available at online merchants.

Enzo Traverso, *The Origins of Nazi Violence* (New Press, 2003).

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (Mass Market Paperback, 2008).

Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (Touchstone, 1995).

Chol-hwan Kang and Pierre Rigoulot, *Aquariums of Pyongyang: Ten Years in the North Korean Gulag* (New York: Basic Books, 2005).

Michael David-Fox (ed.), *The Soviet Gulag: Evidence, Interpretation, and Comparison* (University of Pittsburg Press, 2016).

All other readings are available through links provided, **or else through sakai**.

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

January 16 Class Introduction

January 18 What is a Concentration Camp?

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, (Harcourt, 1951), pp 437-60.

WEEK 2

January 23 Cultural Origins of the Camp

Enzo Traverso, *The Origins of Nazi Violence*, introduction and chapters 1-3.

January 25 Reports on Camp “Prototypes”

REPORTS: With a partner, you will be assigned to research **one** of the following topics based on readings suggested by me and any other additional research you may choose to pursue:

Ghettos, workhouses, prisons, POW camps, criminal tribe camps, labor compounds, slave plantations, native reservations, quarantine camps.

You will report to the class on your findings. Imagine you are delivering an “executive summary.” How did the institution develop? Where did it come from, and how did it change over time? How might the institution be related to “concentration camps”? In what ways is it different? Your presentation will last approximately 10 minutes, and you will field questions from the class for another 5-10 minutes.

WEEK 3

January 30 Reports on “Proto-camps”

February 1 Reports on “Proto-camps”

WEEK 4

February 6 Colonial Camps in India and South Africa

Aidan Forth, “Britain’s Archipelago of Camps: Labor and Detention in a Liberal Empire, 1871-1903,” in David-Fox, *The Soviet Gulag*.

February 8 Anglo-Boer War Concentration Camps

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.

Elizabeth van Heyningen, “A Tool for Modernisation? The Boer concentration camps of the South African War, 1900-1902,” *South African Journal of Science* 106(5/6), 2010.

WEEK 5

February 13 Colonial Legacies

Film viewing: Ohm Kruger (1941).

Liz Stanley, "Aftermaths: post/memory, commemoration and the concentration camps of the South African War 1899–1902," *European Review of History*, 12(1), 2005.

February 15 German South-West Africa

Isabel Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Cornell University Press, 2005), pp. 70-90, 183-93.

Benjamin Madley, "From Africa to Auschwitz: How German South West Africa Incubated Ideas and Methods Adopted and Developed by the Nazis in Eastern Europe," *European History Quarterly* 35(3), 2005.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7033042.stm>

http://www.windhuk.diplo.de/Vertretung/windhuk/en/03/Commemorative_Years_2004_2005/Seite_Speech_2004-08-14_BMZ.html

WEEK 6

February 20 World War I

Matthew Stibbe, "Civilian Internment and Civilian Internees in Europe, 1914-20," in *Captivity, Forced Labour and Forced Migration in Europe during the First World War* (Routledge, 2009).

February 22 The Armenian Genocide

Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete history*, (I.B. Tauris, 2011), pp. 625-52, 562-72.

WEEK 7

February 28. The Soviet Gulag

Michael David-Fox (ed)., *The Soviet Gulag*, chapters 2 and 9; Stephen Barnes, *Death and Redemption: The Gulag and the Shaping of Soviet Society* (Princeton University Press, 2011), pp. 1-27.

March 1 Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/23/freed-pussy-riot-amnesty-prison-putin-humiliation>

<http://rt.com/news/remembering-solzhenitsyn-the-chronicler-of-the-gulag/>

WEEK 8

NO CLASS READING WEEK

WEEK 9

March 13 Nazi camps: The Early Years

Jane Caplan and Nikolaus Wachsmann (eds.), *Concentration Camps in Nazi Germany: the New Histories*, pp. 17-43.

REPORTS: With a partner, choose one additional chapter of interest in this volume and present on it in class. What was its argument? How does it contribute to our understanding of Nazi camps?

March 15 Nazi camps: The Big Picture

Enzo Traverso, *The Origins of Nazi Violence*, chapter 4 and 5.

Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 1-18.

Michael Marrus, "The Uniqueness of the Holocaust" in *The Holocaust in History* (Brandeis University Press, 1987), pp. 18-25

WEEK 10

March 20 Nazi Camps: An Organized Terror

Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror: The Concentration Camp* (Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 16-27.

Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, read as much as you can for the first class and make sure you finish the whole book by the second class.

March 22 The Holocaust

Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, read as much as you can and finish the book for next week.

WEEK 11

March 27 Primo Levi

Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*,

Class Viewing of *Night and Fog*.

March 29 Concentration Camps USA

Alice Yang Murray (ed.), *What did the Internment of Japanese Americans Mean?* (Bedford St. Martin's Press, 2000), pp. 1-24.

Roger Daniels, "Words do Matter: A Note on Inappropriate Terminology and the Incarceration of the Japanese Americans." Available at

<http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2008/2/1/words-do-matter/>

WEEK 12

April 3 Chinese Camps: Republican and Revolutionary

Klaus Muhlhahn, "The Dark Side of Globalization: The Concentration Camps in Republican China in Global Perspective," *World History Connected*, 6(1), 2009.
Michael David-Fox, *The Soviet Gulag*, chapter 12.

April 5 North Korean Gulag

Michael David-Fox, *The Soviet Gulag*, chapter 13.

WEEK 13

April 10 Aquariums of Pyongyang

Chol-hwan Kang and Pierre Rigoulot, *Aquariums of Pyongyang: Ten Years in the North Korean Gulag* (New York: Basic Books, 2005).

April 12 The African Gulag

Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (Holt Paperbacks, 2005), pp. 131-191.

WEEK 14

April 17 Postcolonial Camps

Laleh Khalili, *Time in the Shadows: Confinement in Counterinsurgencies* (Stanford University Press, 2012), pp. 172-212.

April 19 Guantanamo Bay

Amy Kaplan, "Where is Guantanamo?" *American Quarterly*, 57(3), 2005.

Naomi Paik, "Carceral Quarantine at Guantánamo," *Radical History Review*, 115, 2013.

http://www.democracynow.org/2005/6/1/guantanamo_bay_a_gulag_of_our (listen from 41:30)

WEEK 15

April 24 Refugee Camps: the Flip side of the same coin?

Michel Agier, *Managing the Undesirables*, pp. 1-6.

Dan Stone, *Concentration Camps: A Short History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 110-133.

April 26 Camps in the 21st Century

We will read media articles on camps relevant to the politics of April 2018.
