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Teaching the Representation of the Holocaust

Edited by
Marianne Hirsch and Irene Kacandes

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"You Wanted History, I Give You History": Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* 412
Leo Spitzer

Not Quite Holocaust Fiction: A. B. Yehoshua's *Mr. Mani* and W. G. Sebald's *The Emigrants* 422
Adam Zachary Newton

Part IV: Classroom Contexts

Winning Support for a Multidisciplinary Holocaust Course at a Small Liberal Arts College 433
Marcia D. Horn

Teaching the Holocaust in a Genocide Studies Framework at a Historically Black University 442
Renée A. Hill

Building a Holocaust Studies Program for Both Town and Gown 451
David Scrase

Teaching the Holocaust in a Jewish American Literature Course 457
Joshua L. Charlson

Pedagogy and the Politics of Memory: "The Countermonument Project" 466
Michael Rothberg

Writing the Holocaust: The Transformative Power of Response Journals 477
Sondra Perl

Afterword 491
Marianne Hirsch and Irene Kacandes

Notes on Contributors 495

Index 503

Marianne Hirsch and Irene Kacandes

Introduction

"Can the Story Be Told?": Generations of Memory

In his remarkable memoir *Literature or Life*, Jorge Semprun describes the days between his liberation in Buchenwald and his repatriation. "Can the story be told? Can anyone tell it?" he wonders, assuring his reader that he is not doubting the capacities of language to "contain everything." "But can people hear everything, imagine everything? Will they be able to understand? Will they have the necessary patience, passion, compassion, and fortitude?" (13–14). Semprun's misgivings are a topos of Holocaust memoirs. One might think of Primo Levi's famous recurrent dream in Auschwitz of trying to tell his story at his sister's dinner table, only to have it fall on deaf ears (60); of Charlotte Delbo's sense that what she experienced in Auschwitz is "useless knowledge" (115–231); or of Paul Celan's image of the poem as a "message in a bottle" searching for an "addressable you" (396). Even before they return from the camp, Semprun and his fellow prisoners heatedly debate the most effective

genre for their narration and the amount of artifice necessary to make people understand. Would cinema be the best? they ask. No, because "the most significant events of camp life have surely never been filmed" (126). Would eyewitness accounts, reportage, be better, or fiction, because fiction lets you imagine?

This discussion in Buchenwald movingly anticipates many of the questions about representation that have preoccupied the teaching and writing about the Holocaust in the last half century, questions that have become more pointed as the generation of witnesses and survivors is leaving our midst. The second, the third, and subsequent generations—the generations of current college faculty members and students, and of *their* future students—have come to accept as a given that our access to the events of the Holocaust is multiply mediated. But this does not mean that the questions of how to tell and how to be heard are not still as vital as they were for the survivors of Buchenwald in 1945.

Nevertheless, there have been radical generational shifts in transmission concerning what aspects of the story are told, what questions persist, what layers remain unexplored. That the Holocaust has appeared intermittently as front-page news for over a half century has been due to controversies over its history, its memory, and its representation. Every generation, every decade since the end of World War II has confronted new controversies that test the ethical limits of memory and memorialization. And each generation has required ever more sophisticated conceptual tools with which to evaluate these controversies. Paradoxical though it may sound, one could say that since the conclusion of World War II, the Holocaust has remained poignantly present in very different areas of social and cultural life. Should a monastery be built on the grounds of Auschwitz? Should there be a monument to the murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, the capital of the perpetrator nation? What should that monument look like? What stories should and should not be told in popular media? Is it legitimate for Steven Spielberg to tell the story of one good German, Oskar Schindler, when there were very few such rescuers? Can the Holocaust be funny, the subject of imaginative play, as it is for Roberto Benigni in *Life Is Beautiful*? What is the

status of historical truth versus interpretation? Should Holocaust deniers be allowed to advertise in college newspapers? Is Deborah Lipstadt committing libel when she calls David Irving a denier? These debates and other recent ones—over the historical interpretation in Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, over the truth of Binjamin Wilkomirski's *Fragments*, over how to deal with the fact that some of the works in our most prized museums may have been stolen from Jewish homes, over the holdings of Swiss banks, over the accuracy of the exhibition *The German Army and Genocide*, or over the good or bad taste of the exhibition *Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery / Recent Art*—are carried out in the public media. For teachers and students in the humanities, the Holocaust has become a limit case, a prime site for testing aesthetic and ethical theories about mediation and representability. (For what remains the single most important volume on issues of representation and the Holocaust, see S. Friedländer, *Probing*.)

Art Spiegelman's *Maus* is often read and taught as a text that illustrates our multiply mediated access to the private and public history of the Holocaust. It tells the story of the parents' survival in Auschwitz, even while performing the son's efforts at understanding and representing that story. The original three-page "Maus," published in *Funny Animals* in 1972, already inscribes the problematics of representation. Its first panel is a cartoon redrawing of the famous Margaret Bourke-White photograph of liberated prisoners in Buchenwald. There are photo corners at the edges, showing us that this is a drawing of a photograph and that this is a photo in an album, a family album. The small arrow marked "Poppa" pointing to one of the prisoners in the back row shows the son's inability to imagine his father's past other than by way of repeatedly circulated and already iconic public images, images that have become part of his consciousness and his family album. But in Spiegelman's animal fable the Jewish prisoners are represented as mice, and the Nazis will be drawn as cats, introducing further layers of mediation that acknowledge yet again the artifices that have always been necessary to make people understand.

If *Maus* addresses the conflicts of the second generation, as

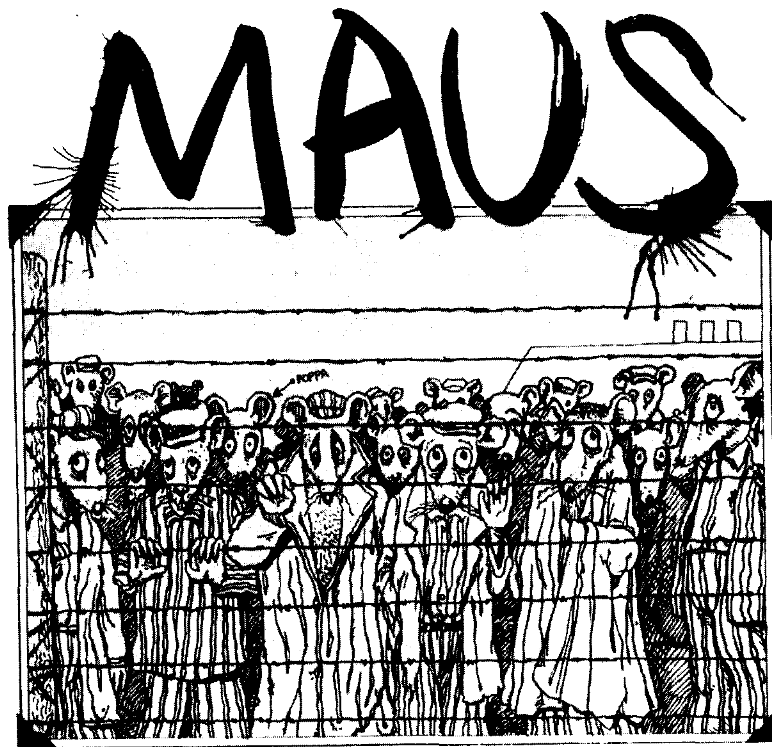

Illustration in the original "Maus." © Art Spiegelman 1972. Published in the comic book *Funny Animals*.

played out in public debates of the 1980s and 1990s, further chronological distance only increases the problem of conceptualization and communicability. "There was a certain impossibility of communicating evil, just as it is impossible to communicate its opposite," the Polish artist Piotr Uklanski said in an interview about the controversial exhibition *Mirroring Evil* held at the Jewish Museum in New York City in 2002. "How can you communicate to anyone the experience of a concentration camp? It no longer has anything to do with reality" ("Mirroring"). His installation *The Nazis*—a series of 166 photographs of famous movie stars dressed for the roles in which they portray Nazis in film—is less about evil or about Nazis than about the ways in which, in the postwar culture of stardom, even Nazism has been commodified (see Rothberg on commodification as a category of Holocaust representation). This distance from

reality makes it all the more necessary to focus on the conventions of representation in our teaching of the Holocaust. The questioning of conventions suggests the need to debunk "the simple notion that we can get beyond representation or outside of history," as David Bathrick puts it in his essay in this volume.

Thus, while this volume contains analyses of many different types of representations of the Holocaust, at its heart is the question of representation itself. It is our conviction that the Holocaust, like any other historical period, cannot be taught separately from the question of how it is represented. At the same time, we need to emphasize that any teaching of representation must be grounded in a historical understanding of what we have come to call the Holocaust. As teachers of literature and culture we are particularly attuned to this complex relation between history and representation and its many possible permutations in our current study of the humanities.

Representation, and the special place it holds in the humanities curriculum, is also the subject of our introduction. We propose that the study of the Holocaust has the potential for bringing into sharper relief a number of current preoccupations in the humanities. Thus our aim here is to introduce several different pedagogical and theoretical issues that anyone teaching Holocaust representation is likely to encounter. We also point our readers to other texts that will allow them to explore these issues in greater depth.

Why Do We Teach This Difficult Subject?

Despite the magnitude of the historical events we call the Holocaust, its study developed slowly. The first academic books did not appear until the early 1960s. (Raul Hilberg's pathbreaking *The Destruction of the European Jews* was initially published in 1961.) College courses lagged even further. Among the first were Destruction of European Jewry, taught by Erich Goldhagen at Brandeis University starting in 1965; Contemporary Jewry, taught by Raul Hilberg at the University of Vermont, first offered in 1968; and The Holocaust in Literature and Culture, taught by Sander L. Gilman at Cornell

University, beginning in 1973. Not until the late 1970s and early 1980s did a remarkable number of universities institute courses on Holocaust history and literature (e.g., James Young taught Literature of the Holocaust at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi offered a course with the same title at Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1979). This time frame coincides with a shift in Holocaust consciousness that commentators date around 1978, with the airing of the NBC series *Holocaust*, watched by 120 million people; Jimmy Carter's commission on the Holocaust (which eventually resulted in the establishment of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC); and the public outcry over the Nazi march in Skokie, Illinois (on the significance of 1978, see Greenspan 45). Since the 1990s, college courses on the Holocaust have become so firmly established in most university curricula that we barely ask ourselves anymore why we teach this difficult subject.

In the last decade, a number of universities have initiated teaching and research centers on the Holocaust and genocide. More than twenty institutions of higher education offer some type of program related to the Holocaust, including undergraduate concentrations and minors, and several now offer advanced degrees. These pedagogical and research efforts at the high school and university level are supported by pedagogy and research centers that offer teacher workshops and classroom materials—most notably, among numerous other institutions, at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles; and the Holocaust Educational Foundation based in Skokie, Illinois.

We have heard students say that a course on the Holocaust is as essential a part of their liberal arts education as a course on Shakespeare. Why? What do they hope to learn? For virtually every discipline in the humanities, the Holocaust has provided some of the greatest intellectual challenges in recent decades. For the historian Michael Marrus, for example, "Holocaust history [is] one of the most sophisticated and methodologically self-conscious fields of historical study" (6). By teaching the Holocaust one can introduce students to philosophical debates about good and evil; to sociological

theories of violence, authority, obedience, conformity, resistance, and rescue; and to psychological theories of tolerance and prejudice, of trauma, memory, and survival. The Holocaust can focus a study of the history of racism and antisemitism, of assimilation and marginality, of exclusion and genocide. In courses on literature and representation, the Holocaust can provide some of the most sophisticated interrogations of representability, of the limits of art, of speech in the face of unspeakability, and of the intersection of ethics and aesthetics. Where is the line between fiction and truth? How can trauma be told; how can it be heard? What will enable us to imagine the extent of the atrocity even as we acknowledge our own distance from the event, evading exploitation, appropriation, trivialization? What literary genres—fiction, poetry, drama, film and video, diaries, oral testimonies, memoirs, memorials, museums—can enable students to receive the story in ways that do justice to its scope? What are acceptable forms of identification, empathy, active listening? And, most specific to the goals of this volume: what are the pedagogical approaches that will most effectively open up these questions?

Certainly, teaching the Holocaust, in our experience, has provided some of the most intense, challenging, exhilarating, and painful classroom encounters. This college subject may require more probing than any other, more pedagogical thinking, careful planning, self-scrutiny, and more open exploration of the stakes involved by the teacher. Teachers will need to question not only in what discipline to offer the course, what to include in the syllabus, and what assignments to design but also how to initiate a diverse group of students, two and soon three generations removed from a chapter of history that has come down to them as the most traumatic and unassimilable of the twentieth century. We have to find strategies that will enable students to learn and respond without being utterly devastated or traumatized; to balance affect and analysis, feeling and thinking; to empower them to speak even while teaching them when to be silent. We have to be open to learning from them, because, clearly, their generation will have different needs and different thresholds from ours. And we have to be ready to call into question the very possibility of teaching and learning in the face of extremity.

Teaching Terminology

"Please excuse me, I use the term 'Holocaust' reluctantly because I do not like it," Primo Levi writes. "But I use it to be understood. Philologically it is a mistake. . . ." Like Levi, we use the term in this volume "to be understood," though we also want to contextualize it. Levi believes that Elie Wiesel coined the term and then "wanted to take it back" (qtd. in Agamben 28). Although the term enables us, too, to be understood, it requires etymological explanation and interrogation. *Holocaust* from the Greek *holocauston* originally meant a sacrifice completely burned by fire. In 1 Samuel 7.9 of the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures, the word was used to mean a "burnt offering to God." Its use to describe the destruction of the European Jews by the National Socialists can be traced back to the 1950s. Because its religious origin implies a form of explanation, or justification, or at least sacralization, many object to its use. Can one say that Jews were sacrificed? But what are the linguistic alternatives?

The term *shoah* is used in Israel, as well as in many European countries. It enters some courses on the subject by way of the title of Claude Lanzmann's film. *Shoah* in Hebrew means "catastrophe," and some find that it, too, has unfortunate connotations. Does not the term "catastrophe" erase the agency of the crime? Still, the term was used as early as 1940 in a publication in Jerusalem entitled *Sho'at Yehudei Polim* (The Shoah of the Jews of Poland). Perhaps it would be more appropriate to employ a term that was used by many of the victims themselves at the time. That word would be the Yiddish *hurban* (or *churban*), also meaning "catastrophe" but with specific reference to the destruction of the Temple. *Hurban* thus also suffers from the connotative problems of *shoah*. Not only does it erase agency, it also makes the mass murder of European Jews the last in a series of catastrophes befalling world Jewry. The only term in current use that does refer to the agency of the crime is the word *genocide*, a term used in France to refer to the destruction of European Jews but used in a number of wider contexts as well. Regrettably, *genocide* elides the specificity of the Nazi crimes, inscribing

this event into a broader history of systematic exterminations on the basis of nationality, ethnicity, or religion. Teachers can use the dilemma of terminology and agency to introduce the perpetrators' ominous and yet euphemistic term "final solution" (*Endlösung*; on euphemistic labeling and dehumanization, see Bandura 378–79).

The difficulty of terminology introduces students not just to notions of inexpressibility and the limits of language, and to the multilingualism of this event, but also to the problem of precisely defining what we have come to call for convenience's sake the Holocaust. For example, when one uses the term, is one trying to reference (only) the attempted annihilation of European Jewry? Even if yes, we must clarify that this attempt involved vastly more than intentional killing in extermination camps. (The term "Auschwitz," too, misleads when used as shorthand, since it obscures the number of locations involved in the killing operations.) Boycotts, emigration, hiding, assumed identities, ghettoization, resistance, pogroms, slaughters carried out by the *Einsatzgruppen* are equally important elements of the full picture of Nazi persecution and extermination of European Jewry. Furthermore, examining terminology can lead us to other groups targeted by the Nazis, especially to the Roma-Sinti (Gypsies), who were the only other racial category slated for complete destruction in the Nazi program for domination of Europe. In fact, with regard to percentage of their respective world populations, the Roma-Sinti were slaughtered to an even greater extent than the Jews. Our terminological discussion with our students should therefore include *Porrajmos*, the word by which the Roma-Sinti designate the destruction of their people (Hancock; Milton). For similar reasons, we need to introduce the phrase "life unworthy of life" (*lebensunwertes Leben*), by which the Nazis justified their first genocidal campaign against people with disabilities, a campaign that historian Henry Friedlander considers the true beginning of the Holocaust.

Defining precisely what we mean when we say "Holocaust" will necessarily involve debates about this event's uniqueness, its incommensurability as opposed to its comparability. As with so many of the issues related to representation we are raising here, there are numerous ways to convey this debate to students. One might begin by

foregrounding the particular context in which we study and teach the Holocaust in the United States: as a people with its own troubled history of suffering, persecution, and genocide. An acknowledgment of the relation of Holocaust representation and memorialization to the representation and memorialization of slavery and the Native American genocide is fundamental to any Holocaust course taught in the United States. (See Rothberg's essay in this volume for useful suggestions on how to foreground the United States context in our teaching.) An approach students are likely to have encountered in middle or high school can help in this regard: secondary school curricula like *Facing History and Ourselves* (www.facing.org) are founded on the belief that learning about the Holocaust is to learn about the workings of racism and prejudice that we can find in our own culture and in many others; therefore to educate ourselves about them is one way to prevent them in the future. A text like Gordon Allport's *The ABC's of Scapegoating* (published by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith in 1959 and not copyrighted, to facilitate wide distribution) takes a similar approach and is well suited to the college classroom even today. One can take up the issue of uniqueness versus comparability more explicitly by considering the German *Historikerstreit* ("historians' debate"; consult Maier or LaCapra, "Representing" and *History*) or the controversial reactions to Christopher Browning's *Ordinary Men* (1992) or Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (1996). (See Zeitlin's essay in this volume.) In our own experience, we have observed that while arguments of the Holocaust's incommensurability still hold a certain validity in psychoanalytic frameworks like that of trauma, our current students may be skeptical of them, from what they know of genocidal killing in Cambodia, Rwanda, and the former Yugoslavia. This knowledge sharpens the need to learn the terms that will allow students to appreciate both the uniqueness of each of these events and the shared histories of violence, oppression, and survival. Some, like Eric D. Weitz in this volume, argue that "on the larger canvas of school and university curricula and of research, the singular focus on the Holocaust no longer suffices" and that, in the future, the Holocaust will increasingly be taught in a comparative framework that will sharpen

these questions. (See the essays in this volume by Hill and by Weitz for suggestions on teaching the Holocaust in the framework of comparative genocide.)

In considering terminology with our students, we also clarify the variations that they will see of the term meaning "hatred of Jews"—that is, *antisemitism* and *anti-Semitism*. Regardless of typography, the term is problematic because of the way it embeds the concept of race in the element "Semitism." The adjective *semitic* traditionally refers to descendants of Noah's son Shem and has been applied to languages and ethnic groups that include Arabs and Jews. The concept of antisemitism has been used (originally as a euphemism) for hatred of Jews only. In this book, we have chosen antisemitism, one word with no hyphen, because we feel that this spelling downplays the chimeric element of "Semitism." We also point out that related words like *philo-Semitism* are troublesome for similar reasons.

Who Has the Right to Speak about the Holocaust?

> The question of my own subject position was a blind spot I was forced to confront by someone else's intrusive behavior. This issue was raised for me, however, not by teaching colleagues or students but rather by fellow Holocaust scholars: I had been puzzled by the physical inspection I often receive at meetings of the Association of Jewish Studies and the Holocaust Educational Foundation (participants inspecting my name tag, peering at my necklaces, and scrutinizing my face) until I surmised that the inquisitors were trying to ascertain if I was Jewish. Of course I don't mean that everyone looks at me in this way, but it had never occurred to me when I first started to work and teach in Holocaust studies that who I was could or should have anything to do with my interest in the subject, until I noticed these curiosity seekers inspecting me. I have since discovered that there seems to be particular concern about pedigree when it comes to Holocaust studies. More tragically for my father than for me, I have that pedigree. But is that something I should share with my students? Is it something I am right to share here? Usually I raise the issue of subject

positions as a topic in my class. And I have revealed occasionally but not consistently my own identity as the child of a survivor when it feels that it would be dishonest of me not to. Still, I feel vulnerable when I do—vulnerable personally but also intellectually. Does my admission make a difference in how readers of my work and students in my class value my comments or my syllabus? Does it undermine my argument that every citizen of our times should study the Holocaust? Is it possible that my compulsion to work and teach in this area is derived from family history—even if I did not begin to study the Holocaust for this reason, even if I did not consciously know that I was the child of a survivor at the time I began my Holocaust studies? If I further reveal myself and tell you that I am not Jewish and that my father was mistaken for a Jew because he was circumcised and that that was why he ended up in a Nazi deportation camp in northern Greece during the war, that I didn't know this until I was in my late twenties, and that my father refuses to talk to his children about it, will it change one's evaluation of my right to speak? to teach? to coedit this book?

—Irene Kacandes

Of the many wonderful students I have had in courses on the Holocaust, two stand out for the failure I felt in teaching them. One, a young man, sat in the back of the room and never spoke during class. I thought he was uninterested, bored. It was not until I read his final journal, after the end of the course, that I found out that he was the grandchild of a German woman who was a teenager during the 1930s and an enthusiastic member of the Nazi youth organization Bund Deutscher Mädchen. During the entire course, he was struggling with his love for his grandmother and his knowledge of her beliefs as a young girl, her collusion in a system that produced the atrocities he was studying. Could I have been helpful to him if I had known? My experience with another student makes me wonder. This young woman was taking the course without the knowledge of her mother, who had raised her with the belief that everything she was learning in school about the Holocaust was vastly exaggerated. Her mother had even refused to allow her to go on a field trip to a Holocaust museum. In her journals, this student vacillated: should she write on behalf of her mother's beliefs and argue against the course readings, or should she write on behalf of those readings, trying implicitly to convince her mother that her mother was wrong? In my conversations with this student I had to go beyond the intellectual and conceptual to another level, a level on which, because of my own subject position as Jewish and as a child of survivors, we had difficulty meeting.

—Marianne Hirsch

Classroom dynamics, such as the ones we expose from each of our own perspectives above, can themselves be used to teach issues of representation. As the question is sometimes, quite problematically, framed, Who "owns" the Holocaust? Who has the right to speak for its victims? Nations? Individuals? Survivors? Descendants of victims or survivors? Competing over the ownership of any world calamity may seem inappropriate, even obscene. And yet the question of to whom the Holocaust belongs comes up repeatedly in the public debates we have listed above. Who has the authority to decide what happens on the grounds of Auschwitz? to decide whether the United States should have a Holocaust museum on the Washington Mall? to build a Holocaust memorial in the center of Berlin?

Who has the right to speak is a question Holocaust classroom teachers must be prepared to deal with. Colleagues and students may explicitly or implicitly challenge one's authority to study or to teach this material. Must those who teach the Holocaust be themselves survivors or—more likely for our time and the future—children and grandchildren of survivors? Who counts as a survivor—only those who were interned in concentration or extermination camps? Or must we include those who survived in hiding, who changed their names and identities, who were forced to escape or emigrate? Does one need to have been a member of a group targeted for extermination, like Jews or Roma-Sinti? What about political prisoners? Some members of our classes may even challenge the authority of certain fellow students. Others may feel that they themselves have no right to speak—if they are not Jewish, for example, or

otherwise personally touched by this history. Do Jews have a special knowledge; are all Jews more deeply affected? Such preconceptions may have to be addressed and demystified from the start.

It is our conviction that the historical phenomena designated by the term *Holocaust* and the representational issues raised by these phenomena should be as widely studied as possible, for themselves, of course, but also for the limit case they present and the discussions they can provoke. It is important that these discussions be as inclusive as a classroom and teaching situation, with its built-in power differentials, will allow. Our students can benefit from the realization that "biology as destiny" was an ideology that the Nazis embraced fully and that led to the Holocaust. Humanists often think of literature as humanizing and individualizing. In our view, it is perhaps the medium that also best enables a transcendence of the biographical and identitarian.

Marianne Hirsch's notion of postmemory identifies an intersubjective transgenerational space of remembrance, linked to a cultural or collective trauma that is not strictly based on identity or familial connection. It is defined through an identification with the victim or witness, modulated and carefully delimited by the unbridgeable distance that separates the participant from the one born after (*Family Frames* and "Surviving Images"). Geoffrey Hartman's notion of "witnesses by adoption" similarly enlarges the familial framework to encompass broader spaces of empathy and identification. (For a discussion in this volume of the problem of authenticity, see the essay by Ezrahi; for a discussion in this volume of the literature of the second generation, see the essay by Sicher.)

Identification, Empathy, Responsibility: Victims, Perpetrators, Bystanders, Rescuers

Where do we position ourselves when we teach the Holocaust, and where do students position themselves when they study it? More than we might expect, our students come to our classes because of earlier experiences with reading texts like Anne Frank's diary or Elie Wiesel's *Night* or because of encounters with popular films like *Schindler's List.* (For suggestions on teaching these texts, see the essay in this volume by Bos on Anne Frank, by Weissman on *Night*, and by Zeitlin on *Schindler's List.*) The strong reactions our students had to those texts as adolescents can be harnessed not just to get them into our classrooms but, more important, to help them think through critical and complex moral and representational issues. Any kind of discussion of subject positions can lead into the more specific question of identification. Identification with the victims, however, is only one of a number of possible points of entry and perhaps one of the more problematic. The distinction among and the invitation to explore the positions of victim, perpetrator, bystander, and rescuer have provided an important paradigm for the study of the Holocaust. Hilberg's *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders* (1992) is based on this paradigm, as is an older volume, *Survivors, Victims, and Perpetrators*, edited by Joel Dimsdale (1980); both could be of help in teaching issues related to position and identification.

Identification with victims is the strategy most often used in contemporary popular genres and in museums and memorials. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Identity Card Project, for example, invites visitors to engage in an act of straightforward identification: each visitor receives an ID card at the entrance and is invited to walk through the museum "as" that person. In the project's initial design, visitors were meant to choose an ID card that corresponded to their own gender and age to facilitate identification even more. Inserting the card into machines on each floor would gradually reveal the course of the person's fate during the war, whether he or she survived or not. As a pedagogical strategy, identification with victims is both powerful and dangerous: it risks being appropriative and projective. As Dominick LaCapra cautions:

> Empathy itself, as an imaginative component not only of the historian's craft but of any responsive approach to the past or the other, raises knotty perplexities, for it is difficult to see how one may be empathetic without intrusively arrogating to oneself the victim's experience or undergoing (whether consciously or unconsciously) surrogate victimage. (*History* 182)

The psychoanalyst Dori Laub warns similarly about secondary trauma: whether professional or amateur, listeners must "not become the victim," lest they risk their own traumatization (58).

In our discussions with our students, we might want to question the ethics of identification or to explore some of the alternative forms of identification suggested by the works we are studying with them. What kind of identification might allow us to say, "It could have been me; it was me, also," and, at the same time, to assert categorically, "But it was not me!"? Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's distinction between "identification with" and "identification as" can be useful in this regard (59–63), as can be LaCapra's notion of "empathic unsettlement" ("Trauma" 722). The distancing devices in texts like *Maus*, Philip Roth's *The Ghost Writer* (discussed in this volume by Hungerford), Sebald's *The Emigrants*, and Yehoshua's *Mr. Mani* (discussed in this volume by Newton), as well as in much poetry (see the essays in this volume by Omer-Sherman and by Baer, and especially the discussion of post-Holocaust poetry by Gubar) can provide models of nonappropriative identification and empathy.

Limiting their identification to victims, however, may prevent students from considering the agency of the crimes that they are studying. Students are in fact drawn to consider the position of perpetrators, bystanders, and rescuers, wondering whether they would have been capable of resisting had they been alive in Nazi Germany or whether they would have collaborated. An exercise used in many diversity-training workshops to illustrate the difference between prejudice and racism can be valuably incorporated into the beginning of the term. Students are asked to divide themselves into smaller discussion groups by birth order: those who are oldest, middle, youngest, or only children speak among themselves about what that position in the family was like. Then the larger group reconvenes, and those in a certain group are asked to keep silent while all the others tell them what ideas they have about that particular role. The group on the hot seat is then asked what it feels like to hear the comments of the others. The exercise can be used to demonstrate that human beings easily develop prejudices—for example, the stereotypical judgments that oldest children are bossy or youngest children spoiled. Is it "human nature" that leads us to such categorization? Students can be made to realize that if they act on those ideas, no matter how commonly held, without taking the specifics of the individual or context into account, they are acting on stereotypes that are akin to racism. This exercise can effectively segue into a unit on antisemitism and the controversies about the extent to which it played a role in the popularity of the Nazis and their ensuing genocidal policies.

Another effective way to consider the role of perpetrators and bystanders in the classroom is to show Leni Riefenstahl's film *Triumph of the Will*. In our experience, it can elicit strong—and uncomfortable—reactions in students, who often are impressed by the aesthetic dimension of the film and by the solidarity and euphoria of the rally participants seemingly documented in it. A short response essay, in which students describe their reactions to the film, can provide a forum for processing uncomfortable feelings. Follow-up discussion in class can offer further contextualization for the idea of collaboration and for the power of totalitarian aesthetics. Lanzmann's *Shoah* is another good choice for exploring the multifaceted problematic of the bystander position. (On teaching about perpetrators and antisemitism, see the essays in this volume by Zeitlin and by Heschel and Gilman. On *Shoah*, see the essays in this volume by Bathrick and by Spitzer.)

An interrogation of the role of the United States government or of the Roman Catholic Church during the Holocaust (and in other, more recent world conflicts) can also provide opportunities to foreground the question of identification and responsibility. We have shown the film *America and the Holocaust* to facilitate such discussion about the role of our own country, and we have assigned Rolf Hochhuth's play *The Deputy* (*Der Stellvertreter*) to launch discussions about the role of the Roman Catholic Church.

Even while discussing these different positions explicitly, it is important to explore with students what it means to witness the Holocaust from their own, retrospective vantage point, from the point of view of their present. Since memoirs as well as oral and written testimonies have become privileged genres in teaching the

Holocaust, students come into contact with individual witnesses who seem to be addressing them, directly, as listeners. As Laub has written:

> Testimony is the narrative's address to hearing; for only when the survivor knows he is being heard, will he stop to hear—and listen to—himself. . . . Insofar as they remind us of a horrible, traumatic past, insofar as they bear witness to our own historical disfiguration, survivors frighten us. (71–74)

Laub's reflections on listening to trauma are helpful companion pieces to the teaching of testimony, as is James Young's notion of "received history": "the combined study of both what happened and how it is passed down to us" that captures the effects of the past on the present and of the "telling" on the witness and the listener (41). (On oral testimony and listening to trauma, see the essays in this volume by Hartman and by Brodzki; on reading diaries and memoirs, see the essay in this volume by Stark.)

In the terms of Kacandes's recent work, students can be invited to become "co-witnesses" to the traumas they encounter through reading and listening, whether in testimony; memoir; or other, more distant narrative, artistic, or poetic forms. She has proposed that when reading fiction of or fiction as trauma, one must "consider the levels of the story and discourse, *and* the levels of the production and reception of the text." Most important for our purposes here is her concept of "transhistorical-transcultural witnessing," in which readers at a historical or cultural remove co-witness the stories in the text by acknowledging and explicating those stories as uncompleted attempts at recounting individual or collective traumas (*Talk Fiction* 95, 96). Heeding specialists' warnings about the deformation involved in translating traumatic memory into narrative memory, she cautions that would-be readers–co-witnesses must be as self-conscious as possible about the stories *they* construct about trauma narratives (140; see also Kacandes, "You" 201–04). This self-consciousness is something we can model for our students in class and urge them to develop in their analyses.

For many of us who teach in North America, this self-consciousness will partly involve considerations of what has been termed the Americanization of the Holocaust. Teachers will at least want to raise the issue of the interest in the Holocaust in the United States and the cultural work that courses on the subject are doing in the United States curriculum. For example, is student interest in the Holocaust displacing the opportunity to consider calamities that have been perpetrated on our continent or by our governments and fellow citizens elsewhere? Why is there a Holocaust museum on the Mall in Washington when we don't have a museum of slavery—and didn't have until 2004 a museum of Native American culture? (For demonstrating the range of subjects related to the idea of the Americanization of the Holocaust, we can recommend Flanzbaum; Novick.)

Finally, analyzing the roles of perpetrators, rescuers, bystanders, victims, and co-witnesses in memoir, film, and fiction will lead to a confrontation with other identity markers, such as gender. Does gender matter when an entire people is targeted for extermination and when the first step in that process is a form of dehumanization that removes subjectivity, agency, and thus also gender from the victims? Does gender matter in an exclusively male hierarchy of leadership such as that of the Nazis? Thinking about these questions—and also about who is telling the story, about how that story is told, and about who is listening—necessitates that we raise, and probe deeply, our own and our students' assumptions about the functioning of gender. (See the essays in this volume by Horowitz, by Zeitlin, by Miller, by Greenberg, and by Spitzer for considerations of gender.)

Balancing Affect and Analysis: Trauma and the Holocaust Classroom

If one of the greatest challenges for the teacher is enabling students to be self-conscious about their subject positions and their acts of co-witnessing, another is the disturbing tension between affect and analysis. Saul Friedländer acknowledges this tension as constitutive:

> The numbing or distancing effect of intellectual work on the *Shoah* is unavoidable and necessary; the recurrence of strong emotional impact is also often unforeseeable and necessary. . . . But neither the protective numbing nor the disruptive emotion is entirely accessible to consciousness. ("Trauma" 51)

The tension between affect and analysis is fundamental to the study of trauma, and thus it returns us to the fundamental question of this book and this introduction: the question of representation. The distinction in trauma studies, based on Pierre Janet's work on traumatic dissociation, between narrative memory and traumatic reenactment has led some scholars to qualify the very notion of representation to make space for what the art historian Jill Bennett has termed a "poetics of sense memory [that] involve[s] not so much *speaking of* but *speaking out of* a particular memory or experience" (87). Such texts produce affect in the reader, listener, or spectator, evoking rather than representing bodily memories. (Brodzki's essay in this volume provides a review of issues in trauma studies, and Greenberg's essay in this volume on Charlotte Delbo considers the notion of deep memory or sense memory.)

The classroom, as a space of analysis, does not easily lend itself to dealing with the emotional work of co-witnessing the Holocaust. Indeed, Shoshana Felman has suggested that strong emotions can threaten to "break the very framework of the class" (47, 48). Felman's account of her experiences teaching video testimony and Sondra Perl's essay in this volume can help prepare the teacher for the possible magnitude of both the numbing and the disruption of which Friedländer warns. Being forewarned about such "crises," to borrow Felman's term, can not only help in the moment when the teacher has to improvise a response in the classroom but also help build space for the expression of affect into the syllabus, precisely so that students, in the face of their strong emotional reactions, can still analyze issues such as representation. Felman and Perl address the crises through a writing assignment, and we too have found that students benefit from being allowed to confront their individual responses in their own writing, thus both supplementing and enhancing

class lectures and discussions. As Perl shows, the regularity of a journal also enables students to trace the progression of their responses over the course of the term. There are obviously many possible journal assignments. In addition to Perl's account on "writing the Holocaust," we offer two that we have used in our teaching.

> 1. A reading journal, kept on an ongoing basis, responding to and reflecting on the readings, films, and lectures. This journal should not consist of reading notes and should not simply record unsubstantiated, vague impressions (I like / I don't like); it should display your responses to the materials—both personal and intellectual—with sufficient clarity and detail so they make sense on later reading and review. Your journal entries should serve you as points of entry into our scheduled class discussions—reflections of your questions, critiques, emotions, and analyses. As we move along in the syllabus, you will find yourselves able to bring comparative elements into your journal entries and to revise assessments and earlier reactions on the basis of additional information.
>
> We expect you to include entries (1–2 pp.) for each scheduled class, film, and lecture. At the conclusion of part 1 and part 2 of the course, we ask you to write longer journal entries, reflecting in a more summary way on the readings and films. Please choose one or two issues that have emerged in that course unit and analyze it or them in greater depth (3–4 pp.).
>
> 2. A media folder and course diary. Each week you should select at least one item from a newspaper, magazine, radio, or television report or Internet posting that in your judgment relates to the course. Cut or print out the article if possible and physically add it to the notebook you'll be turning in at midterm and at the end of class. Summarize the content briefly in any case. Mention any observations you might have about the relation of the writer or commentator to the material. In several sentences describe the connection you make to our course. Try to include what drew your attention to this particular item. Please add additional entries about any reading or class discussion where, because of lack of time or personal reasons, you did not feel free to express your opinion.

These types of exercises obviously provide ways for students to begin to synthesize the large amounts of material that inevitably get assigned in courses on the Holocaust as well as facilitate the creation of connections between the mid-twentieth-century catastrophe and our current world. Furthermore, they can provide a forum for individual students to express feelings of discomfort about identifications they might be making with certain groups, such as victims or perpetrators, or about the dynamics of identification or intellectualization that take place in the classroom.

In addition to journals, we have found that group assignments can be helpful in enabling students to work together outside class, since the classroom cannot contain all their responses and concerns. In group projects, students aid one another in processing some of the material. One model is to use a group research assignment to explore an area that has not received sufficient coverage in class. Video testimonies lend themselves to group assignments: each group can study one testimony, researching the witness's hometown and the ghettos or camps mentioned in the testimony and commenting on the form that the narrative takes, the kinds of memory that appear, the forms of address that are invoked. Groups can study different recent controversies about Holocaust memorialization or different recent exhibitions or films. Group assignments can culminate in a forum in which the groups present their work to one another. (On possible group assignments, see the essays in this volume by Rogowski and by Rothberg.)

Approaches to Teaching: Interdisciplinarity, Multilingualism, and the Holocaust

Just as students benefit from collaborative work in courses on the Holocaust, so do faculty members. As a subject of representation the Holocaust stretches the limits of representability; as a subject of study it stretches the limits of disciplinarity. What preparation do teachers need for this undertaking? Those teaching any aspect of the Holocaust in any field, no matter what their background, will encounter areas outside or adjacent to their expertise. Historians will want to teach film or memoir or ethical, religious, or philosophical writings; scholars of literature will want to teach history; film scholars will want to consider issues of trauma and memory. Germanists or Americanists will need some training in Jewish studies. That Holocaust studies has been burgeoning as an interdisciplinary, multilingual, and theoretically informed scholarly field is acknowledged in our volume by essays from the fields of history (Bergen, Spitzer, Weitz), religion (Heschel), and political philosophy (Hill), in addition to the many different specializations represented in the modern languages, film, and visual culture.

First-time teachers have had a number of resources available to them, from excellent anthologies to the summer workshops organized by the Holocaust Educational Foundation and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. These organizations have assumed that the Holocaust cannot be taught in strictly disciplinary fashion and that every teacher will need some additional training. There are also extremely helpful resources on the World Wide Web. We particularly recommend two sites that offer excellent guidance and primary and secondary materials in numerous disciplines: the list of links by Dan Graf and the list of links by David Dickerson (other Web resources are discussed in Zeitlin's and in Hartman's essay in this volume).

As for helping our students with the range of materials any course is likely to include, we note that useful handouts on basic specific disciplinary practices designed for undergraduates are available in *A User's Guide to German Cultural Studies* (ed. Denham, Kacandes, and Petropoulos). Topics such as "How to View a Film," "How to Read History," "How to Read Statistics," and "How to Use an Archive" may be particularly helpful to literature majors. These pages are not copyrighted and thus can be distributed directly to students or used as a model for a teacher's own handout. In terms of orientation to the fundamental scope of the Holocaust, we recommend Martin Gilbert's *Atlas of the Holocaust*, available in paperback. (For suggestions on suitable historical overviews, consult

Bergen's essay in this volume. For an account of creating an interdisciplinary course at a small liberal arts college, see Horn's essay in this volume.)

For this volume, we have assembled a number of disciplinary and generic approaches with the aim of enabling teachers (and students) to consider the possibilities and the limitations of each. Thus even the ground on which most Holocaust curricula are built—that of history—can, and perhaps should, become a subject of discussion and interrogation, as it does in the essay in this volume by Doris Bergen. In the late 1940s, Theodor W. Adorno famously questioned whether one could write poetry after Auschwitz ("Cultural Criticism"); in the 1950s, he changed his mind, affirming poetry and other literary forms as the only appropriate forms of representation ("Commitment"). Even Hilberg, the most exacting of political scientists, and the most suspicious of nondocumentary forms, later in his career sent us to the poets for help in seeking to understand ("I Was Not There"). In other words, teachers should be prepared for and perhaps even comforted by the idea not only that there is no one discipline or genre adequate to the task but also that even the experts change their mind on how best to work toward a pedagogy of the Holocaust. (See Suleiman's essay in this volume for the questioning of such basic topics as generations and autobiography versus fiction.)

In addition to disciplinary and generic categories, teachers have to confront issues of language, translation, and translatability. Surely internment in Nazi concentration camps counts as one of the most multilingual experiences of the twentieth century. Nazi policy was to have each camp house prisoners of as many different nationalities and language groups as possible: minimizing the inmates' ability to communicate could only strengthen the power of the jailors. Survivors have described their isolation as they were separated from their compatriots, relocated from one camp to another, and placed in yet a different population, so that relationships would remain transient, communication minimal, and resistance nearly impossible. Knowledge of different languages, especially German, could prolong a person's life. The most important factor in Primo Levi's initiation into the world of the camp is his limited ability to understand German and the insane logic of that place, which he can call only by its German name, *Lager*. "The confusion of languages is a fundamental component of the manner of living here," he writes (38). But Levi and other witnesses go further, stressing the incapacity of any language to contain the experience:

> Just as our hunger is not that feeling of missing a meal, so our way of being cold has need of a new word. We say "hunger," we say "tiredness," "fear," "pain," we say "winter," and they are different things. They are free words, created and used by free men who lived in comfort and suffering in their homes. (123)

Teachers and students will thus not only have to deal with the factor of translation as they consider works originally written in German, Yiddish, French, Hebrew, Italian, Russian, Polish, or Hungarian but also have to think about the issue of translatability itself. (Rosen's essay in this volume examines the implications of teaching the Holocaust in English.)

This Volume

A computer search for help on teaching the Holocaust will turn up more books and articles than any college teacher likely has time to read. Similarly, in literary and cultural studies, the representation of the Holocaust has seen the publication of innumerable books, articles, special issues, books series, dictionaries and encyclopedias, atlases and chronologies, the organization of conferences and special sessions, and the multiplication of helpful sites on the World Wide Web. Why then did we urge the MLA to do a volume on Holocaust pedagogy? Paradoxically perhaps, this very burgeoning of scholarly interest, the fundamental interdisciplinarity of the field, as well as the increasing theoretical sophistication of such work have revealed the relative dearth of reflections on teaching representation.

Little of the pedagogy materials available is directed to university teachers and even less to university humanities teachers, under

whose auspices—at least according to our casual observations—more and more college courses on the Holocaust are being taught. Furthermore, despite their titles, many of these materials have greater informative and theoretical than specifically pedagogical value. Series of volumes like those from the Holocaust Educational Foundation's Lessons and Legacies conferences or the single volume published by the Center for Holocaust Studies at the University of Vermont (Scrase and Mieder), for instance, offer excellent compilations of chronologies, terminology, or the latest historical research, but not many concrete tips on teaching. Not much thought is given to make sophisticated scholarly work accessible to undergraduates. The same lack obtains in the numerous resources available on the World Wide Web. We therefore welcome the recently published volumes *Teaching Holocaust Literature* (Totten), *The Curriculum and the Holocaust: Competing Sites of Memory and Representation* (Morris), and *The Holocaust: Theoretical Readings* (Levi and Rothberg). Here college teachers can find many practical suggestions: "Analyzing Stories about the Holocaust via a Multiple Intelligences and Reader-Response Approach" (Totten 125–42); "Representation and the Effects of Anti-Semitism" (Morris 57–85); excerpts from "Nazi Culture, Fascism, and Antisemitism" and "Uniqueness, Comparison, and the Politics of Memory" (Levi and Rothberg 103–44, 441–79). New dictionaries on Holocaust writers offer useful biographical and bibliographic materials (Kremer). Our anthology is in a kindred spirit, but its emphasis on issues of representation and its consideration of a wider range of genres will make it a good complement to these important efforts. The essays in our volume are designed to be useful in a number of different pedagogical settings, ranging from courses on literature to those on history, memory, and representation. These essays should also be adaptable to different levels of background and expertise.

Our volume offers helpful definitions, specific readings and interpretations, and accounts of the critical and pedagogical controversies surrounding certain issues. We encouraged all contributors to share practical tips when appropriate. Even as they treat their individual subjects, they also describe the courses they are teaching, the approaches they have used, the problems they have encountered, the challenges they have faced, the discoveries they have made. Inevitably, some essays offer more in the way of background information, others more pedagogical suggestions.

The authors in the volume's first section, "Critical Paradigms," take up pedagogical challenges that are sure to be encountered when one teaches the representation of the Holocaust, even while offering useful approaches and interpretations of individual texts. Doris L. Bergen provides suggestions on how to teach key historiographical issues—When did the Holocaust begin? Who were its victims?—and some controversial historical texts, like Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners* and Jan Gross's *Neighbors*. At the same time, she shows the importance of interrogating the very status of history with our students. Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi traces the ubiquity of the rubric "authenticity" in our thinking about the Holocaust and insists on the importance of teaching students to question it. Her texts (and authors) range from the poetry of Miklós Radnóti to novels like Jurek Becker's *Jacob the Liar* or Jaroslaw Rymkiewicz's *The Final Station: Umschlagplatz*, from plays like Peter Weiss's *The Investigation* to the feigned memoir of Binjamin Wilkomirski, *Fragments*. Froma I. Zeitlin's description of her course unit on perpetrators focuses on texts such as Gitta Serenyi's *Into That Darkness*, Bernhard Schlink's *The Reader*, and Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List*. In their reflections on the long history of antisemitism, a topic crucial to any attempt to teach Holocaust representation, Susannah Heschel and Sander Gilman offer examples from the New Testament to *The Merchant of Venice* and nineteenth-century scientific texts. Sara R. Horowitz convincingly argues for the importance of highlighting gender in our teaching and accounts for the skepticism with which many have approached this question. She presents readings of gender in relation to victims and perpetrators in specific texts, such as Spiegelman's *Maus*, Ilona Karmel's *An Estate of Memory*, short stories by Ida Fink and Marcie Hershman, and films like Sanders-Brahms's *Germany, Pale Mother*, and Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*.

Each of the last three essays in this section helps make dimensions of the Holocaust intelligible in a specific way: Bella Brodzki gives an overview of the critical field of trauma studies, Eric D. Weitz

takes on the challenge of teaching comparative genocide, and Alan Rosen explains the multilingualism of both the historical events of the Holocaust and its representations. Brodzki elucidates how an examination of trauma is relevant to literary analyses of Holocaust texts, including how knowledge of trauma transforms our notions of language and textuality. In the process, she takes up texts like Primo Levi's *The Drowned and the Saved* and *Moments of Reprieve*, Charlotte Delbo's *Days and Memory*, and Claude Morhange-Bégué's *Chamberet: Recollection of an Ordinary Childhood*. Weitz explicates the particularities of the Holocaust related to Germany's bureaucratic and military culture and territorial ambitions, while also explaining that there was nothing exceptional in the Nazi drive to create homogeneity by deploying the ideology of race to murder groups of people. He offers suggestions on books with an explicitly comparative approach and on texts for teaching other genocides of the twentieth century, like those in Cambodia and Rwanda. Discussing the Holocaust as a multilingual event, Rosen makes us aware of a central paradox in United States classrooms as well as in his own at Bar Ilan University in Israel: English is central to our teaching of the Holocaust and yet marginal to the actual events and their agents. He suggests using texts like Peretz Opoczinski's semiautobiographical "The Jewish Letter Carrier," Cynthia Ozick's *The Shawl*, and John Hersey's *The Wall* to make this paradox salient for our students.

The writers in the volume's second section approach the Holocaust through genre, considering poetry (Gubar), fiction (Hungerford), diaries and memoirs (Stark), audio and video testimony (Hartman), film (Lubin), drama (Rogowski), children's literature (Kertzer), second-generation Holocaust fiction (Sicher), monuments (Young), and visual culture (Bathrick). These essays discuss a specific genre not so much to suggest which texts to use as to elucidate some of the challenges of teaching works of that genre. Given space, we would certainly have liked to include essays on philosophy, ethics, religion, music, and painting and sculpture. Still, in the essays of this section readers can find allusions to national contexts: Germany (Young, Rogowski), Israel and the United States (Hartman, Sicher, Lubin), Eastern Europe (Stark). There are also detailed discussions of textual examples: Lanzmann's *Shoah* (Bathrick), *Schindler's List* and *Europa, Europa* (Lubin), Levi's *Survival in Auschwitz* (Stark), Philip Roth's *The Ghost Writer* and D. M. Thomas's *The White Hotel* (Hungerford), Grossman's *See Under: Love* (Sicher). Readings are offered: of Jane Yolen's *Briar Rose* and Carol Matei's *Daniel's Story* (Kertzer); of lesser-known poems by Nellie Sachs, Paul Celan, and Dan Pagis (Gubar); of Max Frisch's play *Andorra* (Rogowski); of Gilo Pontecorvo's *Kapo* (Bathrick); and of Michael Verhoeven's *The Nasty Girl* (Lubin).

The volume's third section, "Selected Texts," narrows the focus by looking at key works. While a certain canon of literary and filmic texts has already emerged in college courses on Holocaust literature and representation, only some of these can be covered here. The most well known are Anne Frank's diary (Bos), Wiesel's *Night* (Weissman), Levi's *Survival in Auschwitz* (Druker), Paul Celan's poem "Death Fugue" (Baer), and Lanzmann's film *Shoah* (Spitzer). Texts that have received more recent attention by Holocaust scholars are Pagis's poem "Written in Pencil in the Sealed Railway-Car" (Omer-Sherman), Ozick's *The Shawl* (Levine), Delbo's *Auschwitz and After* (Greenberg), Georges Perec's *W or the Memory of Childhood* (Suleiman), and A. B. Yehoshua's *Mr. Mani* and W. G. Sebald's *The Emigrants* (Newton). Under selected texts we include an essay by Nancy K. Miller on a runaway best seller in Europe that has recently been published in an English version: Ruth Klüger's memoir *Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered*. Spiegelman's *Maus*, perhaps the most widely taught text in recent years, is discussed by no fewer than seven of our authors (Bathrick, Brodzki, Charlson, Ezrahi, Horowitz, Rosen, and Sicher) to illustrate the paradigms of their essays, even as it appears at the beginning of this introduction. For this reason it does not appear in this section. Each individual text is inscribed in one or more specific pedagogical frames that are applicable to other texts as well. For example, one might turn to Susan Rubin Suleiman's essay for a discussion of the position of the child survivor or the 1.5 generation; to Miller's essay for generic reflections on the memoir and a discussion of mother-daughter dynamics in Holocaust literature; to Adam Zachary Newton's essay for a generic definition of "not quite Holocaust fiction"; to Leo Spitzer's essay for reflections on the relationship of the documentary

to history; to Judith Greenberg's essay for an analysis of trauma and language.

The essays in the fourth section, "Classroom Contexts," are more practical in nature. Together, they present a variety of institutions and courses in which the representation of the Holocaust is taught. Individually, they contain specific accounts of institutional and classroom struggles, as well as suggestions about a number of important issues: how to win support for a multidisciplinary Holocaust course at a small liberal arts college (Horn), how to create a program on the Holocaust that serves both the campus and the local community (Scrase), or how to design a unit on the Holocaust in a Jewish American literature course (Charlson). Renée A. Hill describes her course The Holocaust and Comparative Genocide in a historically black university and concludes that this context offers the same challenges that any other academic institution might. In describing a culminating project that involves memorialization and writing, Michael Rothberg foregrounds the context in which his students are learning: that of the United States. Sondra Perl's writing assignments are sensitive to the environment of the large urban university her students attend.

The rich and suggestive essays of this volume will provide important resources to teachers of the Holocaust. We are grateful to their authors for the care they have given to these reflections on pedagogy, and we are grateful to the many colleagues who have read and commented on individual essays and on the book as a whole. We also thank the staff members of the MLA publications department for their support and encouragement. And we thank, especially, Gail Vernazza for her brilliant administrative help during every stage of this project.

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