



Weiss - Livnat  
International Center  
for Holocaust Research  
and Education



### **Holocaust commemoration in the digital age**

**Dr. Yael Granot-Bein – [ygranot@univ.haifa.ac.il](mailto:ygranot@univ.haifa.ac.il) ; class times: Sundays, 10-1PM.**

Holocaust culture was created in the era of analogue media and is represented in films, photography, radio, television, architecture and museums. This all happened before the rise of digital culture. The new opportunities that are presented by technology are vast and the potential is overwhelming. This gives rise to debates about ethics, agency and the future of remembrance and often reflect the anxieties that exist within a society in relation to national identity, narratives and the future.

This course will look into different issues within the digital media in relation to Holocaust memorialization and education, among them the relatively new field of digital humanities; social media; digital media such as VR and AR; Holocaust denial and antisemitism online and the possible implications of these new mediums for the future of Holocaust remembrance.

The course will be built around class discussions; case studies of digital projects; guest speakers and a class exercise (design sprint).

#### Course Requirements

There are 8 lessons in the course. Each session will be dedicated to a different topic. The students are required to attend at least 80% of them, i.e. 7 out of the 8. There are readings assigned to each session and they should be read before the lesson in order to allow us to have a meaningful and intelligent discussion.

**All students are required to complete two individual assignments during the semester and one group assignment:**

**1/ 1<sup>st</sup> individual assignment:** each class will begin with a 15 minutes' presentation of a digital project related to the Holocaust. Each student will be assigned with a time slot and choose a project to present to the class. The presentation should include an analysis of the project and your own thoughts about it.

**2/ 2<sup>nd</sup> individual assignment:** hosting a guest speaker: each class will include a guest speaker who is an expert or a practitioner in the topic the lesson deals with. Each student (or a pair of students – depending on the number of students in the course), will be assigned a speaker and prepare themselves to

facilitate the talk with him/her. This would entail reading up on the project the speaker will present, learning about the context and preparing questions to ask during the session.

**3/ group assignment:** on top of learning about the potential of digital tools we will actively experience the planning of a digital project utilizing the Strochlitz Historical Archive of our center. The students will work in small groups to come up with ideas to make the historical materials in the archive accessible to the public in an interactive and engaging way.

There are three options of receiving a grade in the course:

- 1/ receive a final grade based on the above three assignments and class participation.
- 2/ receive a grade that is made up of the three assignments and writing and submitting a Referat.
- 3/ receive a grade that is made up of the three assignments and writing and submitting a seminar paper.

### **Breakdown of grade:**

#### **For those not submitting a referat or a seminar paper:**

Class participation: 10%  
First assignment (presentation of existing digital project) – 30%  
Second assignment (preparing and hosting a guest speaker) – 30%  
Group assignment – 30%

#### **For those submitting a referat or a seminar paper**

Class participation: 10%  
First assignment (presentation of existing digital project) – 20%  
Second assignment (preparing and hosting a guest speaker) – 20%  
Group assignment – 20%  
Referat or seminar paper – 30%.

- Please note that you must submit a proposal for approval for your seminar paper. You must have a topic for a paper by the last class of the semester.

**Course program and readings:** (all articles have been uploaded on the course Moodle site).

Date	Content	Readings
Sunday 12 July	<p><b>Digital memory studies.</b> What happens to collective memory today? Is there even a collective to speak of? Are there clear identifiable private and public spheres?</p> <p><b>The fear from digital media</b> – class discussion.</p> <p><b>Discussion of basic terms:</b> Immersive, Simulative, Counterfactual, digital – can we really not engage young audiences without them?</p> <p><b>Guest speaker: Dr. Victoria Walden, School of Media, Film and Music, University of Sussex, U.K.</b></p>	<p><b>In preparation for this class, please read:</b></p> <p>1/ Alvin Rosenfeld, "Popular Culture and the Politics of Memory", in: The End of the Holocaust", chapter 1, pp. 15-32.</p> <p><b>And read <u>one</u> of the following:</b></p> <p>1/ Wulf Kansteiner, Transnational Holocaust Memory, Digital Culture and the End of Reception Studies, in: Tea Sindbæk Andersen and Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, The Twentieth Century in European Memory Transcultural Mediation and Reception.</p> <p>2/ Michal Aharony and Gavriel Rosenfeld (2016), Holocaust Commemoration: New Trends in Museums and Memorials, Dapim: Studies on the Holocaust, 30:3, 162-165.</p>

<p>Sunday 19 July</p>	<p><b>Digital humanities and the Holocaust</b>  <b>Guest speaker: Andrzej Grzegorzczak,</b>  <b>Acting Head Division of the Lodz Ghetto Model –</b>  <a href="http://radegast.pl/en.html">http://radegast.pl/en.html</a></p> <p>Group assignment: Design Sprint utilizing the Strochlitz Archives</p>	<p><b>In preparation for this class, please read <u>2</u> of the following:</b></p> <p>1/ Tobias Blanke, Conny Kristel, "Historical Research and Evidence in the Digital Age. The Case for New Approaches in Holocaust Research. in Holocaust Research and Archives in the Digital Age, eds. Laura Brazzo, Reto Speck, <i>Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History, Journal of Fondazione CDEC</i>, no. 13, August 2018.</p> <p>2/ Zofia Trebacz, The Ghetto Model as an Alternative Form of Presenting Holocaust Archives. Chance or Threat?, in Holocaust Research and Archives in the Digital Age, eds. Laura Brazzo, Reto Speck, <i>Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History, Journal of Fondazione CDEC</i>, no. 13, August 2018.</p> <p>3/ Wolfgang Schellenbacher, "Momento Vienna. How an Online Tool Presenting Digitized Holocaust-related Data and Archival Material is Offering New Insights into the Holocaust in Vienna? in Holocaust Research and Archives in the Digital Age, eds. Laura Brazzo, Reto Speck, <i>Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History, Journal of Fondazione CDEC</i>, no. 13, August 2018.</p>
<p>Sunday 26 July</p>	<p>Presentations of product of group assignments.</p> <p><b>Social media</b>  Main debates and examples of the use of Twitter, Facebook and other forms of social media in relation to the Holocaust.</p>	<p><b>In preparation for this class, please read <u>2</u> of the following:</b></p> <p>1/ Mykola Makhortykh, Framing the Holocaust on line: Memory of the Babi Yar Massacres on Wikipedia, <i>Digital Icons, Studies in Russian, Eurasian and Central European New Media</i>, no.18, 2017, pp. 67-94.</p> <p>2/ Amelia S. Wong (2011) Ethical Issues of Social Media in Museums: a case study, <i>Museum Management and Curatorship</i>, 26:2, 97-112.</p> <p>3/ Michal Frankl, "Blogging as a Research Method? The EHRI Document Blog", in Holocaust Research and Archives in the Digital Age, eds. Laura Brazzo, Reto Speck, <i>Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History, Journal of Fondazione CDEC</i>, no. 13, August 2018.</p>

	<p><b>Guest speaker: Mariella Bastian (University of Amsterdam) / Mykola Makhortykh (University of Bern).</b></p>	<p>4/ Tehila Hertz, "Wikishtelt!: Commemorating Jewish Communities that Perished in the Holocaust through the Wikipedia Platform", in Holocaust Research and Archives in the Digital Age, eds. Laura Brazzo, Reto Speck, <i>Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History, Journal of Fondazione CDEC</i>, no. 13, August 2018.</p>
Sunday 2 August	<p><b>Gaming and taboos</b> discussion of a central representational taboo of contemporary Holocaust culture. Why is this a taboo and what does the future look like?</p> <p><b>Guest speaker: Luc Bernard, LA, digital game designer</b></p>	<p><b>In preparation for this class, please read the following:</b></p> <p>1/ Christian Sebastian Loh , Yanyan Sheng , and Dirk Ifenthaler, "Serious Games Analytics: Theoretical Framework", in Christian Sebastian Loh, Yanyan Sheng Dirk Ifenthaler (eds.) <i>Serious Games Analytics Methodologies for Performance Measurement, Assessment, and Improvement</i>; (Cham: Springer, 2015), 3-29.</p> <p>2/ Jeff Hayton, "Beyond Good and Evil: Nazis and the Supernatural in Video Games", in Monica Black, Eric Kurlander (eds.), <i>Revisiting the Nazi Occult: Histories, Realities, Legacies</i>. (Rochester: Camden House: 2015), 248-269.</p> <p>3/ <a href="https://www.pcgamesn.com/jewish-opinions-on-nazis-in-videogames">https://www.pcgamesn.com/jewish-opinions-on-nazis-in-videogames</a>, Kirk McKeand, Jan. 18, 2018</p>
Sunday 9 August	<p><b>Digital Media in Holocaust Commemoration</b> What are the challenges that digital media (VR, AR) pose to Holocaust memory; what are the ethical limitations of? Do they add to our knowledge or just a gimmick?</p>	<p><b>In preparation for this class, please read the following:</b></p> <p>1/ Victoria Walden, "What is 'Virtual Holocaust Memory', <i>Memory Studies</i>, 1-3, 2019.</p> <p>2/ Adam Brown &amp; Deb Waterhouse-Watson (2014) <i>The Future of the Past: Digital Media in Holocaust Museums</i>, <i>Holocaust Studies</i>, 20:3, 1-32.</p>

	<p><b>Guest speaker: Syste Wierenga, SPECS Research Lab, Barcelona / Stephanie Billib, curator, Bergen-Belsen Memorial.</b></p> <p><b>Guest speaker: Prof. Motti Neiger, school of Commincation, Bar Ilan University, The creation of empathy via Virtual Reality.</b></p>	
Sunday 16 August	<p><b>Power plays: the potential for agency in the digital arena.</b></p> <p>Is digital media challenging the confines of formalized, institutionalized and regimented memory? Who are the "Controlling gate keepers" And is there a potential for democratizing the memory of the Holocaust via digital media?</p> <p><b>Guest speaker: TBA</b></p>	<p><b>In preparation for this class, please read the following:</b></p> <p>Mykola Makhortykh (2019) Nurturing the pain: audiovisual tributes to the Holocaust on YouTube, Holocaust Studies, 25:4, 441-466.</p>
Sunday 23 August	<p><b>Antisemitism and Holocaust denial online.</b></p> <p>how are antisemitism and Holocaust denial spread over social media and what does the struggle against them entail?</p> <p><b>Guest speaker: Carol Nuriel, Director, ADL Israel.</b></p>	<p><b>In preparation for this class, please read the following:</b></p> <p>1/ Lev Topor, "Dark Hatred: Antisemitism on the Dark Web", Journal of Contemporary Antisemitism, vol. 2, no.2, Fall 2019, pp. 25-42.</p> <p>2/ Paul Jackson, Pioneers of World Wide Web Fascism: The British Extreme Right and Web 1.0, in: Mark Littler, Benjamin Lee (eds.) Digital Extremisms: Readings in Violence, Radicalization and Extremism in the Online Space. Palgrave Studies in Cybercrime and Cybersecurity, (2020), Pp. 13-36.</p>

Sunday 30 August	<p>Presentations by students of topics for final paper: 5 minutes' presentations of topic, research question and relevant bibliography.</p> <p><b>Measuring effect</b> – how can we measure the role and effect of digital media in the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century historical imaginations – what is the empirical data?</p> <p><b>Guest speaker – Prof. Oren Meyers, Department of Communication, University of Haifa.</b></p> <p><b>Guest speaker: Dr. Victoria Walden, School of Media, Film and Music, University of Sussex, U.K. , distancing and intimacy of memory</b></p>	