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**KIIS Austria-Bregenz, Summer 2018**  
**PSY 299-2 Topics: The Psychology of Good and Evil**

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*Syllabus subject to change*

**Course Description:**

The Holocaust was one of the great tragedies of the modern era. One question that is still asked today is: “How could people commit such atrocities?” This class seeks to answer that very question and explore how normal people can do terrible things. We will talk about the effect of authority and the forces that drive us to obey, the urge to conform, the power of out-groups, and the dehumanization of the other. We will also examine factors and core themes of human goodness. For example, what factors influence those few who risked their lives to protect their neighbors, or complete strangers, from the Nazi regime. By the end of this class, we will have a better understanding of the psychology that drove this period in history, compare it to atrocities and acts of heroism that have happened since then, and hopefully, be in a better position to understand and prevent similar horrors in the future.

**Course Level Note:** Western Kentucky University lists Special Topics courses in Psychology as 299. Despite this course's 299 listing at WKU, it is actually an upper level (300-400+ level) course at many other universities. As such, it is being taught as an upper level 300-400+ level course.

**Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes:**

Students will...

1. Demonstrate an understanding of different psychological perspectives related to issues of good and evil and their relationship to areas of human concern. **How assessed:** *class discussion, reaction journals.*
2. Articulate complex information in an interesting presentation on a chosen current world events topic related to good and evil. **How assessed:** *good and evil presentation.*
3. Develop their own views on a variety of questions related to good and evil. **How assessed:** *class discussion, book review presentation.*

4. Understand the effect of situational variables on individual behavior. **How assessed:** *Night book review, class discussion.*
5. Describe the psychological aspects of basic social problems such as prejudice, discrimination, and aggression as well as potential solutions to these problems. **How assessed:** *class discussion, book review presentation, film reaction journal, Night book review*
6. Describe the psychological aspects of basic social virtues, such as forgiveness, empathy, altruism, happiness, gratitude, mindfulness, compassion. **How assessed:** *reaction journal.*
7. Describe the historical and social factors that led to the Holocaust and examine parallels to other incidents of genocide. **How assessed:** *film reaction journal, excursion field assignments.*
8. Describe and apply social psychological principles as they relate to recent world events. **How assessed:** *good and evil presentation,*

### Required Text

#1: Wiesel, E., & Wiesel, M. (2006) *Night*. New York : Hill and Wang,

### #2: Text of Your Choice

For our book review presentations, your choice of **one** of the following books. Do not begin reading until you contact Dr. Winslow and Dr. Bundy, because we want to divide you into presentation groups and split the readings evenly across our class. E-mail us and tell us your top 3 list of these books you'd like to read and we'll do our best to take your preferences into account. To reduce costs, you can consider checking one out from a library, ordering one inexpensively online, etc.

Aronson, E. (2000). *Nobody left to hate: Teaching compassion after Columbine*. New York: Henry Holt.

Baron-Cohen, S. (2011). *Zero degrees of empathy: A new theory of human cruelty*. London: Allen Lane.

Frankl, V.E. (1984). *Man's search for meaning: An introduction to logotherapy*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Golding, W. & Epstein, E.L. (1954). *Lord of the flies: a novel*. New York: Perigee.

Lama, D. & Cutler, H. (1998). *The art of happiness: His holiness the dalai lama*. New York: Riverhead Books.

Lama, D. Mullin, G., & Gyatso, L. (1994). *The path to enlightenment*. Ithaca. Snow Lion Publications.

Larrimore, M. (2013). *The book of Job*. Princeton, Princeton University Press.  
Must be read in combination with:  
Acocella, J. (2013, December 16). *Misery*. *The New Yorker*.  
Find it here: <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/12/16/misery-3>

Merton, T. (1981) *The nonviolent alternative*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Spiegelman, A. (1986). *Maus: A survivor's tale*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Wiesel, E. & Frenaye, F. (2006). *Dawn*. New York: Hill and Wang.

García Márquez, G. (1981). *Chronicle of a death foretold*. New York: Vintage Books.

OR

A professionally written and relevant book that you submit to us for approval for this project.  
E-mail us your ideas or requests **before** we travel to Bregenz.

We'll provide a rubric for book review presentation details.

#3. Additional required readings will be available to students either online, via handout, or a shared dropbox folder from your instructors. E-mail Dr. Bundy if you'd like to request an e-mail with the dropbox link.

**You should make every effort to read (or at least get started on) our readings prior to the start of the class. You will have short reactions based on readings due for many class meetings. Getting an early start, if you like, will help you feel less pressured to do the reading during our trip.**

### **Instructional Activities**

In addition to lectures and readings, the course will involve the following activities:

- Field Excursions and Observation assignments organized for our entire travel group
- Two Field Excursions just for our class (Dachau Concentration Camp, Jewish Museum in Hohenems)
- Class Exercises and activities
- Class Discussions
- 2 Class Films
- Individual Mini-presentations
- Pre and post quizzes

### **Field Excursions/Travel Days**

When we take a travel day, you will be exploring Good and Evil and Holocaust-related topics in the context of Bregenz's surrounding areas. To help structure this learning, when we travel, take a picture taking device and be ready to take photos as directed for your field excursion assignments.

Required excursions...

Munich Weekend: *Dachau* (free admission)

Class Excursion: Jewish Museum in Hohenems

## **Grading**

Course grades will be based on the total number of points earned on each of the following activities:

Reading Reactions for 8 Pre-class Readings (10 points each)

10 Reaction Journals for In Class Videos, readings, audios, activities, etc. (3 points each for 10 total non-excursion classes)

Reaction Journals for Films (5 points each for 2 films)

Pre-post Quiz (5 points each for a total of 2 quizzes)

2 Excursion Field Assignments (2 at 10 points each) (Photography Dachau; 5 Object Project Jewish Museum)

Book Review and Good/Evil Presentations (20 points each for a total of 2 presentations)

Night Book Review (10 points)

Class attendance (10 in classroom days, 2 excursions)=24 points

*Total points possible: 224*

Letter grades for the course will be assigned as follows:

90-100% of the total points available = A

80-89% of the total points available = B

70-79% of the total points available = C

60-69% of the total points available = D

0-59% of the total points available = F

## **Late Work/Make-up Work**

Late work or make up work will be given at the discretion of the instructor. The validity of an excuse given as a reason for missing an exam or assignment will be determined by the instructor with consultation from the program director if needed. The instructor reserves the right to not allow late work or make-up work, or to give late or make-up work which is more difficult or in a different form than the original.

## **Attendance**

You are required to attend all class meetings and excursions. Even one unexcused absence may result in failure of the course or dismissal from the program.

### **Field Journal/Reaction Paper Guidelines**

You will not only get credit for your reading reaction entries, in-class reactions, and film reactions, but if you put them into *one composition book or notebook*, they can become a permanent memento of your trip, and could contain conceptual information that could be used by you or someone else later. Please do not summarize or outline the readings. We will have read them and will not need a review! But we will enjoy reading about your thoughts. You can organize your reaction papers around answering the following questions:

- What is the most **important** finding or concept in the reading in your opinion?
- What is the one thing you found most **interesting** about the reading?
- How can you relate this research study to an experience or observation you have had during our time in **Austria**?
- What is a question you have after completing the reading?

The written reactions for our out of class readings should be 1 full handwritten page. In class reaction journal entries can and should be briefer.

### **Book Review Presentation Guidelines**

These individual or pair presentations will be 3-5 minutes in length and will be pre-videoed by students and screened in class. Consider choosing a cool travel setting for your background.

### **Current Good or Evil Event Presentation Guidelines**

These presentations will be 3 minutes in length and will be presented live in class by student pairs.

### **When You Come to Class, Bring:**

1. Your book or article reading for the day.
2. Any notetaking device you may want to use. (e.g., notebook, piece of paper, laptop, phone, tablet etc.)
3. Your good and/or evil reading reaction paper or other assignment for the day.
4. Field excursion journal or assignment if applicable.

**PSYCHOLOGY 299-2**  
**Topic, Reading and Exam Schedule\***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
27-May	Syllabus/class overview Online “Tour” of Greater Good Science Center Read and Discuss ___>	In class: New German Biography_ Hitler's Underestimated Charisma  In class: Find and Bookmark GGSC website	Pre-Quiz  In class reaction 1
28-May	Holocaust and other genocides  Empathy	8 Stages of Genocide; GGSC <i>What is Empathy?</i> and Smith, 2015 ( <i>Relationship Between Stress and Empathy</i> —embedded videos optional); Bundy “Recipe for Tragedy” reading;	Reaction Journal 1: Genocide and Empathy  In class reaction 2
29-May	Excursion to Lindau		
30-May	Dehumanization  Happiness	Caliban’s Children (pages 72-84);  GGSC <i>What is Happiness?</i> And Simon-Thomas et al., 2015 ( <i>Do Happiness Practices Work?</i> —document 1 of these practices in your journal for this reading)	Reaction Journal 2: Dehumanization and Happiness  In class reaction 3
31-May	In-group/Out-group...  Mindfulness  3:45-5:45 Movie: KZ (Film Reaction due at end of film..list 3 examples of good and 3 of evil)	Social Categorization (p77-98 & p113-117);  GGSC <i>What is Mindfulness?</i> and Suttie, 2017 <i>Three Ways Mindfulness Can Make You Less Biased</i>	Reaction Journal 3: In-group/Out-group Mindfulness and Social Categorization  In class reaction 4
June 1-3	<b>Munich Trip, Dachau</b>	Night – Elie Wiesel	

4-June	<p>Talk about Dachau Prejudice and Discrimination</p> <p>In class: Prejudice (skip 309-322)</p> <p>3:45-5:45 Movie: Die Welle (Film Reaction due at end of film..list 3 examples of good and 3 of evil)</p>		<p>Night Book Review</p> <p>In class reaction 6 (Prejudice activity)</p> <p>Dachau photos &amp; comments must be posted</p>
5-June	<p>Conformity</p> <p>Altruism</p>	<p>Investigating Social Dynamics-Power, Conformity, and Obedience (skip 266- 288) GGSC <i>What is Altruism?</i> and <i>Jacobs, 2016, Altruists Have More Sex</i></p>	<p>Reaction Journal 4: Altruism and Conformity</p> <p>In class Reaction 7</p>
6-June	<p>Screening of Book Review Presentation Videos</p>		<p>In class reaction 8</p>
June 7-10	<b>Innsbruck Excursion and Travel Time</b>		
11-June	<p>The Power of the Situation</p> <p>Gratitude</p>	<p>The SPE Meaning and Messages - The Alchemy of Character Transformations (195- 210 OR 211-228);</p> <p>GGSC <i>What is Gratitude?</i> and Marsh, 2015 (<i>How Gratitude Beats Materialism</i> embedded videos optional).</p>	<p>Reaction Journal 5: Gratitude and Power of the Situation</p> <p>In class reaction 8</p>
12-June	<p>Excursion to Judisches Museum Hohenems...time to be determined</p>		<p>Museum Excursion 5 objects Assignment</p>

13-June	Obedience... Forgiveness	Behavioral Study of Obedience  GGSC <i>What is Forgiveness?</i> and Suttie, 2015 ( <i>Restorative Justice</i> )	Reaction Journal 6: Forgiveness and Obedience (Note: The “evil” part of this reaction paper is different, see questions at the end of the “Obedience” document)  In class reaction 9
	<b>Travel Time 6/14-6/17</b>		
18-June	Bystander effect... Compassion	WINSLOW Bystander Effect Reading  GGSC <i>What is Compassion?</i> and Suttie, 2015 ( <i>Can Compassion Change the World?</i> ); Roots of Empathy Chapter 1	Reaction Journal 7 : Bystander Effect and Compassion  In class reaction 10
19-June	Discussion  Prep time for Good and Evil Current Events Presentations	Experiments in Group Conflict Transforming Good People into Perpetrators of Evil - Can We Reverse the Process? (include examples from GGSC in your reaction journal)  GGSC <i>Choose definition and one article for 1 of the remaining 3 (Awe, Social Connection, or Diversity)</i>	Reaction Journal 8 Can we transform evil into good? And Good Characteristic of Your choice
20-June	In Class Film: Divided We Fall		Enjoy Film
21-June	<b>Post-quiz Good and Evil Current Events Mini Presentations</b>		

**\*The instructors reserve the right to make changes in the course as is deemed necessary.**