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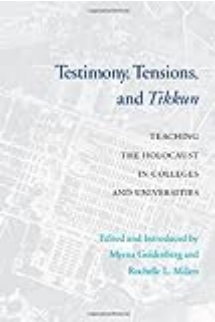

Myrna Goldenberg, Rochelle L. Millen, eds. *Testimony, Tensions, and Tikkun: Teaching the Holocaust in Colleges and Universities.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007. 328 pp. $50.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-295-98687-6.

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Repairing the World through Holocaust Education

Donald Felipe, a contributing scholar to the present collection of essays, summarizes the challenges and responsibilities of Holocaust educators: "One cannot teach about the Holocaust and remain an objective bystander passing on knowledge and moral lessons. Teaching will necessarily involve us–who we are and what we do!" (p. 96). Having the general subject matter of the Holocaust in common, the articles' authors show readers who they are and what they do with that subject through diverse pedagogical approaches. In a well-organized format, the editors of the book have compiled a highly readable set of essays offering practical suggestions for educators across the disciplines. Whether devoting an entire course to the Holocaust or incorporating its themes into a general education seminar, instructors can refer to this book's field-tested ideas for improving knowledge and deepening their own and students' understanding of the Holocaust.

According to the book's introduction, the collection of essays constitutes an "exploration of the experience of teaching the Holocaust" (p. 4). Each contributing essay substantiates that the book as a whole does not remain a theoretical study of the abstract possibilities of teaching the Holocaust. Instead, the volume assembles essays in moral courage and ethical struggles as they relate to academia. In his essay, "Cross-Disciplinary Notes: Four Questions for Teaching the Shoah," David R. Blumenthal cites the results of sociological studies that show perpetrators' and altruists' willingness to "do as they are instructed" (p. 167). Blumenthal then forcefully argues that, as instructors, we have the obligation to instruct students to act morally. This exceedingly worthwhile book reinforces the idea that planned, structured, accurate, and provocative Holocaust courses can help instructors to act morally by healing, repairing, and transforming through their work.

The book is divided into three main sections: "Course Content," "The Process and Nature of Student Learning," and "Progress, and Process: Higher Education, Museums and Memorials." As the book's introduction states, "Teaching the Holocaust invokes silence but also invites students to break that silence" (p. 16). The remainder of the book speaks to teachers of virtually all disciplines, and instructs them on encouraging their students to an-

alyze and break their own silences about this often misunderstood or over-sensationalized subject.

With its interdisciplinary texture, part 1, "Course Content," demonstrates the reach of the Holocaust into nearly every academic department. While some authors describe general applications suitable for writing-intensive or composition courses, others present course outlines that relate to a specialized field like visual arts or architecture. Representative of the former group, Beth Hawkins Benedix, in her essay "Looking for Words: Teaching the Holocaust in Writing-Intensive Courses," explains in clear detail how she assimilates Holocaust-related literature into both a college writing course and one on modern continental European literature. Hawkins Benedix provides concrete and creative ideas that will help students deconstruct materials and rediscover the relationship between form and content. Ultimately, she brings her students closer to an understanding that "language was instrumental in constructing, perpetuating, and ultimately activating a fatal set of premises" (p. 66). Falling into the category of more specialized instructors, Stephen Feinstein approaches the topic by confronting visual arts depicting the Holocaust and its aftermath. In an accessible style, Feinstein not only identifies difficulties of using art but also describes his successful strategies for incorporating art into college courses. Feinstein confidently states the following outcome of studying artistic representations: "[The artists'] approaches … can also lead to interesting breakthroughs dealing with questions of identity, theology, and modernity and may stimulate a conversation about the most basic question: why the Holocaust happened" (p. 48). In her essay "History, Memory, and the City: Case Study–Berlin," Rachel Rapperport Munn builds her essay around the idea that "ethical dilemmas cannot be separated from art, architecture and urban design" (p. 56). In her article, she shares her methods for moving students closer to the discovery that art and architecture directly connect to ideology.

Holocaust education finds an unlikely forum in Felipe's business ethics course, in which he encourages a "shift from self-interested motivation … to a stronger attachment to care and respect for persons" (p. 92). He shares his meticulously structured six-week course, which proceeds from explaining historical background information to deconstructing myths about business and moral courage. Throughout the course, and with the use of innovative ideas like an instructor's journal that makes the instructor into a co-learner, Felipe persists in emphasizing the difference between "what is good and what is 'good for me' from a business perspective" (p. 89). Clearly, Felipe designed his teaching module for a business course, but his clarity of content and well-formulated rationale can appeal to and inspire a wide range of instructors as they design ethics, writing, literature, or history courses in their respective disciplines. Whether engaging the "Ethics of Witness History" like Tam K. Parker or taking on "Pedagogical Peculiarities of Teaching the Holocaust," as David Patterson does, each of the chapters in the first section places indispensable tools in the hands of instructors. These devices will assist interested instructors in the construction and management of a demanding and thought-provoking Holocaust course regardless of discipline.

After the comprehensive section on course content, the volume turns to "The Process and Nature of Student Learning," which may seem like the more unmanageable aspect of any course. The three essayists convince instructors, however, that they cannot only successfully elicit individual student responses to the often emotionally charged subject matter, but that they also can use those responses to improve learning. In her essay "Students' Affective Responses to Studying the Holocaust: Pedagogical Issues," Amy Shapiro links analysis with emotion by joining historical knowledge with individual responses to those historical facts. Fully understanding the "potential for extensive emotional and psychological responses," Shapiro has instead "used students' affective responses to advance their learning" (p. 194). Through a carefully designed process involving peer interviews and written self-reflections of the interview experience, Shapiro explains to readers how they can enlist student emotion to further student learning.

Part 3, "Progress and Process: Higher Education, Museums, and Memorials," opens with Laurinda Stryker's cautionary essay about the dangers of teaching the Holocaust without tenure. After recounting in detail her ideological and subsequent legal battle with administrators at St. Cloud State University, Stryker advises junior Holocaust scholars and non-tenured faculty to proceed carefully in the field of Holocaust studies. Offsetting Stryker's necessary yet somewhat disheartening article, Marilyn J. Harran's "An Unlikely Setting: Holocaust Education in Orange County" proclaims one program's indisputable success in a traditionally less tolerant geographical area. Myrna Goldenberg reports on her positive experiences of incorporating Holocaust education into the community college curriculum. To name one example, Goldenberg offers the inventive idea of studying Nationalist Socialist theories of eugenics or medical personnel

training in the context of a current nursing ethics course. In his article "Teaching about the Holocaust in the Setting of Museums and Memorials," Stephen D. Smith relocates the discussion of how to teach the Holocaust from the classroom to historical sites or museums. Although Smith claims that "being there gives both texture and physical dimension to factual narrative," he also warns instructors to formulate clear pedagogical outcomes and an apparatus for measuring educational success (pp. 273-277).

When Smith poses the question about the worthiness of museums and memorial sites to deliver what they should educationally, novice or even experienced Holocaust educators could ask themselves the same question, "Am I delivering a sound educational product?" Fortunately, the essays contained in *Testimony, Tensions, and Tikkun* assist teachers in presenting the material in an engaging way and advises them on balancing intellectual and emotional responses through best practices.

Despite the diversity of disciplines and teaching styles represented in this book, virtually all of the authors strive to reach the same goals while identifying many of the same challenges for the future of Holocaust education. The Hebrew word *tikkun* found in the title means "to heal, repair, and transform the world"; the term fittingly encapsulates the ultimate goals and objectives for any course involving the Holocaust. Not only do these expert teachers encourage other instructors to include outcomes related to ethics and morals on a class syllabus, but they also encourage teachers and their students to use course material as a force for change and resistance.

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