The Holocaust (sometimes called "the Shoah") is the murder, during World War II, of approximately six million Jews and very large numbers of other “enemies” of the Nazi regime in Europe at the hands of the National Socialists.

The course introduces questions surrounding the representation of these events in various forms. For example: How can one adequately represent this scale of violence and trauma? How can one understand and explain such events? What are the advantages and disadvantages of various types of representation?

We will read a historical overview, a personal memoir from Auschwitz, fiction based on concentration camp experience, and some poems. We will consider also films and hear some music written to commemorate these terrible events. We will learn about German and Jewish history, about racism and violence, about human strengths and weaknesses, and about ideologies that produce violent scapegoating mechanisms.