HIST 1600  
History of Law: Great Trials  
Spring 2016

Lecture: TR 12:20-1:10 p.m., Klarman Auditorium - KG70 Klarman Hall

Section 1 (201): R 1:25-2:15 McGraw Hall 145 [Verhoeven]

Section 6 (206): R 1:25-2:15 Uris Hall 254 [Case]


Section 3 (203): F 11:15-12:05 McGraw Hall 215 [Jackson]

Section 8 (208): F 11:15-12:05 Rockefeller Hall 189 [Law]

Section 4 (204): F 12:20-1:10 Stimson Hall 119 [Vo]

Section 5 (205): F 12:20-1:10 Uris Hall G88 [Law]

Section 9 (209): F 12:20-1:10 Uris Hall 498 McGraw Hall 366 [Jackson]  
Section 10 (210): F 12:20-1:10 McGraw Hall 366 [Jackson]

Instructor Information

Claudia Verhoeven (cv89)  
304 McGraw Hall  
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Holly Case (hac27)  
309 McGraw Hall  
Campus Phone: (25)5-6143  
Office hours: Tues. 10-12 (or by appt.)

TAs

Aaron Law (anl23)  
B4 McGraw Hall  
Office hours: Wed. 1-2 and 2:30-3:30 (or by appt.)

Alex-Thai Vo (adv23)  
B10 McGraw Hall  
Office hours: Thurs. 2-4 (or by appt.)

Lauren Jackson (lej46)  
B21 McGraw Hall
Office hours: Wed. 3-4 and Thurs. 2-3 (or by appt.)

Joseph Giacomelli (jng53)
B01 McGraw Hall
Office hours: Thurs. 8-10 (or by appt.)

Course Description

Through discussion of a variety of high-profile and lesser-known trials throughout history, this course will examine a range of issues in the history of law and criminality. We will study the nature of demonstrative justice, the relationship between ideology and law in different societies, the politics of trials, and the relationship of trials to terror(ism) and social marginalization. Cases to be covered include: Socrates, Jesus Christ, Gilles de Rais, the French Revolutionary Terror, the Russian revolutionary terrorists, the Dreyfus Affair, the Stalinist show trials, the war crimes trials at Nuremberg, Charles Manson, the Hague Tribunal, and Saddam Hussein.

Required Texts


NOTE: Readings on the syllabus marked with an asterisk (*) are available on the course Blackboard website under “Assignments.”

Required Films:

Rashomon (1950), 88 min.
Judgment at Nuremberg (1961), 186 min.

NOTE: The films are also available on reserve at Uris

Expectations:

• Attend lectures and discussion sections
• Complete the assigned reading for each section
• Bring hard copies of readings to discussion section
• Actively participate in class discussion and view the films on your own before section in the weeks they are to be discussed

Grading and Assignments:

30% Participation, Responses, and Attendance
20% Paper - Tuesday, March 1 by noon via Turnitin on Blackboard
25% First Prelim - Tuesday, March 22 in BKL (Baker Lab) 200, 7:30-10 p.m.
25% Second Prelim - In-class segment on Tuesday, May 10, and a take-home segment, due by 11 p.m. on Thursday, May 12 via Turnitin on Blackboard
Participation, Responses, and Attendance (30%)
You are expected to participate in an active and engaged fashion in weekly section meetings. You will also be asked to prepare a reflection (no more than one page) for 6 of the 12 meetings for which there are assigned readings/films, which should be submitted via Turnitin to your section leader by 8 p.m. on the night before your section. At least three of your responses should be completed before the first prelim on Mar. 22. In these reflections, you should draw out some aspect or aspects of the readings that you found particularly interesting and expound upon it/them. Your section leader will respond with a “check” indicating that your reflection has been received and is completely satisfactory. In rare instances, your section leader will respond with a “check plus” for unusually thoughtful reflections or a “check minus” for a reflection that insufficiently developed. While your section leader will not comment or give you feedback on your reflections, your reflections will serve as a basis for weekly section discussions. Please note that attendance at both lectures and discussions is a basic requirement of this class and that repeated absences, whether in discussion or lecture, will adversely affect your grade.

Paper (20%)
The paper should be 5-6 pages (Times New Roman, 12 point font, double-spaced). It is due Tuesday, March 1 by noon via Turnitin on Blackboard. A complete assignment description and citation guidelines are posted to the course Blackboard website under “Course Documents.” Late papers will lose a third of a grade per day (i.e. from an A- to a B+).

First Prelim (25%)
The first prelim will be held at 7:30 pm on Tuesday, March 22 in BKL (Baker Lab) 200 and will cover all of the material—including readings, lectures, and required films—up to and including week 8. The exam will consist of two triads and one long essay question. For both categories, there will be a choice. A study guide with terms and essay questions will be distributed one week in advance of the exam. The best things you can do to prepare in advance is take good notes in lecture and on the readings.

Second Prelim (25%)
The second prelim will be cumulative. It will be part in-class, part take-home. The exam will consist of an in-class segment on Tuesday, May 10, and a take-home segment, due by 11 p.m. on Thursday, May 12 via Turnitin on Blackboard. A study guide with terms will be distributed one week in advance of the exam. A study session for the second prelim will be held on Thursday, May 5 in class.

Statement Regarding Academic Integrity:
Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit must be the student’s own work. The complete Cornell Code of Academic Integrity can be found at: http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/aic.cfm

The instructors reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus throughout the semester.

Class Schedule

Week 1
  1. Thurs. Jan 28: Introduction and Overview (Case & Verhoeven)

NO READINGS FOR THIS WEEK – INTRODUCTIONS IN SECTION

Week 2
2. Tues. Feb. 2: Socrates (Case)

3. Thurs., Feb. 4: Jesus (Verhoeven)

Readings:

Week 3

4. Tues., Feb. 9: Joan of Arc and Gilles De Rais (Verhoeven)

5. Thurs., Feb. 11: Jan Hus and Dracula (Case)

Readings:

Week 4

6. Tues., Feb. 16: FEBRUARY BREAK

7. Thurs., Feb. 18: Which Witches? (Case & Verhoeven)

Readings:

Week 5

8. Tues., Feb. 23: Spectacular Punishment (Case & Verhoeven)


Readings:
Additional readings TBA

Week 6

**Papers are due Tuesday, March 1 by noon via Turnitin on Blackboard.**

10. Tues., Mar. 1: Daniel M’Naughten and the Insanity Defense (Case)
11. Thurs., Mar. 3: Russian Terrorists (Verhoeven)

Readings:
Week 7
12. Tues., Mar. 8: Forensics (Case & Verhoeven)
13. Thurs., Mar. 10: Dreyfus (Case)

Readings:

Week 8
14. Tues., Mar. 15: Rashomon (Case & Verhoeven)
15. Thurs., Mar. 17: Trial by Bureaucracy (Case)

Readings:
* Franz Kafka, The Trial (1925), pp. 3-231.

Week 9
16. Tues., Mar. 22: Leopold & Loeb: The “Superman” on Trial (Case & Verhoeven)

**Prelim at 7:30-10 pm on Tuesday, March 22 in BKL (Baker Lab) 200**
17. Thurs., Mar. 24: Sacco & Vanzetti (Verhoeven)

Readings:
* Friedrich Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra (1883-85), pp. 124-128.

Week 10 [SPRING BREAK] [No class March 29 and 31]

Week 11
18. Tues., April 5: Show Trials (Verhoeven)
19. Thurs., April 7: Reichstag (Case)

Readings:
* Georgi Dimitrov, Letters, Writings and Courtroom Hearings (1933), pp. 1-25.
* Nikolay Bukharin, Last Plea before the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. (1938), pp. 1-10.

Week 12
18. Tues., Apr. 12: Nuremberg (Case)

Readings:
FILM: Judgment at Nuremberg (1961), dir. Stanley Kramer

Week 13
20. Tues., Apr. 19: Guest Lecture: Hannah Arendt and the Eichmann Trial (Corey Robin, Political Science, Brooklyn College)

21. Thurs., Apr. 21: Charles Manson (Verhoeven)

Readings:
* Manson readings TBA.

Week 14
22. Tues., Apr. 26: Radicalism on Trial (Verhoeven)

23. Thurs., Apr. 28: Dictators on Trial: The Hague Tribunal and the Trial of Saddam Hussein (Case)

Readings:

Week 15
24. Tues., May 3: Trials of our Time (Case & Verhoeven)

25. Thurs., May 5: [Study Session in Class]

NO SECTIONS - PREPARE FOR EXAM

Week 16
26. Tues., May 10: Part I of Second Prelim in class