

## Socratic Seminar: Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust

### Part I: The Final Solution

When: Monday, March 27<sup>th</sup> (50%)

What: Test grade. 40% written, 10% oral.

Assignment: Complete the two Holocaust Readings on the website: *Hitler's Willing Executioners* excerpt and *Ordinary Men* excerpt. Prepare responses to the following prompts and be prepared to discuss these texts in class. Each response should be in complete sentences or paragraph-length (length of response will depend on the question). Most responses would be adequately answered with 2 – 3 complete sentences.

#### *Hitler's Willing Executioners*

1. According to Goldhagen, what is the monocausal explanation for the Holocaust?
2. According to Goldhagen, why is coercion or social pressure not a sufficient explanation for the ordinary German's actions against the Jewish population?
3. What is so controversial about Goldhagen's claim?

#### *Ordinary Men*

4. Briefly summarize the assignment that was given to Reserve Police Battalion 101 in Jozefow.
5. What do you think the significance is of Major Trapp's absence during the assignment? What does it say about the larger mission of the Final Solution?
6. According to Browning's sources, were soldiers forced to kill Jews against their will?
7. How does the *Ordinary Men* excerpt support or challenge Goldhagen's description of "willing executioners"?
8. According to Browning's sources, what kinds of rationalizations did the German soldiers make to themselves to explain their actions?
9. How do you interpret the physical revulsion experienced by the German soldiers absent any "ethical or political principles" underlying the revulsion? Is there some fundamental human *nature* that overrides human *constructs* like racism?
10. According to Browning's sources, what role did military hierarchy, political worldview, and economic insecurity play in the actions of the German soldiers?

## Part II: Nazi Occupation and Resistance

When: Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> (50%)

What: Test grade. 40% written, 10% oral.

Assignment: Prepare responses to the following prompts and be prepared to discuss the text in class. Each response should be in complete sentences or paragraph-length (length of response will depend on the question). Most responses would be adequately answered with 2 – 3 complete sentences.

### *Girl in the Blue Coat*

1. What do you think Hanneke's ultimate motivations are in joining the Resistance? Why does she decide to help Ollie and the others? What type of ethical thinking does she seem to display?
2. Who do you think was the bravest: Bas, Ollie, or Hanneke? What type of ethical reasoning can be attributed to their actions? Explain your answer.
3. What do you think of Hanneke's parents? Are they bystanders or upstanders? Explain your answer.
4. Do you think that you would have joined the Resistance? Why or why not? Be honest.