

“Scavenger Hunt” for Rethinking the Holocaust HGS 495 Course  
**The Problems and Responsibilities of Representation- Questions of Authenticity and Credibility**

**In pairs, you will be exploring Holocaust representation and responsibility through identifying three key representational methods: fact, fiction and stylization. We will be looking at three example categories: The World of the Camps, Resistance in the Warsaw ghetto, and rescue. In dialogue with your partner(s), with each item on the list identify which representational method is being used and how it may help or hinder understanding and learning on the subject with which we are concerned. You will have about 45 minutes to complete this activity at which time we shall reconvene and discuss our findings as a group. Please note that you may need to copy and paste links if they do not work.**



Take a look at the above image from Art Spiegelman’s 2011 book *Metamaus*. You will find that it is a drawn picture of the same subject: a mouse. However, they are represented three different ways through a factual mouse, a fictional mouse, and Spiegelman’s signature stylized mouse. Consider this image, or other examples of this technique that you may have seen in Spiegelman’s other works, as a key to the rest of this activity.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Michael Rothberg provides a thorough and extended analysis of Spiegelman’s drawing of the three mice in his book, *Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000) passim, esp. 103f. Rothberg’s analysis unpacks the three dimensions of realistic, stylistic, and fictional representation with clarity and insight.

## **Section 1: The World of the Camps**

1. Grab a copy of *Maus* (1 or 2) from the library (you can search for it here <http://www.keene.edu/academics/library/> or we also have copies available). Familiarize or re-familiarize yourself with the style of the book. Does this help build a picture of “the world of the camps?” Is cartoon an appropriate method of representation for the Holocaust? Why or why not? What does this book bring to the table in terms of fact, fiction, and stylization?

2. <http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/remembrance/multimedia.asp>

From this page, look under “The World of the Camps” and watch one of the video testimonies. Do you find this testimony to represent the camps in an authentic way? How does testimony contribute to fact, fiction and/or stylization? How does this medium contribute to your understanding of the “World of the Camps?”

3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ITSqc1UnLU>

In this scene from *Life is Beautiful*, what method of representation is used? Does this authentically and or appropriately represent the world of the camps? How could it be helpful in exploring this particular subject of the Holocaust if at all?

## **Resistance: The Warsaw ghetto**

4. Watch the below video about the Warsaw Ghetto from ushmm.org.

[http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media\\_nm.php?MediaId=3375](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_nm.php?MediaId=3375)

What kind of a representation is this of the Warsaw Ghetto? How is this form of representation helpful or limiting?

5. This scene is from *Uprising* (2001) (you can stop the clip at 2:16).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uBsspS3B53M> From this clip, how would you say the Warsaw ghetto uprising is portrayed? What kind of representation does this clip, and this movie, utilize? How is looking at resistance in this manner influential and/or useful for studies about the Warsaw ghetto? How might it hinder understanding about resistance and or the Warsaw ghetto?

6. The Oneg Shabbat Archives (you do not need to watch this entire clip, just until you feel like you get the gist of what this group was about)

<https://www.yadvashem.org/education/educational-videos/video-toolbox/hevt-ringelblum.html>

Emmanuel Ringelblum and many others kept an archive documenting what everyday life was like in the Warsaw ghetto as well as about Jewish life in Poland before the war. What kind of representation is this collection? Can Ringelblum and the others involved with this archive be considered resisters? Think back to the scene you watched from *Uprising*. Do you think they represent resistance? Why or why not?

## Rescue

7. The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous.

<https://jfr.org/rescuer-stories/wanda-anishkewicz/>

Read one of the stories of rescue. Does reading testimonies of rescue contribute to your picture of what rescue looks like? How is it important? How might it be limiting to an extent?

8. Yad Vashem's criteria to become a righteous among the nations.

<https://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/about-the-righteous.html>

Yad Vashem's criterion to become a righteous among the nations is just one of many different ways that rescue during the Holocaust has been defined. How does this definition help or hinder understanding rescue? Do you think a significant amount of the population is left out in this definition? Or do you agree that rescue should only be defined by altruism? How do you picture and define a rescuer? Does this represent rescue?

9. Clip of *Schindler's List* (2001): "He who saves one life saves the world entire."

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIp\\_8RNNX4k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIp_8RNNX4k)

*Schindler's List* is arguably the most popular Holocaust rescue film (if not arguably the most popular Holocaust related film). As possibly the most well known rescuer during the Holocaust, mostly attributed to Steven Spielberg's film, how can looking at Oskar Schindler help students understand rescue? How could Schindler's list hinder understanding about rescue?