

Student Panel: The Depictions of Others

Oregon State University, March 6, 2019, Bexell Hall 417. Part of Holocaust Memorial Week

One of the key purposes of Holocaust Memorial Week is to heighten awareness of social, cultural and political trends at home and abroad that could be understood as contributing to the diminishment of other human beings, their discrimination, or even their elimination. The Holocaust was made possible by centuries of anti-Semitic thought and practice. While it was a singular event in its execution, it did not arise out of nowhere, but followed cultural trends within Europe that had laid the groundwork for the systematic expulsion and killing of those deemed unworthy to live in a National-Socialist society.

When we look at anti-Semitic imagery in cultures around the world, and across the political spectrum, we see familiar tropes of creating unresolvable differences between human beings, cultural constructions that paint one group of people as essentially different from mainstream society. This way of "othering" fellow human beings can lay the groundwork for campaigns of discrimination and elimination. Anti-Semitism is just one example of techniques of discrimination against those who are perceived as different from the main group. Oftentimes, such differences are drawn along the lines of ethnicity, nationality, race, religion, cultural practices, and gender identity.

The student panel will look at depictions of others in popular culture. We will interrogate conventional practices of consuming cultural texts that on first sight may not seem unsettling, because we have become used or conditioned to the negative stereotypes within them. Examples may range from the depictions of aliens and monsters on popular science fiction and fantasy shows, to more explicit representations of otherness in media.

A panel of student presenters will provide a brief outline of their arguments with regards to specific examples, which will facilitate a wider discussion with all participants.

Panelists:

Mohammed Shakibnia, Political Science, Philosophy

Francisco Carlos Catibayan, Political Science

Emily Carter, Political Science

Organizer & Moderator:

Dr. Philipp Kneis, Political Science Program / Public Policy

This program is part of Holocaust Memorial Week, co-organized by Oregon State University's School of History, Philosophy and Religion, and the School of Public Policy, in cooperation with Fielding Graduate University.

<https://holocaust.oregonstate.edu/>