

## *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

### *Syllabus*

## *Sociology of silence and denial - 53388*

*Last update 02-10-2021*

*HU Credits: 2*

*Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)*

*Responsible Department: Sociology & Anthropology*

*Academic year: 0*

*Semester: 1st Semester*

*Teaching Languages: Hebrew*

*Campus: Mt. Scopus*

*Course/Module Coordinator: Prof Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi*

*Coordinator Email: [Vered@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:Vered@mail.huji.ac.il)*

*Coordinator Office Hours: Tuesday 9-10*

*Teaching Staff:*

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Prof Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi

Course/Module description:

The course will discuss social aspects of silence and denial. While the field of psychology emphasizes personal aspects of silence and denial, the class will focus on social dimensions of silence and denial and the tension between personal knowledge and social silencing. The course will address various kinds of silences and will discuss silences in a variety of spaces such as: memory and commemoration, the military, gender, culture, organizations and more. Our working assumption entails that the kind of things we pay attention to, talk about, ignore and keep silence around, are affected and shaped by social norms, culture, power relations and political constraints. Throughout the semester, we will define silences, understand their meaning, consider what is worth talked about and relate to, and discuss the tension between personal awareness and public discourse. We will also address the way in which silence can be broken, secrets can be revealed, advantages of keeping silence and the role of silence in collective memory. The first part of the course will focus on theoretical and conceptual issues while the second part will address case studies and analysis.

Course/Module aims:

1. Introducing the students to the sociology of silence and denial.
2. Studying and discussing central questions of the field (for example: how can one prevent from knowledge to become part of public discourse, how can information be socially ignored? How conspiracies of silence are constructed, how awareness of knowledge that the individual holds can be bridge with social silence, what does it take to break silence
3. Understanding the sociology of silence and denial
4. Acquiring the ability to sociologically analyze topics related to silence and denial

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

1. To think about the field in Sociological terms
2. To understand silence as a social category
3. to learn the major concepts and ideas of the field
4. To analyze social silences and understand their construction and meanings.

Attendance requirements(%):

Mandatory

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Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lecture and discussion

Course/Module Content:

Theoretical background, typology, overt secrets, sociology of denial, pain, embarrassment, fear and silence, learning to ignore, breaking silence, gender and silence, silence and organization, Holocaust and silence, silence in memory and forgetting

Required Reading:

האנס כריסטיאן אנדרסן, בגדי המלך החדשים, בתרגום א.ל. יעקבוביץ. 1961. תל אביב: יזרעאל. עמ' 5-16

Connerton, Paul. 2008. "Seven Types of Forgetting." *Memory Studies* 1(1): 59-71.

Zerubavel, Eviatar. 2006. *The Elephant in the Room: Silence and Denial in Everyday Life*. New York: Oxford University Press. Ch. 2, 4 (pp. 17-32, 47-59)

הרמן לואיס, ג'ודית. 1994 (1992). טראומה והחלמה. תל אביב: עם עובד. עמ' 13-16  
רשות

הרמן לואיס, ג'ודית. 1994 (1992). טראומה והחלמה. תל אביב: עם עובד. עמ' 110-114,  
127-129, 190-193

Zerubavel, Eviatar, 1997. *Social Mindscape: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. Ch. 3

Vaughan, Diane. 1986. *Uncoupling: Turning Points in Intimate Relationship*. New York: Oxford University Press. Ch. 4

Benjamin, Walter. 2007[1955]. *Illuminations*. New York: Schocken Books. Pp. 83-84

Diner Hasia R. 2009. *We Remember With Reverence and Love: American Jews and the Myth of Silence after the Holocaust 1945-1962*. New York: New York University Press. Introduction (pp. 1-17)

Stein, Arlene. 2009. "As Far as They Knew I came from France." *Symbolic Interaction* 32(1): 44-60.

Olick, Jeffrey K. 2005. *In the House of the Hangman: The Agonies of German Defeat 1943-1949*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Ch. 13 (Especially pp. 300-314)+ pp, 5, 173-177, 187,

Cohen, Stanley. 2001. *States of Denial*. Cambridge, UK: Polity. Ch. 6

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Pine, Emilie. 2014. "The Abuse of History/A History of Abuse: Theatre as Memory and the Abbey's 'Darkest Corner.'" In *Ireland, Memory and Performing the Historical Imagination*. Edited by Christopher Collings and Mary P. Caulfield. UK: Palgrave Macmillan. Pp. 207-222.

Gellman, Mneesha. 2015. "Teaching Silence in the Schoolroom: Whither National History in Sierra Leone and El Salvador." *Third World Quarterly* 36(1): 147-161

Brown, Kate Pride. 2015. "Guarding the Memory of National Guard: Strategies of Avoidance in Official Historiography." *Memory Studies* 8(3): 313-327.  
רשות:

Barak, Oren. 2007. "'Don't Mention the War?' The Politics of Remembrance and Forgetfulness in Postwar Lebanon." *Middle East Journal*, 61(1) 49-70

Lomsky-Feder, Edna and Orna Sasson-Levi. 2017. *Israeli Women Soldiers and Citizenship: Gendered Encounters with the State*. New York: Routledge.  
Chapter six.

Gilad, Sharon, Moshe Maor and Pazit Ben-Nun Bloom. 2015. "Organizational Reputation, The Content of Public Allegations, and Regulatory Communication." *Journal of Public*

*Administration Research and Theory*, 25(2): 451-478

הרמן לואיס, ג'ודית. 1994. טראומה והחלמה. תל אביב: עם עובד. עמ' 184-186  
Zerubavel, Eviatar. 2006. *The Elephant in the Room: Silence and Denial in Everyday*

*Life*. New York: Oxford University Press. Ch. 6-7 (pp.73 -87)

Ben-Yehuda, Nachman. 2001. *Betrayals and Treason*. Colorado, USA: Westview.  
Pages 78-81

Vinitzky-Seroussi, Vered and Chana Teeger. 2010. "Unpacking the Unspoken: Silence in Collective Memory and Forgetting." *Social Forces* 88(3): 1103-1122

Pagis, Michal. 2010. "Producing Intersubjectivity in Silence: An Ethnographic Study of  
Mediation Practice." *Ethnography* 11(2): 309-328.

Additional Reading Material:

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Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 5 %

Project work 80 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 15 %

class presentations

Additional information:

None