Unit Description
This Reflective History unit explores the relationship between history, law and memory, by taking a series of high profile trials related to the Holocaust as the starting point for broader reflection. The trials span the period from the immediate aftermath of the war in Allied controlled Europe, through Israel and West Germany in the 1960s, France in the 1990s and Britain at the turn of the century. These trials raise questions about the nature of evidence, the value of witness testimony, as well as the reasons for and nature of these different legal proceedings. Ultimately they force us to range more widely and consider a host of bigger issues such as the concept of crimes against humanity, international and national jurisdiction, the instrumental use of trials by the state, media reporting, the nature of ‘truth’ for historians and lawyers and the relationship between trials, history and memory.

Contact Hours and Mode of Teaching:
1 hour intro to unit + 5 x 2 hour seminars

Methods of Assessment:
1 x 24 hour take home exam (100%)

Essential Reading:
Donald Bloxham, Genocide on Trial (Oxford 2001)
Lawrence Douglas, The Memory of Judgement (New Haven 2001)
Richard Evans, Telling Lies about Hitler (London 2002)
Debra Kaufman et. Al. (eds.), From the Protocols of the Elders of Zion to Holocaust Denial Trials (London 2007)

Further Information
Date written: 11/03/09           Date revised: 29/03/10