Course Description

The twelve years of the National Socialist regime cast a long shadow over German history. While serious scholars no longer assert that there was something fundamentally “wrong” with Germans that inevitably produced the Nazi regime, the violence of dictatorship, war and genocide have sparked a series of questions about the German past and profoundly affected the German present. It is also a strangely international field of study, drawing in students, academics and “normal people” all over the world in an effort to understand and come to terms with this catastrophic period. This course examines the controversies this has provoked from the nature power in the German state born in 1871 to the question of immigration and the far right in the post war period. Can an embryonic “proto-Nazi” state be seen in Imperial Germany? How was the rise of the regime influenced by competing interpretations of the German past? How can the dictatorship be understood in light of a divided Germany in which a substantial part of the population remained under an authoritarian regime? How has this short period affected Germany in the last 50 years?

To answer these questions, students will be expected to develop a certain amount of expertise in aspects of German history, share their ideas, and discuss those of their peers on a regular basis. The assignments for this course are based on a combination of contributions to the seminar discussion and work towards a final paper to be submitted at the end of the year. This course demands a good deal of reading, but the readings have been chosen to represent the best, strangest, and most contentious issues in the history of Germany in order to facilitate fruitful and interesting discussion.

The following books should be purchased for the course:

1) Konrad H. Jarausch and Michael Geyer, *Shattered Past: Reconstructing German Histories*
2) Uwe Timm, *In My Brother’s Shadow*
3) EITHER
   - Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*
   - Ernst Jünger, *In Storms of Steel*

**Please note: each student is only required to purchase and read one of the last two texts.**

Because this is a seminar rather than an introductory or survey course, we will not necessarily spend time on the basic outlines of German history. Students with little or no experience in this field are encouraged to consult a general survey such as Mary Fullbrook’s “A Concise History of Germany”.

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York University
Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies
Department of History

*Hist 4330  Issues in the History of Modern Germany: Germany and the Nazi Past*

Fall/Winter 2010-2011
Thursday 2:30-5:20pm
R S101

Course Director: Dr. Matt Bera
mbera@yorku.ca
Grade Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>5%  (Due Oct. 7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>5%  (Due Dec. 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>30%  (Due March 24)</td>
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<td>Test 1</td>
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<td>Test 2</td>
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Assignments

**Participation:** Because this is a seminar course, students will be expected to participate to a very high degree. Seminal participants will normally be expected to read a variety of texts and discuss them in class. They will also be expected to discuss the readings done by other students and to offer comments and criticism to help us to move towards a high level of academic discussion as a group.

**Presentations:** Students will normally be required to read shorter articles or selections from longer texts. However, each student will also act as the “lead” once per term. This student will read a longer text and present it to the rest of the seminar in order to facilitate discussion.

**Research Proposal:** Each student will be required to submit a research proposal of no more than one page identifying an area of interest, a research question to be pursued throughout the year and the kinds of sources (both primary and secondary) that should be consulted. This will then form the basis of the final papers to be handed in at the end of the year.

**Annotated Bibliography:** Students will be required to submit an annotated bibliography listing six (6) sources relevant to their research topic with a brief explanation of the relevance, argument and importance of each text.

**Paper Presentation:** Students will read an early draft of their final research paper (c. 10-15 pages) to seminar participants for discussion that will form the basis of revisions and further research towards the final paper.

**Final Paper:** Each participant will be required to submit a final paper of approximately 20-25 pages based on the work done throughout the year.

**Tests:** There will be a short, in-class test at the end of each term.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism remains a deeply irritating problem in the academy. Should a student submit the work of others as their own or fail to acknowledge the source of material they have employed they will face serious academic consequences. Remember, plagiarism is an affront to other students, an insult to me and a bone-headed waste of your own time and money. It also makes your own work boring and irrelevant. As a result, I will not hesitate to take all possible steps against a student who has violated the terms of academic honesty. Students with questions about this should familiarize themselves with the York Senate Policy on Academic Honesty.
Course Outline

Sept. 16

*Introduction and Outline of German History*

Sept. 23

*The Sordid Past, the Messy Present, and the Post War World.*
Reading: Jarausch and Geyer, pgs. 1-60.
Film (in-class): "Everything is Illuminated". Liev Schreiber, dir. 2005.

Sept. 30

*Power, Violence, and the Birth of a Nation?*
Readings:
Group 1:
- Wolfgang J Mommsen, “The Prussian Conception of the State and the German Idea of Empire: Prussia and the German Empire in Recent German History” in *Imperial Germany, 1867-1918* pp. 41-56. (Reserve).
Group 2:

Oct. 7.

*Identity and Class in Imperial Germany: Trouble Waiting to Happen?*
Readings
Lead Student 1: Vernon Lidke, *The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labour in Imperial Germany*
Lead Student 2: David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in 19th Century Germany*

Research Proposal Due

Oct. 14

*Reading Break*

Oct. 21

*Exporting Violence? German Imperialism.*
Lead Student: Susanne Zantrop *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Pre-colonial Germany, 1770-1870*
Wolfgang Mommsen, "The Causes and Objectives of German Imperialism before 1914" in Imperial Germany, 1867-1918 pp.75-100 (reserve)
Group 3:

Oct. 28
Interpreting the First World War.
Lead Student 1: Anton Kaes, Shell Shock Cinema: Weimar Culture and the Wounds of the War
Lead Student 2: Wolfgang Natter, Literature at War, 1914–1940: representing the “Time of Greatness” in Germany
Readings: Jünger In Storms of Steel or Remarque, All Quiet on the Western Front

Nov. 4
Versailles: Looking for Trouble?
Lead Student 1: Margret MacMillan, Paris, 1919
Lead Student 2: Richard Bessel, Germany After the First World War

Group 1: Sally Marks, “Smoke and Mirrors: In Smoke Filled Rooms and the Galerie des Glaces” in Boemke et. al. The Treaty of Versailles: A reassessment after 75 Years
Treaty of Versailles Excerpts.
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1919versailles.html

Nov 11
The Weimar Republic: An Unstable Mess?
Lead Student 1: Peter Gay, The Outsider as Insider
Lead Student 2: Detlev Peukert The Weimar Republic: The Crisis of Classical Modernity

Film: “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” or “Metropolis”

Nov. 18

How Do You Solve a Problem Like Democracy? The Collapse of the Republic.

Readings
Lead Student 1: Richard Evans, The Coming of the Third Reich pp. 155-308.

Knut Borchardt, “Constraints and Room for Maneuver in the Great depression of the Early 30s: Towards a Revision of the Received Historical Picture” in Ibid.


Lead Student 3: Erich Kästner, Fabian: The Story of a Moralist

Nov. 25

A Popular Dictatorship?

Readings
Lead Student 1: Claudia Koonz, The Nazi Conscience
Lead Student 2: Detlev Peukert, Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life


Dec. 2

Holocaust and Humanity

Readings:

Lead Student 1: Daniel J. Goldhagen, Hitler’s Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust

Lead Student 2: Christopher Browning, Ordinary Men: reserve Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland

Annotated Bibliography Due

Dec. 9

First Term Test.

Christmas Break

Jan. 6.

Film “Somewhere in Berlin” (Irgendwo in Berlin) Gerhard Lamprecht, dir. 1946.

Discussion
Jan 13.  
**A Totalitarian Tendency?**
Readings:
All: Jarausch and Geyer: Chpt. 5 pp.149-172, Chpt. 2, pp.61-84.
Lead Student 1: Corey Ross, *Constructing Socialism at the Grassroots: The Transformation of East Germany, 1945-65*.
Lead Student 2: Jeanette Madarász, *Twice Persecuted: Surviving in Nazi Germany and Communist East Germany*.
Student Paper presentations:

Jan 20.  
**West Germany: Us and Them.**
Readings:
All: Jarausch and Geyer, Chpt 10. 269-317.
Lead Student 1: Richard Evans, *In Hitler’s Shadow: West German Historians and the Attempt to Escape the Nazi Past*.
Lead Student 2: Harold James, *A German Identity, 1770–1990*.
Students Paper Presentations:

Jan. 27  
**1989 and Unification: A Bad Idea?**
All: Jarausch and Geyer: Chpt. 7 pp. 173-196.
Lead Student 1: Renata Fritsch-Bournazel, *Europe and German Unification*.
Lead Student 2: Brigitte Young, *Triumph of the Fatherland: German Unification and the Marginalization of Women*.
Students Paper Presentations:

Feb. 3  
**Sex, Gender, and Personal Relationships after the Third Reich**
Readings:
All: Jarausch and Geyer, Chpt 9 pp.245-269.
Lead Student 1: Dagmar Herzog, *Sex after Fascism: Memory and Morality in 20th Century Germany*.
Students Paper Presentations:

Feb. 10  
**Terror and Violence in Germany**
Readings:
All: Jeremy Varon “Refusing to be “Good Germans”: New Left Violence as a Global Phenomenon” *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* Issue 43 (Fall 2008) pp.21-44.
Lead Student 2: Christoph Rojahn, *Left Wing Terrorism in Germany: The Aftermath of Ideological Violence*.
Students Paper Presentations:

Feb 17  
**Dealing with the Far Right**
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGdJWFFv6Bs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGdJWFFv6Bs)
Lead Student 1: Ingo Hasselbach, Führer-Ex: Memoirs of a Former Neo-Nazi (Robarts)
Lead Student 2: Rand Lewis, A Nazi Legacy: Right-Wing Extremism in Post-War Germany

Students Paper Presentations:

Feb 24: **READING BREAK**

March 3.

**Memory: Victims or Perpetrators?**
Lead Student 1: Jörg Friedrich, The Fire: The Bombing of Germany, 1940-1945
Lead Student 2: Bill Niven, Facing the Nazi Past: United Germany and the Legacy of the Third Reich

Students Paper Presentations:

March 17

**Immigration and Identity**
All: Jarausch and Geyer, Chpt. 7.
Lead Student 1: Günter Wallraf, Lowest of the Low
Lead Student 2: Rita Chin, The Guestworker Question in Postwar Germany

Students Paper Presentations:

March 24

**A German Identity?**
All: Jarausch Chpt. 8. Pp. 221-244.

Students Paper Presentations:

Final Papers Due

March 31

**Final Test**