

21:510:290

Perspectives in History
Living in Nazi Germany
Writing Intensive

Fall 2014

Class Location: Conklin 302

Class Meeting Times: Monday 4:00-7:00 pm

Professor: Dr. Eva Giloi

Office Hours: 316 Conklin Hall, Mondays 12:00-2:00

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Course Description

In the year 2010 alone, 850 books were published on Nazi Germany. Sixty-five years after the end of World War II, the desire still grows to understand how a country rich in culture, art, education, political vision and industrial wealth could descend into the lowest depths of violence, authoritarianism, intolerance and mass murder. Today, scholars study Nazi Germany to gain insights into the politics of social destruction, in order to learn general lessons that can be applied to any country. Immediately after World War II, the victorious Allies, including the USA, had even more difficult questions to answer. As the Allies set out to rebuild Europe and neutralize Germany, they had to decide which Germans they could trust: who was a Nazi and who was not, who had participated actively and willingly in the regime, who was capable of rehabilitation, and who should be punished for crimes against humanity. These questions were complicated by the fact that most Germans claimed that they had not participated willingly in the regime, that they had only gone along with the government out of fear, and that they had been ignorant of what the Nazis were really doing.

This course takes students through the same process that the Allies, and historians after them, had to go through: finding and deciphering clues to determine who knew what and when, how actively and willingly Germans were involved in Nazi crimes, whether they had any room for resistance, and how responsible they were for what happened in their country. Students examine a range of different primary sources – evidence and testimony directly from the time period – to answer these questions. The primary sources include interviews and voting statistics, law codes and newspaper articles, memoirs and diaries, films and letters, even down to everyday consumer objects and jokes. For each source, students will examine what it was like to live in Nazi Germany, and with this information, will interpret, analyze, read between the lines, and question the reliability of the sources, how and where they were produced, and the background and hidden interests of who produced them – in other words, act as detectives as they take a critical approach to the clues they are offered.

Learning Objectives

In this Writing Intensive course, students will practice the following skills:

-- Analyzing evidence with a critical mind: in class, students will analyze the weekly primary source readings in groups settings, building on each others' insights to ask relevant questions about how to evaluate different types of sources.

-- Writing clear and concise summaries of evidence: in homework assignments, students will write summations and opinions about the evidence they are presented, and learn to craft persuasive arguments supported by facts and evidence.

-- Learning how to find relevant evidence: over the course of the semester, students will take on the investigative work of finding their own original sources, with guidance from the course instructor.

-- Writing a research paper: students will write a final paper that is: 1. clearly-argued; 2. persuasive; 3. based on solid evidence; 4. significant in its findings and conclusions. Students will have guidance from the instructor on how to achieve these goals, including an opportunity to rewrite one shorter paper and conferences with the instructor on crafting the final paper.

Course Requirements:

Students are required to attend lectures and take notes. The books or essays marked “Readings” must be read before the start of the lecture for which they are assigned. Student participation in the discussion makes up 15% of the grade. Aside from course participation, there are multiple shorter written assignments, two short essays, and a final research paper.

1. Participation in class discussion. Students are expected to read the assigned texts before the class (by the date indicated on the syllabus). Simple attendance in class is not factored into the participation grade – students are required to come to class ready with questions or observations about the readings and to take part in the discussion to earn a good participation grade. We will devote most of our class time to interpreting the primary source readings; this in-depth analysis will compose the participation grade.

2. Homework Assignments and Final Evaluation. There are multiple written assignments, outlined on the syllabus. Assignments MUST be handed in at the beginning of class. I will only accept late written assignments in case of emergency, but proof of emergency is required. If students know they will not be able to attend class (for instance for religious holiday observance), they must submit the assignment in advance.

3. Two Short Papers, 5 pages in length each. Students will be offered an opportunity to revise and rewrite the second of the two papers.

4. Research Essay, 8 pages. Due December 19. Individual components of the essay: Thesis question and a list of primary sources; Outline and Thesis Paragraph; Final Paper.

Grading:

In-class participation:	15%
Homework Assignments:	20%
Final Evaluation:	5%
Short Paper #1:	15%
Short Paper #2:	15%
Research Essay:	30%

Grading Rubric:

- A: Outstanding
- A-: Outstanding, with one or two areas of improvement
- B+: Very good
- B: Good
- B-: Good overall, with some significant weaknesses
- C+: Satisfactory, with some potential for improvement
- C: Satisfactory, but needs significant development
- C-: Barely satisfactory
- D: Poor: overwhelming flaws
- F: Failing: doesn't complete assignment

The grades are applied to your work in the class: at the college level, this means the final product of your work – what you hand in to me – not simply the amount of effort you put into the work. (In other words, students don't get an "A for effort" at the college level.) "Outstanding" is not defined as how the final product compares to your own previous work, but how it compares to other students' work. All of this is a reflection of the real world: in the professional working world that you will soon be entering, you will succeed based on the quality of your work.

I am happy to talk to you about your assignments, strategies for writing papers, rough drafts, etc. at any time during the semester – but I will only do so in office hours. I will not review paper drafts or answer in-depth questions via email, since email is not an effective tool for this kind of pedagogical review. You can send me short informational questions via email, but for an evaluation of your work (including rough drafts) you must make the effort to come to my office hours in person. If you have a scheduling conflict with my regular office hours, email me to make an appointment at another time.

Class Rules:

European history is largely a story of the rise of and interplay between individual rights and civic duties. The classroom is a microcosm of that relationship, and the classroom rules reflect a respect for individual rights and the need for group responsibilities. I expect students to behave in a manner that shows respect for the civic community: for others' needs and desire to learn. Any behavior that might be disruptive to other students, making it difficult for them to hear or distracting them from the lecture, or in any way intimidates them from participating in class, is prohibited and will be counted against the participation grade. This means, in concrete terms: no talking in private conversations (even in whispers), no cell phone use or any other form of texting, no use of computers (except with my special permission) or surfing the web, no working on other course homework. Arriving at class late or leaving early is extraordinarily disruptive to other students, and is only acceptable in an emergency situation. More than anything else, though, private conversations draw attention away from the common civic forum – if I have to stop the class to ask you to stop a private conversation, you will receive an F for your participation grade for the course.

Attendance policy:

Attendance is required. There will be no make-up opportunities for missed classes.

Excused vs. Unexcused absences: The Rutgers-Newark Undergraduate catalog (http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwk-ug_current/pg576.html) states: "The recognized grounds for absence are illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions."

If you plan to claim a religious holiday as an excused absence, you must inform me of this fact within the first two weeks of class.

If you have three unexcused absences, your overall course grade will be lowered by a full grade (from B to C, for example). With four absences, the stakes change: Any student who misses **four** or more sessions through any **combination** of **excused** and **unexcused** absences will have missed more than a quarter of the class time and will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw from the course to avoid an F.

Late papers and exams:

Homework Assignments: I will not accept late assignments, except in cases of proven emergency. The homework assignments are designed to help you keep up with the readings and to prompt participation in class discussion. This is why they cannot be handed in later than the beginning of the class when they are assigned. But: You can always hand an assignment in early. If you know that you will be absent on a particular day, plan ahead and email the assignment to me early.

Essays: Unless you have express permission from me, discussed with me IN ADVANCE, and based on an acknowledged reason, late essays will have their grades lowered one full grade every day that they are late.

Disabilities:

Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, requiring assistance and/or accommodation should speak with Disability Services in a timely manner to set up appropriate accommodations.

Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism):

Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. Cheating is both a moral and an ethical offense. It violates both your own integrity and the ethics of group commitment: when you cut corners and cheat, you undermine those student who took the time to work on the assignment honestly. The standard minimum penalties for students who cheat or plagiarize include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University.

All students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge. To receive credit, every assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: "On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.

You may only use the texts assigned in this syllabus to complete the homework assignments. Resist the urge to cut and paste, either literally or figuratively by using other people's ideas. If I find that you have used other people's ideas (ex: Wikipedia, Amazon reviews, book jacket descriptions, etc.), I will not accept the assignment because I will not be able to consider it your own work. You will get a failing grade (0 points) for that assignment and will not be able to make it up.

Required Readings:

The **required readings** are on Blackboard under 'Course Documents.' You will need to print out the readings and bring them to class, since we will be working intensively in class with the documents. If you don't bring them to class, you will not be able to participate adequately in the discussion.

Schedule of Classes

Week 1: Mon., Sept. 8: Introduction to Nazi Germany
No readings this session

Week 2: Mon., Sept. 15: The Aftermath = The Issues

Readings:

- Snyder, *Hitler's Third Reich*, Part 1: "Buchenwald;" "Belsen;" "JCS/1067"
(pages 503-506, 511-515, 522-527)
- Browning, "One Day in Józefów: Initiation to Mass Murder" (pages 165-176)
- Johnson and Reuband, *What We Knew*, Interview with Hubert Lutz (pages 141-150)

Assignment due: 2-3 pages: What is your opinion of Hubert Lutz? What did he know? Do you believe him? Do you think he's hiding something? Do you find him sympathetic?

Week 3: Mon., Sept. 22: Nazi Origins

Readings:

- Snyder, *Hitler's Third Reich*, Part 2, "Mein Kampf" (pages 42-49)
- Stackelberg, *Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, "Reichstag elections 1928-1933," Table 2.1
- Riefenstahl, *Memoirs*, "Victory of the Faith;" "Triumph of the Will" (pages 143-151, 156-166)

Assignment due: 2-3 pages: Find 1 newspaper story about Germany in 1935, and attach it to this assignment. Compare that newspaper description of Germany in 1935 to what you saw in the film *Triumph of the Will* and/or to the interview with Hubert Lutz in *What We Knew*. How do you account for any differences in these descriptions?

Week 4: Mon., Sept. 29: Nazis in the 1920s

Readings:

- Snyder, *Hitler's Third Reich*, pt.2, "A Small Group of Dissidents..." "Dr. Goebbels"
(pages 22-25, 53-55)
- Stackelberg, *Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, "Mein Kampf" (pages 92-94)

Assignment due: 2-3 pages: Find 3 newspaper stories about Germany from the 1920s, and attach them to this assignment. Part 1: Based on those stories: what was Germany like in the 1920s? Part 2: Based on the readings for today, did the Nazis address the problems outlined in the US newspapers?

Week 5: Mon., Oct. 6: The Hitler Myth

Readings:

- Kershaw, "Hitler and the Germans" (*Life in the Third Reich*) (page 41-55)
- Shirer, *Berlin Diary*, September 4 – 5, 1934 (16-20)
- Riefenstahl, *Memoirs*, "A Fateful Meeting" (101-108)
- Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, "Chapter 2: Profession and Vocation" (pages 13-20)
- Eberle, *Letters to Hitler*, "Veneration and Advice;" "Rage and Hope" (pages 30-67)

Assignment due: 2-3 pages:

Part 1 (minimum 1 page): Compare Riefenstahl's description of her first encounter with Hitler to Speer's description. Why were they attracted to Hitler?

Part 2 (minimum 2 pages): How do Riefenstahl's and Speer's descriptions compare to the letters written to Hitler in 1930-1932? Do the letters have the same tone? Do they view Hitler in the same way as Riefenstahl and Speer? Use specific examples from the letters to support your argument.

Week 6: Mon., Oct. 13: Hitler Takes Over

Readings:

- Fritzsche, "January 1933" (pages 137-149, 197-210)
- Snyder, *Hitler's Third Reich*, Part 2, "Chancellor Hitler Issues a Proclamation;" (pages 85-89)
- Noakes and Pridham, *Nazism*, Party Membership statistics (pages 84-87)
- Haffner, *Defying Hitler*, Chapters 16-17 (pages 79-90)
- Haffner, "Afterword" (*Defying Hitler*) (pages 201-210)

Short Paper #1 due, 5 pages:

Use the letters written to Hitler from 1930-1934, which we read in Eberle's *Letters to Hitler* last week, as evidence to prove one of the two statements below:

Either:

Hitler was successful because he appeared god-like, with a clear and strong vision for a racially pure Germany.

Or:

Hitler was successful because he was an opportunist and chameleon who could appeal to many different constituencies.

Week 7: Mon., Oct. 20: Immediate Actions in 1933

Readings

- Snyder, *Hitler's Third Reich*, Part 3, "Restoration of Civil Service;" "Burning of Books;" "Hitler's Decree for Gleichschaltung;" "Law Concerning Formation of New Parties;" "Law for the Protection of Heredity;" "Law for Reorganization of the Reich;" "Propaganda Minister Goebbels Addresses Film" (pages 111-119, 129-133, 152-157)
- Bielenberg, *When I was a German*, "The Years Before: Part I" (pages 16-25)
- Klemperer, *I Shall Bear Witness*, "10 March – 30 April, 1933" (pages 5-15)
- Shirer, *Berlin Diary*, August 25 – September 2 1933 (pages 14-16)
- Riefenstahl, *Memoirs*, "A Visit to the Reich Chancellery" (pages 134-138)
- Haffner, *Defying Hitler*, Chapters 18, 21, 22, 23 (pages 90-94, 110-123)

Assignment due: 2-3 pages: If you look at the first year of Nazi rule, what would you conclude about the nature of the regime? In other words, by looking at events on the ground (and not what the Nazis said in their speeches and pamphlets), what would you assume were the movement's main principles and goals?

Week 8: Mon., Oct. 27: The Nuremberg Laws, 1935

Readings:

- Stackelberg, *Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, "The Nuremberg Laws" (pages 186-190)
- Burleigh, *The Racial State* (pages 77-96)
- Document titled: "1935 in Diaries and Memoirs," which contains excerpts from Klemperer (pages 124-130); Bielenberg (pages 25-33); and Riefenstahl (pages 175-176, 211-214).

Assignment due: 2-3 pages: Part 1: Based on Stackelberg and Burleigh, how would you describe the nature of the Nuremberg Laws? What were they designed to accomplish? Part 2: How do the diaries and memoirs describe the laws? Do you think they describe the laws correctly and adequately? Did Klemperer, Bielenberg and Riefenstahl see the laws for what they were?

Week 9: Mon., Nov. 3: Foreign Policy and Domestic Policy, 1933-1939

Readings:

- Fritzsche, "Reviving the Nation," (*Life and Death in the Third Reich*) (pages 19-24, 38-65)
- Snyder, *Hitler's Third Reich*, Part 4, "Law Regarding Labor Service;" "Hitler Youth;" "Report on the Accomplishments of Kraft Durch Freude" (pages 206-210, 241, 278)
- Klemperer, *I Shall Bear Witness*, "21 October - 16 December 1934;" "4 October - 10 October 1936;" "30 June - 27 July 1938" (pages 92-97, 185-187, 250-252)
- Riefenstahl, *Memoirs*, "The Day of German Art" (pages 211-214)
- Haffner, *Defying Hitler*, Chapters 27, 28 (pages 145-154)

Assignment due: 2-3 pages: Part 1: What kind of everyday life did ethnic Germans experience? What was appealing about this daily life? Part 2: How does this compare to Victor Klemperer's description of life?

Week 10: Mon., Nov. 10: Everyday Opinions, 1933-1939

Readings:

- Eberle, *Letters to Hitler*, "Recognition, Gratitude and Veneration," "Dissent," "Jubilant and Concern" (pages 91-97, 122-127, 177-181)
- Peukert, "Contradictions in the Mood," from *Inside Nazi Germany* (pages 49-66)

Short Paper #2 due, 5 pages:

Compare the letters to Hitler from 1933-1939 (in Eberle) to the SPD's reports on German morale (in Peukert). Do the two sources give the same impression? Do they give different impressions of what people thought of the regime? What accounts for their differences? (Try also to think which you would consider the more reliable source and why.)

Week 11: Mon., Nov. 17: 1933-1945: Persecution of the Jews

Readings:

- Haste, "The Racial State" (*Nazi Women*) (pages 101-127)
- Snyder, *Hitler's Third Reich*, Part 4, "Night of Broken Glass;" "Goering Issues Three Decrees" (pages 295-304)
- Johnson and Reuband, *What We Knew*, Interviews with Rolf Heberer, Helga Schmidt, Hiltrud Kühnel, Ekkehard Falter, Ernst Walters (pages 153-157, 177-180, 185-190, 195-199, 204-210)

Assignment due: 2-3 pages: Compare the interviews in *What We Knew* to Haste's *Racial State*. What do people say they remember? What did they notice or not notice?

Due by email: Research paper topic, with Thesis Statement and at least 2 primary sources from the course

Week 12: Mon., Nov. 24: Opportunities for Resistance

Readings:

- Bielenberg, *When I was a German*, "The Blockwart;" "A Dangerous Tea Party;" "Star of David" (pages 51-60, 89-93, 110-114)
- Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, "Resistance;" "Edelweiss Pirates" (pages 118-125, 154-165)
- Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, "Order and Terror" (pages 197-207)
- Klemperer, *I Shall Bear Witness*, "3 December – 6 December 1938" (pages 266-268)
- Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society*, "Reflections on the Meaning of the Yellow Star;" "Report on Swing Dancing;" "Jokes about the Nazi Regime" (pages 129-132, 160-164)
- "The Rosenstrasse Demonstration," at **URL:**
<http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10008064>
- "The White Rose," at **URL:** <http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/revolt/whiterose.html>
- Jay, "T4 Medical Killing Program," (*The Nazi Doctors*), at **URL:**
<http://remember.org/witness/wit.vic.med.html>

Assignment due: 2-3 pages: Using all of the readings for today, can you find a pattern for when people resisted and how they resisted? Who resisted, and under what circumstances? Or was it simply impossible for most people to resist?

Due by email: List of Primary Sources for the research paper: at least 5 primary sources, 3 from outside of class.

Due (Optional): Rewrite of Short Paper #2

Week 13: Mon., Dec. 1: Final Evaluation: Sitting in Judgment on Leni Riefenstahl

Readings:

- Riefenstahl, *Memoirs*: entire

Final evaluation due: 4 pages: Based on Leni Riefenstahl's *Memoirs*, and drawing on all of our class sessions as context: If you were an Allied judge after the war, would you convict Riefenstahl of being a Nazi and "major perpetrator"? Or merely a "fellow traveler"? Or would you exonerate her as not guilty? What evidence would you give to support your judgment? What extenuating circumstances – if any – would you point to?

Week 14: Mon., Dec. 8: Conferences about Final Paper

No common class meeting this week. Students will sign up for individual conferences to discuss strategies for writing their final research paper.

Email by Monday, 9 am: Paper Outline, Final List of Primary Sources, and Thesis Paragraph. Drafts welcome, but must be emailed by the previous Sunday, 6 pm.

Final Paper Due: December 19