

The History of Germany II

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Conklin Hall 446

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This course explores German history from 1871 to 2000. It begins with the unification of Germany into a single nation-state, and the nature of the German Empire created by Otto von Bismarck. It follows the dramatic, political, social, and cultural developments at the beginning of the twentieth century, as a backdrop for the origins of World War I. It then turns to the Weimar Republic, its idealism and dislocations; the rise of the Nazi party and its allure; Hitler's seizure of power, domestic and foreign policies, descent into war and the Holocaust. The last third of the course examines how Germany—East and West—put itself back together again after the war, with topics including the creation of two separate states and the Cold War; East German Communism; the West German welfare state and consumerism; terrorism and the youth movements of the 1960s; and ending, finally, with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and its aftermath.

Against this political and social backdrop, we will also examine intellectual and cultural developments to understand what moved Germans to act with idealism and violence. We will read historians' different analyses of how German history led to the rise of Nazism, and how Germans lived and acted during and after the Hitler regime. To get a greater insight into the mentality of the times, we will analyze a wide variety of primary source documents: newspaper articles, speeches, novels, and films. We will discuss these views and sources extensively in class as students learn to read sources closely and critically, i.e. to read between the lines and analyze evidence in the historical context of its time. Students will regularly practice their writing and critical reading skills in short assignments, and two papers, and have many opportunities to express their ideas verbally in class.

Course Requirements:

1. Participation. Students are expected to read the assigned texts before class (by the date indicated on the syllabus), and to be prepared to discuss them in class. At times, students will be given 'discussion points' to prepare for class (as listed on the syllabus). Please note that participation is worth 20% of the final grade.
2. Assignments: There are 2 short assignments in this course, each 2-3 pages long, with the topics stated on the syllabus. Each assignment is worth 10% of the final grade.
3. Take Home Midterm Exam: 5-6 pages, due at the beginning of class on October 27th. The paper topics will be distributed on October 13th and you will be given the opportunity to submit a draft of your paper a week before the deadline to receive comments from me.
4. Final Paper: 5-6 pages, due at the beginning of the final exam. Topics will be distributed on December 1st. Students will have the opportunity to submit a draft of their paper no later than December 8th to receive comments from me.
5. Final Exam: The final exam is a cumulative, in-class exam, time TBD. Students will receive a study sheet to help them prepare for the exam.

Grading:

In-class participation:	20%
Assignments:	20%
Midterm Paper	20%
Final Paper	20%
Final Exam	20%

Required Books:

Mary Fulbrook: *A History of Germany 1918-2014: The Divided Nation*, 4th edition.

Detlev Peukert: *The Weimar Republic*.

Robert Gellately: *Backing Hitler*.

Marion Kaplan: *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany*.

Heinrich Böll: *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*.

The books are available at New Jersey Books, 167 University Avenue (corner of University and Bleeker) and at the University Book Store. Most will also be on two-hour reserve at Dana Library, as long as the Rutgers libraries own a copy of it. The rest of the required readings are either on Blackboard (Bb) under "Course Documents."

Attendance policy:

Attendance is required. If you miss more than four classes, your grade will be lowered by a third of a grade (from B+ to B, for example). If you miss more than six classes, your grade will be lowered by one full grade (B+ to C+, for example). Any student who misses eight or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw from the class.

Late papers and exams:

Papers and exams are due on the dates announced in class or indicated below. Unless discussed with me IN ADVANCE, late assignments will have their grades lowered.

Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism):

Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. 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 examination / assignment."

Schedule of Topics and Readings:**Week 1**

September 1st: Introduction

September 3rd: Which Germany? The Path to German Unification

Readings: BB: Blackbourn, pp. 171-203

Week 2

September 10th: The Second Empire. "Structural Continuities"?

Readings: BB: Blackbourn, pp. 265-303; Viersbeck

Week 3

September 15th: Class Society and Political Transformation

Readings: BB: Blackbourn, 304-334; Elias.

September 17th: Modernism and Anti-Modernism: Culture at the Fin-de-Siècle

Readings: BB: Heinrich Mann, *Man of Straw*, pp. 72-121

Week 4

September 22nd: The Paths to War

Readings: BB: Heinrich Mann, *Man of Straw*, pp. 121-173

Assignment: Write 2-3 pages, due at the beginning of class.

To what extent could Diederich Hessling, the main protagonist of the novel, be described as a faithful image of the German bourgeoisie in the late 19th century? Do you think that Heinrich Mann's critical description of German society is a fair assessment of how German society at that time worked?

September 24th: World War I

Readings: BB: Hull; Davis

Week 5

September 29th: Legacies of The Second Empire

Readings: M. Fulbrook: *Divided Nation*, pp. 1-37; BB: Weimar Republic Sourcebook (Meinecke, et al.)

October 1st: Continuities between the old Empire and the new Republic

Readings: D. Peukert: *The Weimar Republic*, pp. 1-51

Week 6

October 6th: The Post-War Crisis

Readings: *The Weimar Republic*, pp. 52-106

October 8th: Early Weimar: Political Experimentation, Civil War, Inflation

Readings: *The Weimar Republic*, 107-163.

Week 7

October 13th: “Years of Stability”: Weimar Culture, Social Experimentation

Readings: *The Weimar Republic*, pp. 164-246.

MIDTERM TOPICS DISTRIBUTED

October 15th: Why did Weimar Collapse? Depression, Political Polarization

Readings: *Divided Nation*, pp. 37-54; *The Weimar Republic*, pp. 247-286.

Week 8

October 20th: The Nazi's rise to power and the Hitler myth

Readings: BB: Kershaw: “Hitler and the Germans”; Fritsche: “January 1933”

Discussion points:

Based on the essays by Ian Kershaw and Peter Fritsche, what are some of the major reasons why Hitler personally, and the Nazis more generally, appealed to the German people.

October 22nd: The Nazi Seizure of Power

Readings: R. Gellately: *Backing Hitler*, pp. 1-8, 90-150.

Week 9

October 27th: Solidification of the Nazi State

Readings: *Backing Hitler*, pp. 224-264.

MIDTERM PAPER DUE

October 29th: From “Peace” to War and Occupation

Readings: *Divided Nation*, pp. 79-105; M. Kaplan: *Between Dignity and Despair*, pp. 5-49.

Week 10

November 3rd: The Holocaust: How Did it Happen? How Could it Happen?

Readings: *Between Dignity and Despair*, pp. 94-118; 145-172 (pp. 119-144 optional)

Discussion points:

According to Kaplan, what were the main methods used by the Nazi party to exclude Jews from German society? Were they mainly legal methods or should we focus on other aspects of exclusion in order to better understand the persecution of Jews in the period before the outbreak of the war?

November 5th: The Final Solution

Readings: BB: Christopher Browning: “One Day in Josefów”; Daniel Jonah Goldhagen: *Hitler’s Willing Executioners* (Excerpt)

Discussion points:

How can we explain the stark contrasts of interpretation between Browning’s and Goldhagen’s view of what drove ‘ordinary’ Germans to mass murder? Is it possible to reconcile these texts or is one version more convincing than the other?

Week 11

November 10th: The End of the War and Division of Germany: Denazification, Reconstruction

Film: Alain Resnais: *Night and Fog*.

Readings: *Between Dignity and Despair*, pp. 173-238; BB: Heineman

November 12th: Economic Miracles: “Consumer Democracy” vs “People’s Democracy”

Readings: *Divided Nation*, pp. 137-159; BB: Poiger

Week 12

November 17th: Alternative Politics and “Reform”: The Federal Republic of Germany as “Western”? German Democratic Republic as “German”?

Readings: *Divided Nation*, pp. 169-196.

November 19th: Cultural Transformations and Sexual Revolutions in the East and West

Readings: BB: Dagmar Herzog: *Sex After Fascism* (Excerpt); Josie McLellan: *Love in the Time of Communism* (Excerpt)

Discussion points:

Were there differences in the level of sexual liberation that each part of Germany enjoyed or experienced in the postwar period? Did they happen at the same time? What could explain some of those differences?

Week 13

November 24th: Prosperity and Discontent: The 1960s and 1970s

Readings: BB: Quinn Slobodian: *The Foreign Front* (Excerpts); Ulrike Meinhof (Excerpts)

November 26th: **THANKSGIVING**

Week 14

December 1st: The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum

Readings: Heinrich Böll: *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*

Assignment: Write 2-3 pages, due at the beginning of class.

What area of society does Heinrich Böll focus his criticism on in the novel? Do you think that Böll would have been sympathetic to some of the writings of Ulrike Meinhof that we read in last week's class? Do you think that his criticism would have some validity even today?

FINAL PAPER TOPICS DISTRIBUTED

December 3rd: The Fall of the Wall and German Reunification

Readings: *Divided Nation*, pp. 267-293.

Week 15

December 8th: Life after the Fall of the Wall

Readings: BB: Daphne Berdahl: *Where the World Ended* (Excerpts)

December 10th: Conceptualizing German History: Forever in the Shadow of Hitler

Readings: BB: *Forever in the Shadow of Hitler* (Excerpts)

Discussion points: Is it possible to discuss the history of modern Germany that would not center on the character and deeds of Adolf Hitler? Have historians focused too much on the history of the Nazis in the last few decades or does World War II and its effects define most of German, and perhaps even, European history?

FINAL EXAM: TBD