

Historical Background of Contemporary Issues: Germany 1933 (History: 4100)

Spring 2017

Prof. Elizabeth Heineman

Office Hours: Monday 1:30-3:00, Friday 12:30-2, and by appointment

Contact: Elizabeth-heineman@uiowa.edu, 335-2299, SH 276

Meetings: 0001: Monday 5:30-6:20, SH 140

0002: Monday 6:30-7:20, SH 31

Introduction

How did a vibrant democracy with one of the world's most diverse political, ethnic, religious, and sexual cultures turn into an authoritarian racial state? What is the relevance of this history today? We will explore these questions in HIST: 4100.

In section 0001 (Monday 5:30-6:20), we will closely examine the transition from democracy to authoritarian state in the German case. Our readings will consist of primary sources and works by historians. All students will complete the requirements for section 0001 for 1 sch.

In section 0002 (Monday 6:30-7:20), we will look at the ways thoughtful observers have tapped this history to try to make sense of present-day politics, mainly (but not exclusively) in the US. Our readings will consist of recent articles in news outlets. Section 0002 is optional, for 2 sch.

Readings

One book is required for this class: Peter Fritzsche's *Germans into Nazis*. Prairie Lights Bookstore (15 S. Dubuque Street) has a large stock of used copies of this book for a good price. Please buy the hard copy of this book, since research shows that students' comprehension and retention of long texts is much better when they read "on paper" than when they read e-books.

Additional readings will be posted on the class MyUI site. In order to respond to student interests and late-breaking developments, I may alter some of the readings after the semester begins, and I am leaving the readings for the last two weeks open (with the assumption that the load for those weeks will be no more than it is for earlier weeks). I will make all substitutions at least a week ahead of the due date, and any substitutions will alter the total reading load by no more than 10%.

Our readings do *not* include a basic survey of German history in the Weimar and Nazi period. If you feel you need a refresher (or a starter), take a look at these two brief narratives published by the German Historical Institute. You'll also find the links on MyUI.

Weimar Germany (1918-33): http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=4494

Nazi Germany (1933-45) (especially section 1: Building the Nazi Regime): http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2489

Class meetings

Since this is a reduced-credit class, our emphasis will be on thoughtful engagement of weekly readings rather than the completion of a major project or cumulative exams. Class meetings for 0001 will combine lecture, discussion, and in-class exercises. Section 0002 will be entirely discussion-based. In both sections, I ask for your attentive and active participation. Bring your insights, questions, and curiosity to class, and be prepared to discuss the readings.

And bring your sense of community! One crucial element of a democracy is citizens' ability to engage with people holding a range of views, even if they passionately oppose some of those views. Another crucial element of a democracy is the ability to engage evidence that challenges one's prior assumptions. In a historical sense, we'll see what happened when a large number of people lacked or devalued these abilities. In a "skills" sense, we'll practice the art of constructive engagement in our class discussions.

Finally, bring hard copies of your readings. Print out the texts that are on the MyUI site. Sometimes we'll want to take a close look at specific passages, and your memory won't be enough. You can team up with a friend to share print-outs if you'd like to save paper. If there's demand, I can have a coursepack made for the second half of the semester (when most of the MyUI readings for 0001 will occur).

Our lectures will cover material that isn't in the readings, so you should take notes on the lectures. Our discussions and class exercises, by contrast, require your full participation, unencumbered by the task of taking notes. Each week I will assign 2-3 scribes who will have the job of taking and posting notes on our discussions. The rest of you should put down your pens and focus on full and active participation. Don't be afraid to let your voice be heard, and engage your classmates as carefully as you engage me.

With only 14 class meetings and a focus on discussion, attendance is crucial. You may have one unexcused absence with no effect on your attendance grade, though I urge you to aim for perfect attendance. Appropriate reasons for additional absences include serious or contagious medical condition, family or personal emergency, or hazardous travel conditions. If you're aware that you will need to miss a class, please contact me in advance. If you aren't able to contact me in advance, please send an email as soon as you're able to fill me in. If you have work or family responsibilities that make frequent absences unavoidable, this class probably isn't a good fit for you.

Each evening after class, please take a photo of your class notes (for 0001) and submit it to the MyUI drop box. That will be my way of taking attendance – and it will also help me to see if there are areas of confusion. I will *not* grade or evaluate your notes – no worries! Please take notes in whatever way you find most helpful. Deposit them in the dropbox **by noon the day after class**. Again: *this will be my way of taking attendance*. If you forget to do this, I won't know to mark you "present."

Finally: Please store all electronic devices. We won't be using them in this class, and they provide a distraction. The exception is the class "scribes," who may take notes on their computers if they wish.

Assignments

0001: Each week, you will complete a brief written assignment (no more than 1 double-spaced page) based on the readings. In addition to helping you to focus on key issues as you do the readings, your responses will help me to plan for our class meetings. For this reason, **they are due at 9 am each Monday from January 30 – May 1.** Assignments arriving closer to class time will receive reduced credit, and the drop-box will close 1 hour before class time. However, if you have serious reasons requiring you to turn in an assignment late (similar to reasons for excused absences), please do consult with me. I will use the time stamp on ICON as my indicator of when an assignment was submitted.

Each class session, in turn, will help me to plan the next week's assignment. I will post each week's assignment by 5 pm on the Tuesday before it is due.

0002: Each week, you will complete a "check sheet" on each article to help to focus your reading on key questions and prepare you for discussion. You can complete the check sheets as you read the articles; they won't require dedicated writing time.

I will assign two scribes each week to take notes on our discussion. Please deposit the notes on MyUI by **Thursday 9 am** after the class. I will then post them for the class as a whole to consult.

In addition, you will select and analyze one article in which the author draws on the history of fascism or interwar European history to comment on developments between January and early April, 2017. After selecting your article (and clearing it with me), you will write an analysis of the author's use of history to discuss current events, linking it as appropriate to other class readings. We will then use the articles you discover as our readings for the last two weeks of class. Following the discussion of the readings, you will write a brief follow-up piece explaining any revisions to your thinking based on your classmates' comments. I will post detailed instructions (including tips on how to find a good article) on MyUI.

Grades 4100:0001

Attendance and participation:	50%	Photo of notes due 9 am Tuesday after class
Reading responses:	50%	Due 9 am the day of class

Grades 4100:0002

Your work for 4100:0001 will constitute 50% of your grade. The other 50% will be calculated as follows:

Attendance and participation:	40%	I'll take attendance in class
Weekly "check sheets":	15%	Due 9 am the day of class
Notes in role as scribe:	5%	Due 9 am Thursday after class
Article analysis:	40%	Due dates in "class schedule" below

Class Schedule 4100:0001

January 23	Introduction
January 30	The German Nation (<i>GiN</i> 1-36, 66-82; skim 37-65)
February 6	The Scar of Class Divisions (<i>GiN</i> 85-107)
February 13	Civil Society (<i>GiN</i> 107-36)
February 20	Mass Politics (<i>GiN</i> 139-83)
February 27	The Nazi Movement (<i>GiN</i> 183-214)
March 6	Hitler Comes to Power (Bendersky 57-83)
March 20	Coordination: an Overview (<i>GiN</i> 217-35)
March 27	Establishing Dictatorship (Bendersky 84-98)
April 3	Establishing Dictatorship (3R Sourcebook 45-55, 62-63)
April 10	Social Revolution (Bergen 69-90)
April 17	Social Revolution (3R Sourcebook selections TBD)
April 24	Self-Coordination (Reading TBD)
May 1	Consequences (Reading TBD)

Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis* (Cambridge MA, 1999)

Joseph W. Bendersky, *A Concise History of Nazi Germany* (Lanham MD, 2014)

Doris Bergen, *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*, 3rd ed. (Lanham MD, 2016)

Anson Rabinbach & Sander L. Gilman, eds., *The Third Reich Sourcebook* (Berkeley CA, 2013)

Overviews of Weimar and Nazi Germany:

http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=4494

http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2489

Class Schedule 4100:0002 (please read multiple selections in the order given)

January 23 ***History, contemporary politics, and rhetorical approaches***

[Thou shalt not commit logical fallacies](#)

[“Blue Feed, Red Feed,”](#) *Wall Street Journal*, 18 Jan 2016.

Gregor, Neil. [“‘To Think is to Compare’: Walther Rathenau, Trump, and Hitler.”](#) *History Today* 20 February 2017 [later addition]

Snyder, Timothy. [“Him.”](#) *Slate*, 18 November 2016.

January 30 ***Should we even go there?***

Best, Isabel. [“Should we even go there? Historians on comparing fascism to Trumpism.”](#) *The Guardian*, 1 December 2016.

Caplan, Jane. [“Trump and Fascism. A View from the Past.”](#) *History Workshop: Histories of the Present*. 17 November 2016.

Illing, Sean. [“Comparing the alt-right to Nazism may be hyperbolic — but it's not ridiculous.”](#) *Vox*, 6 December 2016.

February 6 ***Liberal Democracy at risk?***

Mazower, Mark. [“Ideas that fed the beast of fascism flourish today.”](#) *Financial Times*, 6 November, 2016.

Eley, Geoff, [“Is Trump a Fascist?”](#) *The History in Question* blog, 21 November 2016.

Levitsky, Steven and Daniel Ziblatt. [“Is Donald Trump a Threat to Democracy?”](#) *The New York Times*, 16 December 2016.

February 13 ***Nationalism: patriotism or exclusion?***

[“The New Nationalism.”](#) *The Economist*, 17 November 2016.

[“League of Nationalists,”](#) *The Economist*, 19 November 2016.

February 20 ***How important is the leader?***

Salmon, Christian. [“Trump, fascism, and the construction of ‘the people’: An Interview with Judith Butler.”](#) *Verso Books Blog*, 29 December 2016.

David A. Bell, [“Donald Trump is Making the Great Man Theory of History Great Again,”](#) *Foreign Policy* 12 January 2017.

February 27 ***Does psychology explain politics?***

Ross, Alex. [“The Frankfurt School knew Trump was coming.”](#) *The New Yorker*, 5 December 2016.

MacWilliams, Matthew. "[The one weird trait that predicts whether you're a Trump supporter.](#)" *Politico Magazine*, 17 January 2016.

March 6

A battle for the soul of the Right? The Left?

Meyerson, Harold, "[Bernie, Hillary, and the Ghost of Ernst Thälmann](#)," *The American Prospect* 13 July 2016.

Weitz, Eric D. "[Weimar Germany and Donald Trump.](#)" *Tablet*, 18 July 2016.

Kagan, Robert, "[This is how Fascism comes to America](#)," *Washington Post* 18 May, 2016.

[optional, for those interested in a libertarian perspective] Tucker, Jeffrey, "[Waking Up to the Reality of Fascism](#)," *Foundation for Economic Education* 9 December 2015.

March 20

Fascism in America?

Gopnik, Adam, "[Going there with Donald Trump](#)," *The New Yorker*, 11 May 2016.

Gopnik, Adam. "[Being Honest about Trump.](#)" *The New Yorker*, 14 July 2016.

Steigmann-Gall, Richard. "[One expert says yes, Donald Trump is a fascist. And it's not just Trump.](#)" *The Huffington Post*, 18 July 2016.

Steigmann-Gall, Richard. "[What the American Left doesn't understand about fascism.](#)" *The Huffington Post*, 7 October 2016.

March 27

Or is "populism" the better term?

Berman, Sheri. "[Donald Trump isn't a fascist.](#)" *Vox*, 3 January 2017.

Ash, Timothy Garton. "[Populists are out to divide us. They must be stopped.](#)" *The Guardian*, 11 November 2016.

Müller, Jan-Werner. "[Trump, Erdoğan, Farage: The attractions of populism for politicians, the dangers for democracy.](#)" *The Guardian*, 2 September 2016.

Moses, A. Dirk; Federico Finchelstein, and Pablo Piccato, "[Juan Peron shows how Trump could destroy our democracy without tearing it down](#)," *The Washington Post* 22 March, 2017.

April 3

What about state and civil society?

Luban, David, "[The Case Against Serving in the Trump Administration](#)," *Slate* 15 November, 2016.

Douthat, Ross. "[You Must Serve Trump.](#)" *The New York Times* 11 November 2016.

Broich, John, "[Normalizing Fascists](#)," *The Conversation*, 11 December 2016.

Gessen, Masha, "[Trump: The Choice we Face](#)," *The New York Review*, 27 November 2016.

April 10 ***What is the role of the citizen?***

Hamilton, Shawn. "[What those who studied Nazis can teach us about the strange reaction to Donald Trump](#)." The Huffington Post, 19 December 2016.

Haynes, Stephen R. "[Has the Bonhoeffer Moment Finally Arrived?](#)" *The Huffington Post*, 30 November 2016.

Gessen, Masha. "[Autocracy: Rules for Survival](#)." *The New York Review*, 10 November 2016.

April 17 ***How about Americans who really do take Nazism as a model?***

Kovaleski, Serge F., Julie Turkewitz, Joseph Goldstein, and Dan Barry. "[An Alt-Right Makeover Shrouds the Swastikas](#)." The New York Times, 10 December 2016.

Saslow, Eli. "[The White Flight of Derek Black](#)," *The Washington Post* 15 October 2016.

4 pm: Deadline for preliminary analysis of your news article/essay

April 24 ***Workshopping draft essays***

May 1 ***The First 100 Days***

"[Emory College project examines first 100 Days of Hitler's Rule](#)," *Emory News Center* 25 April 2017.

"[The First 100 Days](#)," Emory University German Department.

De Grazia, Victoria. "[Many call Trump a fascist. 100 days in, is he just a reactionary Republican?](#)" *The Guardian* 30 April 2017.

May 5 (Fri) ***12 pm: Deadline for revised essay***

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has provided this syllabus supplement with required information. The links can be found on the electronic version of this document (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-syllabus-insert>)

Administrative Home

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Academic Policies Handbook at <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook>.

Electronic Communication

University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences ([Operations Manual, III.15.2](#), k.11).

Accommodations for Disabilities

The University of Iowa is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (which includes but is not limited to mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related conditions). A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor's office to make particular arrangements. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student, instructor, and SDS. See <https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/> for information.

Academic Honesty

All CLAS students or students taking classes offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's [Code of Academic Honesty](#): "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the [IOWA Challenge](#). I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled ([CLAS Academic Policies Handbook](#)).

CLAS Final Examination Policies

The final examination schedule for each class is announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. **No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes.** All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the date, time, and location of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar's web site and will be shared with instructors and students. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of a final exam.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Since the instructor of this course is also the DEO, students should see the Dean of Undergraduate Education if they wish for further follow-up (SH 120). Complaints must be made within six months of the incident (CLAS [Academic Policies Handbook](#)).

Understanding Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI [Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator](#) for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather

In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the [Department of Public Safety website](#).