

Spring 2008 HONR 102 B
After Catastrophe:
Germany and the Legacy of World War II

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Office Hours:
Mondays and Wednesdays 11am - noon
and by appointment

This course will explore the complex historical, moral, and political legacies of war, dictatorship, and Holocaust for Germany after 1945. We will address questions of guilt and responsibility, victimhood and agency and the ways these terms have been understood over time. Some important questions we will explore are: How did the physical, moral, political, and ethical destruction of the war and Holocaust influence Germany's reconstruction in the postwar context? How did contemporaries, historians, politicians, artists etc. participate in these processes? How have these discussions changed in recent years as most are eyewitnesses are dying and new generations develop their own interpretations? Some of the debates that surround these questions are: Who has the right to remember and be remembered? Who can claim to be a victim, in other words: were Germans victims - or perpetrators – or both? Can a new German state be "normal" and overcome its historical baggage? What's the difference between guilt and responsibility and how does it affect future generations? How have discussions changed over the past decades?

Course Format:

This course will be taught in a seminar format. Group learning and intellectual collaboration and cooperation characterize a seminar. That means that the success of the course will rely on the participation of all of us. I will lecture rarely and instead the class will be based on the premise that we are all active participants and not just observers in teaching, which requires a serious commitment from all. I will expect your regular attendance, conscientious reading and viewing of the course material before seminar meetings, completion of your assignments before the due dates, as well as your eagerness and willingness to initiate and engage in our exploration of difficult issues.

Assignments and Requirements:

Attendance:

In keeping with DePauw's official policy, attendance at all classes is mandatory. Missing more than 2 classes will lower a student's grade.

Participation:

All students should come to every class prepared to actively participate in class discussions. Readings must be completed for the assigned day and you should have spent some time thinking about the readings.

Leading Discussion:

Starting on Feb 5, during every class period, a team of two (or three) students (depending on class size) will lead our discussions. You will not have to do any additional reading, but should meet with your partner ahead of time to decide how best to get the conversation started and what main issues to address that day. Each of you will lead discussion (with a partner) several times over the course of the semester.

Writing:

Intellectual Journal:

You will be required to keep an intellectual journal with entries at least twice a week (one entry for every class meeting). I will collect this journal occasionally during the semester, so you should always keep it current. The entries will either focus on your reaction to the readings and our discussions, or grapple with a question raised in class, develop new ideas etc. The entries are designed to facilitate our discussions and help you to work through difficult material, sort out your thoughts and responses and keep an intellectual diary of your thought processes over the course of the semester.

These should be typed and a minimum of 400 words each. I will collect these journals occasionally, and at the end of the semester, the whole notebook (with my comments) and all other written work will be submitted as a portfolio of written work.

Research paper:

Over the course of the semester students will write a 12-15 page research paper on a topic of their choice, which will be determined in consultation with the instructor. Paper topics and a bibliography will be due during the semester and the final paper is due at the end of the term. During the last two class meetings, students will present their research to the class in a formal 10-minute presentation.

Exams:

There will be a take-home midterm and an in-class final exam. Both will consist of several essays reflecting the major themes and discussions covering in the class. More information will be distributed later in the term.

Grade Distribution:

Participation: 35%
General part. 25%
Leading Disc. 10%

Writing: 35%
Daily Journal 15%
Research pap. 20%

Exams: 30%
Midterm Exam 15%
Final Exam 15%

FAILING TO COMPLETE ANY ONE OF THESE REQUIREMENTS WILL RESULT IN
AUTOMATIC FAILURE IN THE COURSE.

Policy on Academic Integrity:

All students will be held to the DePauw policy on academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, submission of the work of others, etc. violates DePauw policy on academic integrity and may result in penalties ranging from a lowered grade to course failure or expulsion. The policy and discussion of students' obligations and rights are in the Student Handbook and all students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the policy. Feel free to ask me at any time if you have any questions concerning issues of academic integrity.

Laptop policy:

You are not allowed to use your laptops in class unless you have a documented disability that requires you to use your laptop.

Late Paper Policy:

I expect that you do all your work on time and hand in assignments by the due date. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional cases before the due date has passed. The instructor determines what constitutes a valid excuse. Should you anticipate any problems in completing

your work on time you should come and talk to me before it is too late. Late work without an extension will be downgraded one half letter grade for each day it is late.

Readings:

The following books will be provided by the Honor Scholar Office:

Bill Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*

Robert Moeller, *War Stories*

Hans Erich Nossack, *The End: Hamburg 1943*

W.G. Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction*

Günther Grass, *Crabwalk*

Anonyma, *A Woman in Berlin*

Atina Grossmann, *Jews, Germans and Allies*

Konrad Jarausch, *After Hitler*

All additional readings will be available via the Moodle site for the course or on reserve at Roy O. West library.

Introduction to German History

Week 1

Jan 29 Tuesday

Introduction

Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 155-204

Jan 31 Thursday

Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 204-258

Nazi Germany and some Legacies

Week 2

Feb 5 Tuesday

Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*, 1-119

Feb 7 Thursday

Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past* 119-174

Mary Nolan, "The Politics of Memory in the Berlin Republic" *Radical History Review* 81 (Fall 2001): 113-32

Week 3

Feb 12 Tuesday

Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*, 175-244

Alexander Mathäs, "The Presence of the past: Martin Walser on Memoirs and Memorials" *German Studies Review*, Vol. 25, No. 1. (Feb., 2002), pp. 1-22.

Integrating Expellees and POWs into History

Feb 14 Thursday

Moeller, *War Stories*, 1-88

Rainer Schulze, "The Politics of Memory: Flight and Expulsion of German Populations after the Second World War and German Collective Memory" *National Identities* Vol 8, No 4 Dec 2006, 367-382

Week 4

Feb 19 Tuesday
Moeller, *War Stories*, 88-198

Feb 21 Thursday
Frank Biess, "Pioneers of a New Germany': Returning POWs from the Soviet Union and the making of East German citizens, 1945-1950" *Central European History* 1999 32 (2): 143-180

Christina Morina, "Instructed Silence, Constructed Memory: The SED and the return of German prisoners of war as "war criminals" from the Soviet Union to East Germany, 1950-1956" *Contemporary European History* 2004, 13 (3): 323-342.

A New Debate? The Air War and German Suffering

Week 5

Feb 26 Tuesday
"United States Strategic Bombing Survey"
<http://www.anesi.com/ussbs02.htm>

Tami Biddle, "Sifting Dresden's Ashes" *Wilson Quarterly* 29 no 2 (Spring 2005): 60-80

James Barker, "Sowing the Wind" *History Today* Vol. 55 iss. 3 (2005): 50-57

Feb 28 Thursday
Nossack, *The End: Hamburg 1943*
Discussion surrounding Jörg Friedrich, *The Fire* (more details distributed later)

Week 6

March 4 Tuesday
Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction*

March 6 Thursday
Neil Gregor, "A *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*? Allied Bombing, Civilian Morale, and Social Dissolution in Nuremberg, 1942-45" *The Historical Journal* 42, 4 (2000): 1051-1070

Michael Hughes, "'Through No Fault of Our Own': West Germans Remember their War Losses" *German History* Vol. 18 No 2 (2000): 193-213

Week 7

March 11 Tuesday
Thomas Childers, "'*Fascilis descensus averni est*': The Allied Bombing of Germany and the Issue of German Suffering" *Central European History* vol 38, no 1 (2005): 75-105.

March 13 Thursday
Aleida Assmann, "On the (In)compatibility of Guilt and Suffering in German Memory" *German Life and Letters* 59:2 (April 2006): 187-200.

Robert Moeller, "On the History of Man-made Destruction: Loss, Death, Memory, and Germany in the Bombing War" *History Workshop Journal* 61 (2006) 103-134.

Week 8

March 18 Tuesday
Grass, *Crabwalk*, begin

March 20 Thursday
Grass, *Crabwalk*, finish

Mary Nolan, "Germans and Victims during the Second World War: Air Wars, Memory Wars" *Central European History* vol 38, no 1 (2005): 7-40.

Robert Moeller, "Sinking Ships, the lost Heimat and Broken Taboos: Günter Grass and the Politics of Memory in Contemporary Germany" *Contemporary European History* vol 12 Iss. 2 (2003): 147-181

(Take Home Midterm due March 21 5pm)

Week 9

SPRING BREAK

The End of the War, Gender, and Occupation

Week 10

April 1 Tuesday

Anonyma, *A Woman in Berlin*, begin

April 3 Thursday

Anonyma, *A Woman in Berlin*, finish

Elizabeth Heinemann, "Gender, Sexuality, and Coming to Terms with the Nazi Past" *Central European History* vol 28 no 1 (2005): 41-74.

Week 11

April 8 Tuesday

Grossmann, *Jews, Germans and Allies*, 1-88

April 10 Thursday

Grossmann, *Jews, Germans and Allies*, 88-184

Week 12

April 15 Tuesday

Grossmann, *Jews, Germans and Allies*, 184-169

Margarete Myers Feinstein, "Jewish Women Survivors in the Displaced Persons Camps of Occupied Germany: Transmitters of the Past, Caretakers of the Present, and Builders of the Future," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* Vol 24 No 4 (2006): 67-89.

A New German Society?

April 17 Thursday

Jarausch, *After Hitler*, 1-99

Week 13

April 22 Tuesday

Jarausch, *After Hitler*, 99-185

April 24 Thursday

Jarausch, *After Hitler*, 185-283

Conclusions and Presentations

Week 14

April 29 Tuesday

Student Paper Presentations

May 1 Thursday

Student Paper Presentations

Week 15

May 6 Tuesday

Conclusions and Summary

Final Exam, Thursday, May 15 8:30-11:30