

Dr. Agnes C. Mueller

Syllabus for Spring 2009:

GERM 780 / CPLT 750N:

Anti-Semitism in Contemporary German Literature and Film

This course investigates representations of anti-Semitism in contemporary German literature and film. WWII and the Holocaust essentially rendered any post-1945 anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria taboo. However, sociological studies show that anti-Semitism in Germany has, especially since unification, been on the rise again. If we read film and literature as cultural artifacts that indicate trends and currents in societies, we must carefully investigate why and how such anti-Semitic utterances and trajectories are produced, transmitted, and received. We also need to think about how we might respond, and what kinds of traditions of anti-Semitism (anti-Zionism, Islamic prejudices, German right-wing, or German guilt rejection) are represented. Students will analyze works by German non-Jewish and German Jewish writers and filmmakers, asking whether and how their works might display (involuntary) contemporary German anti-Semitism, and examine how German and German Jewish works address anti-Semitism of the past and present.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- demonstrate critical thinking about current issues in contemporary Germany (as represented in culture, history, literature)
- synthesize content from recent, cutting edge secondary sources dealing with anti-Semitism
- present materials orally and in writing concerning the themes they chose
- closely analyze contemporary texts in a foreign language, as well as current responses to those texts by renowned critics
- demonstrate their oral and writing skills in both German and English languages (depending on which their non-native language is)
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Please note: While knowledge of German is not required for the course, some of the secondary materials are only available in German. Students with no reading knowledge in German must contact the professor well in advance to receive information on possible substitutes.

Primary Texts:

Bernhard Schlink: *Homecoming: A Novel* (2006)

Peter Schneider: *Eduards Homecoming* (1999)

Günter Grass: *The Tin Drum*. (1959)

Katharina Hacker: *The Have-Nots* (2006)

Maxim Biller: *Love Today. Stories* (2008)

Barbara Honigmann: *A Love Made of Nothing and Zohara's Journey*

Robert Schindel: *Born-Where* (1992)
Viola Roggenkamp: *The Spectacle Salesman's Family*.
Henryk Broder: *A Jew in the New Germany* (2003)

Films:

Jakob the Liar (1975 and 1999)
The Nasty Girl (1988)
Der Untergang (Downfall), 2004
Die Fälscher (The Counterfitters), 2007
Mein Führer (2007)

Secondary Texts (MANDATORY):

Gilman, Sander. *Jewish self-Hatred : Anti-Semitism and the Hidden Language of the Jews*.
Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1986.
LaCapra, Dominick. *Writing History, Writing Trauma*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins
University Press, 2001.
Peck, Jeffrey M. *Being Jewish in the New Germany*. New Brunswick and London: Rutgers
University Press, 2006.
Schlant, Ernestine. *The Language of Silence. West German Literature and the Holocaust*. New
York/ London: Routledge 1999.

Requirements:

Attendance & active participation	30 %
Oral Presentation	20 %
Response Paper	15 %
Research Paper	30 %
Course Record	5 %

Oral Presentation:

You will be asked to give an oral presentation on one of the topics listed below, or on a topic of your choice that you have discussed with me. In any case, please discuss your presentation with me in my office hours. They should be at least 40 minutes, and incorporate current scholarship. Also, you should be prepared to respond to questions for about 15 minutes after your presentation, so please also think of a way to stimulate a discussion after your talk.

Response Paper:

You should write a personalized response to one of the mandatory texts. I would like your response paper to be on a different text/theme from your Oral Report or Research Paper, and it should be about 5-8 pages long. You may incorporate current scholarship if you wish, but this is not a requirement here. It is due as soon as you have read the work it concerns, but at the latest on the day we discuss the work in class, i.e. you may not turn in a personal response paper after we already discussed the work in class. **I do not want any plot summaries in response papers, rather you should choose a theme or subject matter pertaining to the work of your choice.**

Research Paper:

I would like for you to turn in a fully-fledged research paper, which can be based on your presentation, but may also be on another reading/topic of the course (if you do not find your presentation yielding enough material to write on). Obviously, your research paper should go well beyond your findings in the presentation, and I expect you to use your classmates' ideas in the Q&A to develop your thesis (this of course also means that everyone has a responsibility to come up with helpful remarks/questions after the presentations!). If you are unsure about research methods in general, please ask about them in class, and if you have more specific questions concerning your paper, please talk to me. **Your research paper is due on the last day of classes, and I do not accept late papers**, so please get started early on. Your paper should be around 15-20 pages, double-spaced, with bibliography.

Course Record:

Everyone should write a fairly detailed report/overview of one class period. Obviously, this should not be the class period where you are also giving the presentation. The CR is due on the Monday before the next class meeting, and will be photocopied by me for everyone. Please sign up early on for your CR.

Bibliography:

Arnds, Peter, "On the Awful German Fairy Tale: Breaking Taboos in Representations of Nazi Euthanasia and the Holocaust in Günter Grass's *Die Blechtrommel*, Edgar Hilsenrath's *Der Nazi & der Friseur*, and Anselm Kiefer's Visual Art," *German Quarterly* 75.4 (Fall 2002): 422-39.

Assmann, Aleida, "Two Forms of Resentment: Jean Améry, Martin Walser and German Memorial Culture." *New German Critique: An Interdisciplinary Journal of German Studies* 90 (2003): 123-33.

Baer, Ulrich, "The Hubris of Humility: Günter Grass, Peter Schneider, and German Guilt after 1989." *The Germanic Review* 80 (Winter 2005): 50-73.

Bartov, Omer, "Germany as Victim," *New German Critique: An Interdisciplinary Journal of German Studies* 80 (2000): 29-40.

Benz, Wolfgang, *Was ist Antisemitismus?* Munich: Beck, 2004.

Bogdal, Klaus-Michael. "Literarischer Antisemitismus nach Auschwitz. Perspektiven der Forschung." In: *Literarischer Antisemitismus nach Auschwitz*, hg. V. K.-M. Bogdal, Klaus Holz, und Matthias N. Lorenz. Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler, 2007. 1-12.

Costabile-Heming, Carol Anne, "Berlin's Topography in Three Post-1989 Narratives," in *German Life and Letters* 58.3 (July 2005): 344-56.

Costabile-Heming, Carol Anne. "Peter Schneider's *Eduards Heimkehr* and the Image of the 'New Berlin'," in *German Studies Review* 25.3 (2002): 497-510.

- Diner, Dan. *Feindbild Amerika – Über die Bestätigung eines Resentiments*. Munich: Propyläen, 2002.
- Donahue, William Collins, “Revising ’68: Bernhard Schlink’s *Der Vorleser*, Peter Schneider’s *Vati*, and the Question of History,” *Seminar* 40.3 (September 2004): 293-311.
- Eagleton, Terry. *After Theory*. New York: Basic, 2003.
- Fuchs, Anke, “Towards an Ethics of Remembering: The Walser-Bubis Debate and the Other of Discourse”, *German Quarterly* 75.3 (Summer 2002): 235-46.
- Gessler, Philipp. *Der neue Antisemitismus. Hinter den Kulissen der Normalität*. Freiburg: Herder, 2004.
- Gilman, Sander, “Male Sexuality and Contemporary Jewish Literature in German: The Damaged Body as the Image of the Damaged Soul,” *Genders* 16 (Spring 1993): 113-140.
- , “Salome, Syphilis, Sarah Bernhardt, and the ‘Modern Jewess’,” *German Quarterly* 66 (Spring 1993): 195-211.
- Heine, Heinrich. “Ludwig Börne. Eine Denkschrift. Viertes Buch.” *Heines Werke in fünf Bänden*. vol. 5. Berlin/ Weimar: Aufbau, 1974.
- Hell, Julia, “Eyes Wide Shut: German Post-Holocaust Authorship.” *New German Critique: An Interdisciplinary Journal of German Studies* 88 (2003): 9-36.
- Jerome, Roy, “Introduction,” *Conceptions of Postwar German Masculinity*. Ed. Roy Jerome. Albany: SUNY Press, 2001, 3-12.
- Körte, Mona. “*Judaeus ex machina* und ‘jüdisches *perpetuum mobile*’. Technik oder Demontage eines Literarischen Antisemitismus?” In: *Literarischer Antisemitismus nach Auschwitz*, hg. V. K.-M. Bogdal, Klaus Holz, und Matthias N. Lorenz. Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler, 2007. 59-74.
- Levi, Primo. “The Memory of the Offense,” in: P. L., *The Drowned and the Saved*. Translated by Raymond Rosenthal. New York: Summit Books, 1988. 23-35.
- Levy, Richard S. “Forget Webster,” in *German Studies Review* 24 (2006): 145-6.
- Lorenz, Matthias N. “*Auschwitz drängt uns auf einen Fleck*.” *Judendarstellung und Auschwitzdiskurs bei Martin Walser*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 2005.
- Lustiger, Gila. *So sind wir. Ein Familienroman*. Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 2005.

- McGlothlin, Erin. *Second-Generation Holocaust Literature. Legacies of Survival and Perpetration*. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2006.
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- Niven, Bill, "Bernhard Schlink's *Der Vorleser* and the Problem of Shame," *Modern Language Review* 28.2 (2003): 381-96.
- Pellegrini, Ann, "Interarticulations: Gender, Race, and the Jewish Women Question." *Judaism Since Gender*. Ed. Miriam Peskowitz and Laura Levitt. New York/ London: Routledge, 1997, 49-55.
- Riordan, Colin. "German-Jewish Relations in the Works of Peter Schneider." *Jews in German Literature Since 1945: German-Jewish Literature*, hg. Pól O'Dochartaigh. Amsterdam, Atlanta: Rodopi, 2000. 625-36.
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- Steinecke, Hartmut, "Die Shoah in der Literatur der 'zweiten Generation'," *Shoah in der deutschsprachigen Literatur*. Ed. Norbert Otto Eke and Hartmut Steinecke. Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 2006. 135-53.
- Swales, Martin, "Sex, Shame and Guilt: Reflections on Bernhard Schlink's *Der Vorleser* (The Reader) and J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*," *Journal of European Studies* 33.1 (2003): 7-22.
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- Theweleit, Klaus. *Männerphantasien I und 2*. Frankfurt a. M.: Stroemfeld, 1977/78.