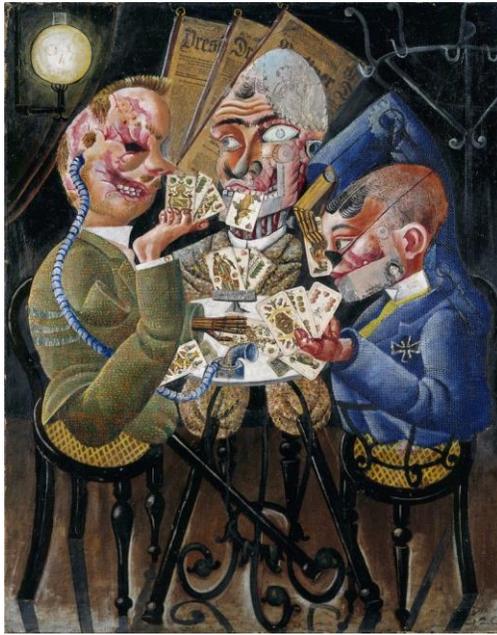


HISTORY 201 (001): THE HISTORIAN'S CRAFT: THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC AND THE RISE OF NAZISM



Otto Dix, "The Scat Players – Card Playing War Invalids" (1920)

Course Information

Instructor:	Prof. Brandon Bloch (bjbloch@wisc.edu)
Office Hours:	Tues. 1-3 p.m. or by appointment (5118 Humanities or online)
TA:	TBD
TA Office Hours:	TBD
Semester:	Fall 2022
Lecture:	Tues./Thurs. 9:55-10:45 a.m. (Mechanical Engineering 1153)
Sections:	Thurs. 2:25-3:15 p.m. (Humanities 2131) *Honors section taught by Prof. Bloch Thurs. 3:30-4:20 p.m. (Humanities 2121) Thurs. 4:35-5:25 p.m. (Humanities 2125)

Fri. 9:55-10:45 a.m. (Humanities 2631)

Modality: In-person

Credits: 3 (section registration is required)

Prerequisites: none

Course Designations: COMM-B

Course Description

Germany's Weimar Republic (1918-1933) is perhaps the most notorious case of democratic failure in modern history, and its collapse remains a reference point in discussions about challenges to democracy today. But is it fair to evaluate the Weimar Republic only in light of its disastrous end? Why did the Nazis come to power in 1933, and could the Nazi rise have been prevented? This seminar dives deep into the culture, society, and politics of this short-lived but momentous period in modern European history. We will explore not only the seedbeds of fascism and authoritarianism in 1920s Germany, but also reform movements that sought democratic transformations in the arts, gender, sexuality, and the built environment. Our sources will range widely across the Republic's vibrant cultural landscape, including literature, film, journalism, music, fashion, painting, architecture, and propaganda. One key theme will be the *contingency* of the Weimar Republic's rise and fall—understanding how the Republic's history was shaped by individuals and groups who could not anticipate consequences that appear evident to us in hindsight. By explore a wide range of perspectives on this complex period, we will sharpen our skills in historical thinking and writing.

Learning Outcomes

As a “Historian’s Craft” seminar, this course focuses as much on historical content as on skills of research, analysis, writing, and speaking. These skills are foundational to the history major, but also applicable to your other college courses and the world beyond the university. Writing assignments will build in complexity over the semester, beginning with short analyses of assigned readings and culminating in a research paper. You will also give a presentation on your original research. A significant portion of our class time will be devoted to practicing the skills critical to success in the writing and speaking assignments.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Articulate your own definition of historical thinking that accounts for the importance of research, analysis, and interpretation

- Craft analytical papers that assess the authorship, perspective, audience, context, and credibility of primary sources
- Apply the tools of primary source analysis to a range of media, including propaganda, journalism, fiction, and memoir
- Analyze works of historical scholarship to explain how historians reach their interpretations through evidence and argument
- Identify the attributes of an effective historical research question, and develop a research question related to the course themes
- Apply skills of historical research, including navigating online databases; assessing the reliability and relevance of sources; and properly using citations
- Present, both in writing and orally, an original, persuasive, and evidence-based historical argument

For a complete description of learning goals in the “Historian’s Craft” seminars, see the “Goals for HIST 201” appended at the end of the syllabus.

Course Book

Irmgard Keun, *The Artificial Silk Girl*, trans. Kathie von Ankum (New York: Penguin, 2011) [1932]. ISBN: 9781590514542.

This book is available for purchase at the University Book Store or online. It is also available as an e-book through the library catalog, but can only be downloaded by three users at once.

Course Requirements

*Further details on the assignments, including expectations, guidelines, and rubrics, will be available on Canvas.

1. Top Hat (10%)

We will use the online platform Top Hat to facilitate a more interactive classroom during the lectures. Students will receive an invitation to join Top Hat before the first class. (There is a cost of \$16/semester, but there is no additional cost if you are taking multiple courses that use Top Hat).

Your Top Hat grade will be based largely on in-class polling and discussion questions during lectures. In addition, you will be asked to contribute a one-paragraph discussion

post on the reading for week 5. Top Hat questions and discussion posts will be graded complete/incomplete, and will serve as a record of your attendance at lecture. You will be permitted three excused absences from lecture (no need to provide a reason). If you need to miss lecture more than three times due to religious observance, illness, or family emergency, please let Prof. Bloch or your TA know.

2. Section Participation (20%)

Your attendance and active participation are expected at weekly section meetings. You will have a free pass to miss one section meeting, for any reason. Beyond that, please inform your section instructor in advance if you need to miss section. Make-up assignments will be provided for additional excused absences. Unexcused absences will lower your section participation grade. Participation during in-class debates and peer reviews will also count toward your section participation grade.

Please keep in mind that the quality of your contributions to section discussions is more important than the quantity, and that asking a well-informed question also counts as participation. We are happy to meet during office hours if you would like to discuss strategies for speaking in class.

3. Three Short Essays (30%)

During the first part of the course, you will be complete three essays of approximately 3 double-spaced pages each. The first is a creative writing assignment that will ask you to compose a *feuilleton* (literary editorial), in the style of a Weimar-era newspaper columnist, about life at UW-Madison. The second and third essays are analytical papers that will ask you to make an argument about a primary source: an artwork from the Weimar era housed at the Chazen Museum of Art, and Irmgard Keun's 1932 novel *The Artificial Silk Girl*. The essays are due on Mondays Sept. 26, Oct. 17, and Oct. 31 at 5 p.m. These assignments are designed to equip you with skills of historical thinking and primary source analysis that you will apply in the final research paper.

4. Research Paper (40%)

During the final part of the course, we will shift from shared readings and discussions to individual work on a capstone assignment: a research paper of 7-8 double-spaced pages that draws on at least three primary and two secondary sources. We will spend significant time in class discussing how to define a research question and locate sources,

and I will provide a bibliography of English-language primary and secondary sources available online to get you started. The final paper will be due TBD during finals week. We will discuss expectations for this assignment at length in class. There are also multiple intermediate assignments, which are designed to keep you on track and provide you with ongoing feedback. These include:

- One-page research proposal and annotated bibliography (due Nov. 7 at 5 p.m.)
- Revised research proposal and outline (due Nov. 14 at 5 p.m.)
- Draft of introductory paragraph (due in section on Nov. 17-18)
- First draft (due Dec. 5 at 5 p.m.)
- In-class presentation, 5 mins. (in section on Dec. 1-2 or Dec. 8-9)

Completion of the intermediate assignments will count for 5% of your course grade; the in-class presentation will count for 5%; and the final paper will count for 30%.

Grading Scale

A: 93-100	AB: 88-92	B: 83-87	BC: 78-82
C: 70-77	D: 60-69	F: Below 60	

Credit Hours

The credit standard for this 3-credit course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit, or 9 hours per week). This includes regularly scheduled meeting times, reading, writing, group work, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus. Since each 50-minute meeting counts for 1 class hour (for a total of **3 hours of direct instruction per week**), you should plan to allot an average of 6 hours per week outside of class for course-related activities.

Honors Credit

Students taking this course for honors credit (enrolled in the section on Thursdays at 2:25 p.m.) will be asked to complete two enrichment activities related to the course themes, to be chosen in consultation with Prof. Bloch. Enrichment activities could include attending a lecture, exhibit, or performance on campus; visiting the Library Special Collections or Wisconsin Historical Society; or completing additional readings on relevant current events in Germany and Europe. After completing each activity, you will be asked to contribute a one-paragraph reflection to the

Canvas discussion board. The discussion posts will be marked Complete/Incomplete but not graded. All students taking the course, whether or not for honors credit, will be graded according to the same scale and requirements. Please note, any student is welcome to sign up for the honors section; you do not need to be enrolled in the L&S Honors Program.

Late Work

If you are unable to meet an assignment deadline, please let Prof. Bloch or your TA know as soon as possible and we can work out a plan for you to get caught up. We understand that life is unpredictable, and that you may require an extension due to illness, religious observance, or personal or family emergency. In cases of unexcused late work, we reserve the right to apply a deduction to late assignments out of fairness to other members of the class. Typically this deduction will be 3 points (out of 100) per day late.

Please note that we are not able to accept any written work for this course after Thursday, Dec. 22, the last day of the exam period. Incomplete grades can only be granted to students who are unable to complete the final exam due to “illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond their control.” For the university policy, see: <https://registrar.wisc.edu/incompletes/>.

Academic Integrity

The exchange of ideas is at the core of academic inquiry, and you are encouraged to discuss the course material with your classmates. However, all work that you submit for a grade should reflect your own thinking and writing, and should adhere to proper citation practices in the discipline of history. Passing off another person’s words or ideas as your own is not only unfair to your peers; it is also theft of the original author’s work, shutting out their voice from the academic conversation.

In my experience, violations of academic integrity tend to have two causes: either a) lack of awareness about citation standards, or b) procrastination, followed by panic. The course is designed to mitigate against both of these factors. We will discuss how to cite your sources for each assignment; if you’re unsure about a particular case, don’t hesitate to ask Prof. Bloch or your TA. I have also implemented scaffolding in the final paper, with preliminary assignments guiding you through the steps of writing a research paper. If you are worried about not finishing an assignment as a deadline approaches, please email Prof. Bloch your TA! We can always work out solutions to help you improve your organization, and it’s much better to accept a late penalty (or turn in less than perfect work) than to cheat. If you plagiarize (and be assured that we will catch it—it’s really not difficult), then we have to deal with the case as a disciplinary

infraction rather than a learning opportunity. Serious academic misconduct must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.¹

Technology

Please come prepared to lecture with a laptop or other device in order to participate in the Top Hat exercises. Laptops are permitted (but not required) in section for taking notes and referencing readings. Of course, we ask that you refrain from checking email or social media during class. If you face challenges accessing the technology necessary to succeed in this course, please reach out to Prof. Bloch or your TA as soon as possible.

Accessibility

We are committed to ensuring that all students receive equal access to the course materials and equitable opportunities to achieve the course learning goals. If you experience or anticipate any challenges related to the format, materials, or requirements of this course, please let Prof. Bloch or your TA know as soon as possible. We are happy to explore a range of options for removing barriers to your learning. If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, you may also wish to work with the McBurney Disability Resource Center (<https://mcburney.wisc.edu/>) to discuss accessibility in this and other courses, including possibilities for official accommodations. All communications regarding accessibility will remain confidential.

A Note on Classroom Environment

Studying history involves discussion of complex themes including race, gender, sexuality, class, religion, and national identity, among others. In class discussions, it is crucial that we remain respectful of one another's viewpoints and the wide range of backgrounds and experiences represented in the classroom. During the first week of class, each section will establish a Group Agreement setting out classroom discussion norms for the semester. In general, if you disagree with a classmate (and debate and disagreement are encouraged!), then be sure to direct your comments at the idea, not the person. It is often helpful to summarize a peer's idea before disagreeing, to ensure you have really understood it. Please do not hesitate to meet with Prof. Bloch or your TA if you have concerns about engaging with the course content and discussions.

¹ I have developed these thoughts on academic dishonesty with reference to: Kevin Gannon, "How to Create a Syllabus: Advice Guide," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, accessed July 14, 2020, <https://www.chronicle.com/interactives/advice-syllabus>.

Additional Resources

UW-Madison and the History Department make available a wide range of resources to foster your academic success and personal wellbeing. It's a good idea to familiarize (or re-familiarize) yourself with the following:

University Writing Center

<http://www.writing.wisc.edu/>

Individual consultations, workshops, and online guides on all aspects of academic writing.

History Lab

<http://go.wisc.edu/hlab>

A resource center for undergraduates in history courses staffed by experienced graduate students, who are available to assist you with writing history papers. You can sign up online for an individual consultation at any stage of the writing process.

Greater University Tutoring Services

<https://guts.wisc.edu/>

Study skills support and peer tutoring across academic subjects.

McBurney Disability Resource Center

<https://mcburney.wisc.edu/>

Contact the McBurney Center if you have or think you may have a disability to discuss a range of possible accommodations.

Mental Health Services

<https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/>

Resources on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

UW–Madison is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment and offers a variety of resources for students impacted by sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. The Dean of Students Office has compiled a comprehensive guide to resources on and off campus, including both confidential resources and options for reporting: <https://doso.students.wisc.edu/report-an-issue/sexual-assault-dating-and-domestic-violence/>.

Course Schedule

Readings are due by the beginning of section. Guidelines and rubrics for all assignments will be posted on Canvas. All readings, except for Irmgard Keun's *The Artificial Silk Girl*, will be available on Canvas. See the Modules tab for week-by-week links.

Week 1

Thurs. Sept. 8: Course Introduction

*FIRST SECTION MEETINGS (Sept. 8-9)

UNIT I: CREATING THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC

Week 2

Tues. Sept. 13: World War I and the German Revolution

Thurs. Sept. 15: The Historian's Toolkit (I): Reading Primary Sources

Reading:

- "Spartacus Manifesto" (1918)
- Joseph Roth, *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin, 1920-1933*, pp. 23-27, 31-39, 63-68, 97-103, 119-123, 171-175, 189-198

Week 3

Tues. Sept. 20: Legacies of Defeat

Thurs. Sept. 22: Forging Weimar Democracy

Reading:

- Excerpts from the Constitution of the Weimar Republic (1919)
- Excerpts from Party Platforms (1919-22)

Assignment:

- Essay #1 (*feuilleton*) due on Mon. Sept. 26 at 5 p.m.

Week 4

Tues. Sept. 27: The Nazi Party in the Early Weimar Republic

*Rosh Hashanah: No class meeting, lecture pre-Recorded

Thurs. Sept. 29: Analyzing Early Nazi Propaganda

Reading:

- “Program of the German Workers’ Party” (1920)
- “Hitler’s Speech at the Putsch Trial” (1924)
- Ernst Bloch, “Hitler’s Force” (1924)

Assignment:

- Opening statement for National Assembly debate due in section

UNIT II: WEIMAR MODERNISMS

Week 5

Tues. Oct. 4: Artistic Modernisms

Thurs. Oct. 6: The Historian’s Toolkit (II): Thesis Statements

*Sections on Oct. 6-7 meet in Chazen Museum of Art

Reading:

- Eric Weitz, “Sound and Image,” in *Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy* (3rd ed., 2018), pp. 207-250

Assignment:

- Post a one-paragraph summary of Weitz’s argument on Top Hat before section

Week 6

Tues. Oct. 11: Sex Reform and the Homosexual Emancipation Movement

Thurs. Oct. 13: The Historian’s Toolkit (III): Honing your Research Skills

*Class meets in Memorial Library

Assignment:

- Essay #2 (on artwork) due on Mon. Oct. 17 at 5 p.m.

Week 7

Tues. Oct. 18: The “New Woman”

Thurs. Oct. 20: The Depression and the Rise of the Nazis

Reading:

- Irmgard Keun, *The Artificial Silk Girl* (all)

UNIT III: REVOLUTION FROM THE RIGHT

Week 8

Tues. Oct. 25: Ordinary Germans and the Fall of the Weimar Republic

Thurs. Oct. 27: Forging Nazi Dictatorship

Reading:

- Sebastian Haffner, *Defying Hitler* (1939), pp. 3-71, 85-94

Assignment:

- Essay #3 (on Keun) due Mon. Oct. 31 at 5 p.m.

Week 9

Tues. Nov. 1: The Historian’s Toolkit (IV): Effective Research Proposals

Thurs. Nov. 3: (Why) did Weimar Fail: Competing Theories

Assignment:

- Research proposal and annotated bibliography due Mon. Nov. 7 at 5 p.m.

UNIT IV: RESEARCH PAPERS

Week 10

Tues. Nov. 8: NO LECTURE—Individual Meetings with Prof. Bloch or TA

Thurs. Nov. 10: NO LECTURE—Individual Meetings with Prof. Bloch or TA

*Sign up for a 30-minute meeting during this week to discuss your research proposal

*No sections this week

Assignment:

- Revised research proposal and outline due Mon. Nov. 14 at 5 p.m.

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Week 11

Tues. Nov. 15: The Historian's Toolkit (V): Crafting an Introduction

Thurs. Nov. 17: The Historian's Toolkit (VI): Analyzing Sources

Assignment:

- Draft of introductory paragraph due in section (peer review workshop)

Week 12

Tues. Nov. 22: Nazi Propaganda in Power

THANKSGIVING; NO SECTIONS

Week 13

Tues. Nov. 29: The Historian's Toolkit (VII): Quotation, Paraphrase, Citation

Thurs. Dec. 1: The Historian's Toolkit (VIII): How to Revise

Assignment:

- Presentations on research papers in section
- First draft of research paper due on Mon. Dec. 5 at 5 p.m.

Week 14

Tues. Dec. 6: NO LECTURE—meet with writing partner before class on Dec. 8

Thurs. Dec. 8: Weimar in Exile

Reading:

- Read writing partner's draft prior to peer review meeting

Assignment:

- Presentations on research papers in section

Week 15

Tues. Dec. 13: Conclusion: Legacies of the Weimar Republic

Research paper due TBD (during finals week)

APPENDIX: Goals for HIST 201 – “The Historian’s Craft”

Approved by Undergraduate Council, December 8, 2010

The “Historian’s Craft” courses offer an opportunity to experience the excitement and rewards of doing original historical research and conveying the results of that work to others. Through engagement with locally available or on-line archival materials, the courses encourage undergraduates to become historical detectives who can define important historical questions, collect and analyze evidence, present original conclusions, and contribute to ongoing discussions—the skills we have defined as central to the history major.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be prepared to undertake substantial historical research and writing in a variety of courses, including the HIST 600 seminar. Specific goals for this course include learning to:

1. Ask Questions: develop the habit of asking questions, including questions that may generate new directions for historical research.

- Develop historical questions through engagement with primary sources, secondary literature, and/or broader ethical, theoretical, or political questions.
- Ask historical questions to guide individual research.
- Pose questions to prompt productive group discussion.

2. Find Sources: learn the logic of footnotes, bibliographies, search engines, libraries, and archives, and consult them to identify and locate source materials.

- Identify the purposes, limitations, authorities, and parameters of various search engines available both through the library and on the world-wide web.
- Take advantage of the range of library resources, including personnel.
- Locate printed materials, digital materials, and other objects.
- Be aware of, and able to use, interlibrary loan.

3. Evaluate Sources: determine the perspective, credibility, and utility of source materials.

- Distinguish between primary and secondary material for a particular topic.
- Determine, to the extent possible, conditions of production and preservation.
- Consider the placement of sources in relation to other kinds of documents and objects.
- Identify the perspective or authorial stance of a source.
- Summarize an argument presented in a text.
- Distinguish between the content of a source and its meaning in relation to a particular question.

4. Develop and Present an Argument: use sources appropriately to create, modify, and support tentative conclusions and new questions.

- Write a strong, clear thesis statement.
- Revise and rewrite a thesis statement based on additional research or analysis.
- Identify the parts of an argument necessary to support a thesis convincingly.
- Cite, paraphrase, and quote evidence appropriately to support each part of an argument.

5. Plan Further Research: draw upon preliminary research to develop a plan for further investigation.

- Write a research proposal, including a tentative argument, plan for research, annotated bibliography, and abstract.
- Identify the contribution of an argument to existing scholarship.

6. Communicate Findings Effectively: make formal and informal, written and oral presentations tailored to specific audiences.

- Write a clearly argued, formal academic paper, using appropriate style and bibliographic apparatus.
- Deliver a concise, effective, formal verbal presentation with appropriate supporting material.
- Contribute constructively to discussion, whether proposing or responding to an idea