

History 100: Making History
Europe under the Great Dictators

Fall 2009: Tuesday 10:00-11:50; Thursday, 10:00-10:50

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Office hours: Wed 4:15-5:00,
Thurs 2:15-4:05,
Fri 11:00-11:50 (or by
appointment)

Course description

This course provides an introduction to issues of historical causation, argumentation, and evidence by looking at the history of Germany and Russia under the rule of two of the most repressive dictators in world history—Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin. Like all sections of History 100, this class will begin with an introductory unit on historical methodology before delving into a particular theme in greater depth—in this case, the political and social history of Nazi Germany and the Stalinist USSR. Among the topics to be discussed are the functioning of the Stalinist and Nazi dictatorships, the nature of everyday life under totalitarianism, the personality cults of Hitler and Stalin, the role of the German and Soviet secret police, the origins of the USSR's Great Purges, and the decision-making behind the Holocaust. Overall, this class will provide students not just with an introduction to Soviet and Nazi history, but with a more general look at how historians examine the past.

Course readings

The following books are on reserve at Burling Library and are available for purchase at the Grinnell College Bookstore:

John Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction*

Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*

Jane Caplan, ed., *Nazi Germany (Short Oxford History of Germany)*

Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times*

Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*

Assignments and grading

Your grade in this class will be based on the following requirements:

Film analysis (5%). A 2-3 page analysis of the film *A Midwife's Tale*, due on Friday, September 11 at 5:00 PM.

Document analysis (5%). A 2-3 page analysis of an excerpt from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, due on Friday, September 25, at 5:00 PM.

Short writing assignment (10%). A 4-5 page writing assignment due on Thursday, October 15.

Oral history analysis (15%). A 4-5 page analysis of the oral history interviews of the Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System (available online), which looks at life under Stalin; this paper will be due at 5:00 PM on Friday, November 13.

Annotated bibliography and review essay (20%). A 5-7-page annotated bibliography based on a research topic of your choice, along with a 3-4 page review essay summarizing what you found while researching your theme, will be due on Wednesday, December 9, at 5:00 PM. You will also need to hand in a brief proposal connected to this project and a draft of the bibliography.

Take-home final (20%). You will have a take-home, open-book final exam, due on Thursday, December 17. This exam will be composed of essay questions based on material from the class.

Class participation (25%). The final requirement for this course is active and informed participation in classroom discussions. In brief, I'll be looking for evidence that you've done the reading, that you're thinking about the themes and issues covered by the class, and that you're prepared to discuss your ideas with your classmates; attendance, the frequency of your participation in class, and the insightfulness of your comments will all help decide your grade.

Feel free to contact me at any time if you want to talk about your class participation. I understand that some people will always be more talkative than others and that different people have different styles of processing information or speaking in class, and I'm happy to discuss strategies to help you become a more active part of the discussion.

NOTE: In addition to the requirements listed above, I reserve the right to fail any student with more than 6 unexcused absences and to lower the grade of students with more than 2 unexcused absences. If your grade seems likely to suffer significantly from your absences or your lack of participation, I will let you know early enough that you have time to correct the problem.

Extension policy

Each student in the class can have one (and only one) 48-hour extension on a writing assignment over the course of the semester, on any assignment except the final. To claim this extension, send me a brief email asking for extra time before the assignment's deadline; I will grant this extension automatically, so there is no need for you to explain why you need extra time. (Keep in mind, however, that once you've received an extension on one assignment, I will not give you an extension on another except in the case of a documented emergency.) In the absence of an extension, late assignments will be penalized one third of a grade per day.

Important notes

Grinnell College makes reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students need to provide documentation identifying any special needs to the Dean for Student Academic Support and Advising, Joyce Stern, whose office is located on the third floor of the Rosenfield Center. Students should then notify me within the first few days of class.

Students should also be aware of Grinnell's policy on academic honesty. Plagiarism, it goes without saying, will not be tolerated in this course.

Course schedule

Thursday, August 27: Course Introduction

Readings: John Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction*, ch. 1

Tuesday, September 1: What is History?

Readings: Arnold, ch. 2-5

Thursday, September 3: Was the Past a Foreign Country?

Readings: Arnold, ch. 6
Robert Darnton, "Workers Revolt: The Great Cat Massacre of the Rue St. Severin" [Pioneerweb]

FILM SHOWING: There will be two showings of the film *A Midwife's Tale*, each one taking place in ARH 224. The first will be on Thursday, September 3, from 7:00 to 8:30; the second will be on Monday, September 7, from 7:00 to 8:30. You're welcome to attend either of these showings. If you cannot attend either showing, you can view the film on your own at either the A/V Center (on the second floor of ARH) or the Listening Room of Burling Library, where the movie is being held on reserve.

Tuesday, September 8: A Midwife's Tale; A Visit to the Archives

Reading: Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*, excerpts [Pioneerweb]
Arnold, ch. 7

[Tuesday's class will include a visit to the Iowa Room of Burling Library at 11:00 AM.]

Thursday, September 10: Hitler's Story

Reading: Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, excerpts [Pioneerweb]

Friday, September 11: FILM REVIEW IS DUE AT 5:00 PM

Tuesday, September 15: The Rise of Nazism

Reading: Richard J. Evans, "The Emergence of Nazi Ideology" [in Caplan]
Peter Fritzsche, "The NSDAP 1919-1934" [in Caplan]
Richard Bessel, "The Aftermath of the First World War and the Rise of Nazism"
[Pioneerweb]

Thursday, September 17: Revolution!

Reading: Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, pp. 1-67

Tuesday, September 22: The Great Break

Reading: Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, pp. 68-147
Lev Kopelev, "The Last Grain Collections" [Pioneerweb]

Thursday, September 24: Ending the Revolution

Reading: Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, pp. 148-172 [Pioneerweb]
Stalin, "Dizzy with Success" [Pioneerweb]

Friday, September 25: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS IS DUE AT 5:00 PM

Tuesday, September 29: How Did Dictatorships Work?

Reading: Jeremy Noakes, "Hitler and the Nazi state: leadership, hierarchy, and power"
[in Caplan]
Oleg Khlevniuk, "Stalin as Dictator" [Pioneerweb]
Arch Getty, "Stalin as Prime Minister" [Pioneerweb]

Thursday, October 1: Hitler's Personality Cult

Reading: Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth*, pp. 48-104 [Pioneerweb]

Tuesday, October 6: Stalin's Personality Cult

Reading: Sarah Davies, "Stalin and the making of the leader cult in the 1930s"
[Pioneerweb]
Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin in Power*, ch. 7 [Pioneerweb]
Richard Overy, *The Dictators*, ch. 3 [Pioneerweb]

Thursday, October 8: The Secret Police in the Soviet Union

Reading: Paul Hagenloh, *Stalin's Police*, excerpts [Pioneerweb]

Tuesday, October 13: The Secret Police in Nazi Germany

Reading: Robert Gellately, "The Gestapo and German Society: Political Denunciation in
the Gestapo Case Files" [Pioneerweb]
Eric Johnson, *Nazi Terror: The Gestapo, Jews, and Ordinary Germans*, excerpts
[Pioneerweb]

Thursday, October 15: Denunciation in the USSR

**Assignment (due in class): a one-page proposal for your annotated bibliography
4-5 page writing assignment**

FALL BREAK: OCTOBER 19-23

Tuesday, October 27: Living under Stalin

Reading: Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, pp. 1-88

Thursday, October 29: Material Life in the 1930s

Reading: Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, pp. 89-138

Tuesday, November 3: How Different was the USSR?

Reading: Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, pp. 139-189, 218-228

Assignment: Look around the Harvard Interview Project

Thursday, November 5: The Nazi National Community

Reading: Jill Stephenson, "Inclusion: building the national community in propaganda and practice" [in Caplan]

Tuesday, November 10: Repression and Exclusion in Nazi Germany

Reading: Nikolaus Wachsmann, "The policy of exclusion: repression in the Nazi state, 1933-1939" [in Caplan]

Richard Steigmann-Gall, "Religion and the churches" [in Caplan]

Thursday, November 12: Nazi Economics

Reading: Adam Tooze, "The economic history of the Nazi regime" [in Caplan]

Friday, November 13: ORAL HISTORY ANALYSIS IS DUE AT 5:00 PM

Tuesday, November 17: The Holocaust: An Overview

Reading: Doris L. Bergen, "Occupation, imperialism, and genocide, 1939-1945" [in Caplan]

Timothy W. Mason, "Intention and explanation: A current controversy about the interpretation of national socialism" [Pioneerweb]

Thursday, November 19: The Order Police in Poland

Reading: Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men*, preface and pp. 1-48

Tuesday, November 24: The Order Police and the Holocaust

Reading: Browning, pp. 49-142 Assignment: Draft bibliography is due

Tuesday, December 1: Ordinary Men?

Reading: Browning, pp. 143-224
Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, "The Evil of Banality" [Pioneerweb]

Thursday, December 3: Everyday People and the Great Purges

Reading: Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, pp. 190-217
Sarah Davies, "'Us Against Them': Social Identity in Soviet Russia, 1934-41"
[Pioneerweb]

Tuesday, December 8: Understanding the Great Purges

Readings: Oleg Khlevniuk, "The Objectives of the Great Terror" [Pioneerweb]
James Harris, "The Purging of Local Cliques in the Urals Region, 1936-7"
[Pioneerweb]

Wednesday, December 9: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY IS DUE AT 5:00 PM

Thursday, December 10: Nazism and Stalinism Compared

Reading: Yoram Gorlizki and Hans Mommsen, "The Political (Dis)Orders of Stalinism and National Socialism"