

Communication/Inquiry 101N Fall 2009

Two German Jewish Families on the Cusp of History

Syllabus

Professor

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Student Leaders

Chelsea Freeland, Suite 61502, cfreeland08@austincollege.edu

(from Charleston, Illinois, French major and minors in Art History and Chemistry. Service Station tutor and member of Student Development Board)

Jillian Kerbacher, Suite 60737, jkerbacher@austincollege.edu

(from Fairfield, International Relations and German double major, and Spanish minor.)

Andrew Maxwell, Suite 60895, amaxwell@austincollege.edu

(from Farmers Branch, Physics and Math double major.)

Seth Warner, Suite 61324, swarner@austincollege.edu

(from Coppell, History and Biology double major and Classics minor.)

Office Hours

My regular office hours are Monday 11 - 11:50 AM, Tuesday 10 - 10:50 AM, Wednesday 9 - 9:50 PM, and Thursday 11 - 11:50 AM. They are posted on my office door with my class schedule.

Texts

- *The Pity of it All: A History of Jews in Germany, 1743-1933* by Amos Elon
- *A Part of Myself* by Carl Zuckmayer

Course Description

This is the course description which you received early this summer:

The Bergmanns and the Grunwalds were typical middle class Jewish citizens of the early twentieth-century German Reich – or were they? Can we identify common experiences and aspirations of the Aryan bourgeoisie in Germany both before and after World War I? Is there a difference between this sector of society and the Jewish professional and business class? We ask because we would like to understand the forces that molded the exceptional contributions by members of these families to the intellectual life of Germany – until they were either murdered or forced out of Germany during the Nazi dictatorship. We will attempt to get a glimpse into life and thought in Germany in this era by first looking into the political and social life, then cultural expressions in art, music, theatre, literature and the sciences. We will then follow the family trajectories, first of Max Bergmann, born in 1886 in a suburb of Nurnberg to a successful wholesale merchant. He was at the same time as Einstein a Director of a state research institute – until he also was forced to leave Germany in 1933. In the 1920's and 30's he was the world's leading expert in the emerging field of protein chemistry. His wife Emmy Grunwald was one of the first graduates of the first high school for females in Germany, and she was also one of the first female doctors. Her sister Clara Grunwald was the founder of the Montessori educational movement in Germany. She was murdered in Auschwitz. Peter Bergmann, the son of Max and Emmy, was forced to obtain his physics doctorate outside of Germany, in Prague. Immediately following the reception of his degree in 1936 he joined Albert Einstein as his Assistant at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. He went on to become a world leader in general relativity and an promoter of international scientific cooperation during the Cold War.

Peter Bergmann was my Ph. D. advisor and friend. Students in this course will have an opportunity to continue with me in an exploration into this extraordinary family saga. The research can involve a deeper look into the culture of the period, identification and exploitation of new sources related to Jewish intellectual life, or the use of archival sources that I have collected from various locations both in Germany and the United States.

General C/I Objectives

C/I 11 Freshman Seminar is the initial core course in the Austin College curriculum. It is intended to serve as a bridge from various high school backgrounds to rigorous college-level learning. We are mandated to incorporate instruction in written and oral communication skills, and library use, as well as activities which hone intellectual inquiry and critical thinking skills. Specifically, we intend to develop the following::

- Skills of investigation and critical analysis--especially the ability to evaluate sources, interpret evidence and draw logical conclusions.
- Skills of written communication—especially the ability to write clearly and to present thoughts in a coherent and persuasive fashion.

- Skills of oral communication—especially the ability to listen critically, ask clear questions and present thoughts effectively in discussion with others.
- Skills pertaining to effective and efficient use of the library—especially the ability to locate and exploit traditional and electronic resources.
- A sophisticated and thoughtful understanding of the principles of academic integrity—especially the policies and procedures in effect at Austin College.

Course Objectives

We firmly believe that we can meet all of these objectives most effectively if we can manage to engage you intellectually in this exploration of the broader intellectual and social roots of the achievements of these two illustrious German Jewish families. Thus we insist that this will be a "serious" course, and we anticipate that you will sample some of the joys of intellectual discovery. (In layperson terms ... you're going to have some fun!)

The central themes that we will address in this course are the following:

- German political, social, and cultural history 1871 – 1945
- Origins and manifestations of German antisemitism
- German Jewish intellectuals as creative agents, stimulators, and challengers within the German intelligentsia
- Special Jewish social context of scientific discovery
- Jewish German women in medicine in the early 20th century
- German Jewish contributions to educational reform and the Montessori movement
- Max Bergmann and the beginnings of protein chemistry
- Exile of German Jewish scientists and the Holocaust

Co-curricular Objectives

We want to assist you as you take more responsibility for your education. This will be a challenging, at times frustrating, but ultimately rewarding transition period for you. As we share both the joys and trials of college life, we hope you will look not only to your faculty mentor and your student leaders, but also to your classmates, for support and affirmation.

Reading and Writing Assignments

Reading are attached. Please note that readings are to be completed *before* the associated class meeting. In most instances this means you will read about a topic before it is discussed in class and you are expected to come to class prepared to participate in small group discussions.

An initial writing assignment is also listed on the attached schedule. You are asked to type a one page statement addressing your hopes and expectations for this course. This statement is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, September 7.

Research and Oral Reports

You asked to work with two other classmates on a short mid-semester research project. Your own two-page written report is due at the beginning of class on Monday, October 5. The topic selection and group members are to be decided in consultation with the course leaders by the beginning of class on Wednesday, September 23. Joint group oral reports are scheduled for Monday and Wednesday, October 5 and 7.

In addition you are asked to research, write, and report on a major research project. The topic must be selected in consultation with the course leaders by Monday, October 12. An annotated research bibliography is due at the beginning of class on Monday, October 26. A first written draft is due by the beginning of class on Monday, November 9. The final version is due on Monday, November 30. Individual oral reports on the projects are scheduled for Monday, November 30, Wednesday, December 2, and Friday, December 4. Each of you will be asked to critique the research paper of one of your classmates. These critiques will be due at 5 pm on Friday, December 4.

Moodle

This syllabus, the course schedule, and additional course resources will be posted on the Austin College Moodle web site. You will be given instructions on how to access the site in the first class meeting.

Quizzes

There will be two one-half hour quizzes.

Grading

Grades will be computed as follows:

Classroom participation	30
Small project paper	8
Class joint presentation	7
Major research paper	20
Major research presentation	10
Peer critique of major research paper	5
Quizzes	20
Total	100

Academic Integrity

You are expected to abide by the college academic integrity policy which is outlined in the

Environment, the student handbook. The following activities constitute a not necessarily exhaustive list of offenses which are in violation of the college's Academic Integrity Policy:

- Turning in work done by someone else.
- Working on an assignment with others when the instructor asked for individual work.
- Receiving unpermitted help on an assignment.
- Writing or providing a paper for another student.
- Getting Q/A from someone who has taken test.
- In a course requiring computer work, copying a friend's program rather than doing your own.
- Helping someone else cheat on a test.
- Falsifying lab or research data.
- Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography.
- Copying from another student during a test or examination without his or her knowing it.
- Copying from another student during a test with his or her knowledge.
- Copying a few sentences of material from a written source without footnoting them in a paper.
- Turning in a paper either purchased or plagiarized, in large part, from a term paper "mill" or website.
- Copying a few sentences of material from an Internet source without footnoting them in a paper.
- Using unpermitted crib notes (cheat sheets) during a test.
- Copying material almost work for word from any written source and turning it in as your own work.
- Altering graded test and submitting it for additional credit.
- Turning in a paper copied from another student.
- Using a false excuse to obtain extension on due date.
- Hiding or damaging library/course material.
- Giving aid to anyone who has not yet taken the daily online reading quiz
- Receiving aid on an online reading quiz
- Cheating on a test in any other way
- Cheating on a written assignment in any other way.

These general policies apply unless explicit written instructions to the contrary are distributed by the instructor. You must become familiar with the requirements set out in this syllabus. If there is ever a question about the appropriateness of an action, ask the instructor for clarification.