

HOS 921/GER 804 (etc.)
Experts and Expertise in Modern Industrial Culture
Germany, 1750 to 1950
Fall, 2001

Seminar Leaders:

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Expertise is a modern and paradoxical concept. It is modern, for it relies upon theoretical knowledge as provided by the sciences, and licenses the work of physicians, engineers, social workers, and a host of professions. It is paradoxical, for it has been built upon two claims that seem mutually contradictory. On the one hand, the scientific knowledge on which expert practices are based is claimed to be universally accessible to enlightened human reason. But on the other hand, experts reserve for themselves alone the right to create, evaluate, and proclaim that knowledge.

The seminar examines the role of experts and expertise, especially scientific and technical expertise, in German Central Europe between 1750 and the recent past. We will begin with the Enlightenment and then move through Germany's period of cultural ascendancy and unification in the nineteenth century. The discussion will continue through Germany's dichotomous twentieth century, marked by violence and instability, but also by spectacular economic success and the surprise of reunification. Through all this we will be exploring two main themes: the circumstances in which it first became possible to publicly maintain these apparently competing claims (that knowledge was both universal – i.e., potentially accessible to all people -- and simultaneously privileged); and how the relationship between knowledge and the concept of expertise was altered in the complex of changes accompanying Germany's late industrialization.

Central to both of these topics will be the question of what it means for something to be called “public knowledge.”

Requirements

As with all graduate seminars, this one requires diligent preparation with the readings, zealous attendance at our weekly meetings, probing and lively conversation, and, last but not least, 15–18 pages of learned prose. Please schedule a conference with Tom during the first few weeks of the semester to discuss which option would be most useful to you.

Schedule of weekly readings

September 4 – Introductions & explanation of themes

Reading: Stephen Turner, “What is the Problem with Experts?” *Social Studies of Science* 2001, 31:123–49.

Thomas Broman, “Introduction: Some Preliminary Considerations on Science and Civil Society.” (article manuscript)

September 11 – J. G. Fichte and the Late Enlightenment Public Sphere

Reading: Anthony La Vopa, *Fichte: The Self and the Calling of Philosophy, 1762–1799* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pr. 2001), chapters 8, 12 & 13.

La Vopa, “Conceiving a Public: Ideas and Society in Eighteenth-Century Europe.” *The Journal of Modern History* 1992, 64:79–116.

September 18 – The Origins of the Public Sphere

Reading: Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989), sections I–III and V. (First published as *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, 1962)

Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1988), Introduction and parts 1 & 2. (First published as *Kritik und Krise*, 1959).

Harold Mah, “Phantasies of the Public Sphere: Rethinking the Habermas of Historians.” *The Journal of Modern History* 2000, 72:153–182.

September 25 – Literary Criticism and the Marketplace for Literature

Reading: Klaus L. Berghahn, “From Classicist to Classical Literary Criticism, 1730–1806.” In Peter Uwe Hohendahl (ed.), *A History of German Literary Criticism, 1730–1980* (Lincoln, Neb. Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1988), pp. 13–99.

Peter Uwe Hohendahl, “Literary Criticism in the Epoch of Liberalism, 1820–1870.” In Hohendahl, *History of German Literary Criticism*, pp.

179–276

Thomas Broman, "On the Epistemology of Criticism: Science, Criticism and the German Public Sphere, 1760–1800." In Jörg Schöner (ed.), *Literaturwissenschaft und Wissenschaftsforschung* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2000), pp. 6–26.

James J. Wald, "The 'Small Club of Connoisseurs' and the 'General Public': Schiller's *Horen* and Posselt's *Europäische Annalen*." In Herbert Rowland and Karl J. Fink (eds.), *The Eighteenth Century German Book Review* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1995), pp. 113–135.

October 2 – Bürgertum & Bildungsbürgertum

Reading: David Blackbourn, "The German Bourgeoisie: An Introduction." In David Blackbourn and Richard J. Evans (eds.), *The German Bourgeoisie* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 1–45.

Jonathan Sperber, "Bürger, Bürgertum, Bürgerlichkeit, Bürgerliche Gesellschaft: Studies of the German (Upper) Middle Class and its Sociocultural World." *The Journal of Modern History* 1997, 69:271–297.

Jürgen Kocka, "The Middle Classes in Europe." *The Journal of Modern History* 1995, 67:783–806.

Wolfgang Kaschuba, "German *Bürgerlichkeit* after 1800: Culture as Symbolic Practice." In Jürgen Kocka and Allen Mitchell (eds.), *Bourgeois Society in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 1993), pp. 392–422.

October 9 – Popularization of Science

Reading: Roger Cooter and Steven Pumfrey, "Separate Spheres and Public Places: Reflections on the History of Science Popularization and Science in Popular Culture." *History of Science* 1994, 32:237–67.

Lynn K. Nyhart, "Civic and Economic Zoology in Nineteenth-Century Germany." *Isis* 1998, 89:605–630.

Andreas Daum, "Science, Politics and Religion: Humboldtian Thinking and the Transformations of Civil Society in Germany, 1830–1870." (article manuscript)

Denise Phillips, "*Bürgerlichkeit und Naturwissenschaft*. German Civic Scientific Societies and the Revolution of 1848." (article manuscript)

October 16 – Helmholtz: The Public Role of the Man of Science

Reading: Kathryn M. Olesko, "Civic Culture and Calling in the Königsberg Period." In Lorenz Krüger (ed.), *Universalgenie Helmholtz: Rückblick nach 100 Jahren* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1994), 22–42.

David Cahan, "Anti-Helmholtz, Anti-Zöllner, Anti-Düring: The Freedom of Science in Germany during the 1870s.. In Krüger, *Universalgenie Helmholtz*, pp. 330–343.

David Cahan, "Helmholtz and the Civilizing Power of Science." In David Cahan (ed.), *Hermann von Helmholtz and the Foundations of Nineteenth-*

Century Science (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1993), pp. 559–601.

Robert M. Brain, "Bürgerliche Intelligenz." In *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science* 1995, 26:617–635.

David Cahan, "On Helmholtz and 'Bürgerliche Intelligenz': A Response to Robert Brain." *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science* 1997, 28:521–532.

October 23 – Who Speaks for Labor?

Reading:

October 30 – Medicine between Civil Society and the State (Volker Hess)

Reading:

November 6 – The public presence of craft knowledge

Reading:

November 13 – Technological criticism at the turn of the century

Reading:

November 20 – Modernism and the celebration of industrial society

Reading:

November 27 – A totalitarian public sphere?

Reading:

December 4 – Post-war cultural debates: the roles of historians and scientists

Reading: