

Lessons from Germany? Anti-Racism Work and a Community Read

Welcome back to Bowdoin and to the most unusual and challenging semester any of us has ever experienced! As we see you again, or for the very first time (!), in zoom squares, we are reminded of the importance of community, hope, resilience, and critical work. The most important work ahead, we all agree, lies in the critical examination of racist structures in both the United States and Germany.

We, the faculty of Bowdoin's German department, share the grief and outrage over the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless other Black lives. We condemn the lasting effects of white supremacy and of structural racism, especially anti-Black racism, in our country and across the globe.

We are committed to action. We hear and see the concerns of our students, and we support and join their call for action. We will continue to work towards an ever more inclusive curriculum in German Studies and towards co-curricular events and activities that challenge and shift the traditional focus of our academic field and that take seriously global and cross-cultural perspectives.

The work and struggle against racism is as much community work as it is individual work. We invite all of you to a virtual German-at-Bowdoin community read for the 2020 fall semester. The read will be capped by discussions, conversations, and meetings on Zoom between November 10-20, 2020. We hope that alumni will join us as well, and that this can be the first of hopefully many and sustained meetings across generations of Polar Bears interested in German and German Studies.

The book is Susan Neiman's *Learning from the Germans: Race and the Memory of Evil* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux/Macmillan, 2019).

Please contact us if you are interested in this event.

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