

HISTORICAL FICTION SET IN GERMANY DURING THE RISE OF HITLER

Bottome, Phyllis. ***The Mortal Storm***. Faber: 1937; Northwestern University Press: 1998. **About a family with a Jewish father and two Nazi stepsons, this novel depicts the agony of family division and the persecution of dissenters following the Reichstag fire.**

Brecht, Bertolt. **“Fear and Misery of the Third Reich.”** Trans. by John Willett. In *Bertolt Brecht Collected Plays*, vol. 4 part 3. Methuen: 1983. 1-94. **The inspiration for Kushner’s *A Bright Room Called Day*. The play is 24 scenes of various families and workers trying to survive—a stark, sardonic gallery of life in Nazi Germany. See the excerpt on this website.**

Edugyan, Esi. ***Half-Blood Blues***. Toronto: Thomas Allen Publishers, 2011. **A beautifully-written novel of the persecution of Black jazz musicians at the end of the Weimar Golden Age in Berlin.**

Isherwood, Christopher. ***Berlin Stories***. NY: New Directions Publishing, 1954; this edition published 1963. **The book on which the musical *Cabaret* was based.**

Outrageous [TV series]. Dir. by Joss Agnew & Ellie Heydon. Firebird Pictures, 2025. Available on *Britbox* and several other streaming services. **Historical drama set in 1930s England and Berlin, depicting the real-life conflict among the six Mitford sisters, two of whom supported Hitler, one of whom was a Communist, and one of whom wrote the book on which the series is based.**

The Mortal Storm [film]. Dir. by Frank Borzage. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1940. **The film starring Jimmy Stewart as a young Communist (!), based on Phyllis Bottome’s gripping novel.**
<https://www.lookmovie2.to/movies/play/1689789582-the-mortal-storm-1940>.

NONFICTION COMMENTARY ON THE PLAY AND THE ERA

On Tony Kushner and *A Bright Room Called Day*

Bigby, Christopher. **“Chapter 3: Tony Kushner.”** In *Contemporary American Playwrights*. Cambridge University Press, 2004. **A scholarly analysis of Kushner’s work and its impact on American theater.** <https://epdf.pub/contemporary-american-playwrights.html>

Blume, Liam. **"A Bright Room Called Day Illuminates the Difficulties of Ideologies."** *New University*, University of California at Irvine. 1 May 2018. **Review of a university production of the earlier script.** <https://newuniversity.org/2018/05/01/a-bright-room-called-day-illuminates-the-difficulties-of-ideologies/>

Butler, Isaac. **"Tony Kushner Versus the Apocalypse."** *Slate*. 4 December 2019. **Thoughtful review and meditation on how the play affected Butler long afterwards.** <https://slate.com/culture/2019/12/bright-room-called-day-kushner-rewrite-new-character-trump.html>

Fisher, James. **"Chapter Two: Past Heaven Through Earth, to Hell."** *The Theatre of Tony Kushner: Living Past Hope*, 2nd ed. NY: Routledge, 2021. **A whole chapter devoted to A Bright Room Called Day and the 2019 rewrite.** <https://www-taylorfrancis-com.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/books/mono/10.4324/9780429398391/theater-tony-kushner-james-fisher>

Solomon, Alisa. **"Tony Kushner on Making Serious Political Theatre in 2019"** [interview]. *The Nation*. 25 November 2019. **Kushner tells Solomon his uneasy thinking about the play.** <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/tony-kushner-interview-bright-room/>

TheaterMania [website]. **"Review: Tony Kushner's A Bright Room Called Day Corrects Its Past Mistakes—and Hopes America Will Too."** 25 November 2019. **Review of the revised version that we are doing.** https://www.theatermania.com/news/tony-kushners-a-bright-room-called-day-corrects-its-past-mistakes-and-hopes-america-will-too_90219/

On the Weimar Republic and the Rise of Hitler

Fletcher, Bremner Duthie. *The Weimar Spectacle Podcast* on website *Bremner Fletcher*. N.d. **Well-researched and entertaining, this podcast offers a fascinating description of the wild artistic, social, and gender experiments during the 14 years of the Weimar Republic.** <https://bremnersings.com/weimar-podcast>

Jelavich, Peter. ***Berlin Cabaret***. Harvard UP, 1993; this edition published 1996. **An engaging examination of the Weimar entertainment scene, including photographs of stars such as Josephine Baker.**

Northcott, Charlie and Ben Milne. **“How an Old Suitcase Revealed a Hidden Family Fortune, Lost Under Nazi Rule.”** *BBC News*, 18 October 2025. **A fascinating true story illustrating how the Nazis gained economic power.** <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c33pvlez6yjo>

Ulrich, Barbara. ***The Hot Girls of Weimar Berlin***. LA: Feral House, 2002. **An X-rated art book depicting the sex and drug culture of Weimar Berlin.**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. **“Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Rise to Power, 1918-1933.”** *Holocaust Museum* [website]. 2025. **There are many other illuminating articles on this website.** <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-nazi-rise-to-power>

The Weimar Republic—Germany’s First Democracy [website]. **This website contains helpful timelines, maps, and photos explaining the rise and fall of the Weimar Republic.** <https://www.weimarer-republik.net/themenportal/chronik-1918-bis-1933/1918/>

On North American Fascism

Fine, Jonathan. **“*Manitoba History*: Anti-semitism in Manitoba in the 1930s and 40s.”** Manitoba Historical Society Archives, Number 32, Autumn 1996. **This essay by Jonathan Fine of Kelvin High School won the Manitoba Historical Society’s 1995 Dr. Edward C. Shaw “Young Historians” Award.** https://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/32/manitobaantisemitism.shtml

Fowler, Jermaine. **“Jim Crow Took a Road Trip.”** *The Humanity Archive*. Row House Publishing, 2022. Pages 249-276, especially 268-269. **See also Fowler’s Facebook post on November 1, 2025—linked on this website. Fowler tells how Hitler used Jim Crow laws to inform Nazi Party policies.**

Maddow, Rachel. ***Rachel Maddow Presents Ultra*** [podcast]. Launched 10 October 2022. **Shocking, little-known stories of fascism in the US.** <https://open.spotify.com/show/3ImqTb6CcfZINTgByeAThh>

Wagner, Jonathan. **"The Deutsche Zeitung für Canada: A Nazi Newspaper in Winnipeg."** *MHS Transactions*, Series 3, Number 33, 1976-77 Season. **A scholarly examination of how the Nazi Party recruited members in Manitoba through propaganda.** <https://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/transactions/3/deutschezeitung.shtml>

_____. **"Nazi Party Membership in Canada: A Profile."** *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, vol. 14, no. 27, 1981, 233-239. **The title is self-explanatory.** <https://hssh.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/hssh/article/view/37974/34435>

Wall, Andrew, writer & director. ***The Devil's Handshake*** [documentary]. Farpoint Films. 2024. Shown 5 March 2025 at the Centre for Transnational Mennonite Studies Film Night at the University of Winnipeg. **A young Mennonite man investigates his grandfather C.A. DeFehr's personal connection to Hitler.** Available on several streaming services. Trailer available on <https://ctms.uwinnipeg.ca/events/ctms-film-night-the-devils-handshake/>