

The New Fascist Body

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Wilhelm Werner, *The Triumph of Sterelation*, 1938. Prinzhorn Collection, Heidelberg.

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Prelude: The Preoccupations of Postmodern Fascism

How do we recognize a fascism when we see one? The last twenty years have been characterized by the rise of far-right movements and parties that were thought to be long overcome—a phenomenon which has been painful and shocking for many people, but evidently emboldening and gratifying for others. Globally and locally, we are no longer living “after fascism,” but—all of a sudden—in the midst of it again. Yet once more, we are seeing how racisms of various kinds give some people a heightened sense of self-worth, how sexual minorities are ridiculed and denigrated, how the hard-won right to self-determination in matters of reproduction is again being contested, and how shrill campaigns of indignation are stirring up emotions. At the same time, a delight in violating taboos is spreading. Without ignoring the immense differences between then and now—including the increasing opacity of global financial market capitalism, and the polarization and fragmentation in the perception of reality reinforced by social media filter bubbles—it’s also the case, regrettably, that current developments in many places make the events of the 1930s to 1940s in Central Europe much more emotionally comprehensible and understandable. How can it

be that citizens of various countries are so misguided and vote “against their own interests”? And why are ostensibly more progressive or moderate-minded spokespeople suddenly so willing to pander to more right-wing positions? It has dawned on many observers that the success of new right-wing movements must have something to do not just with fear or rage, but—quite unambiguously—with the pleasures of aggression, meanness, and violence.

One such example of these new far-right movements is the German political party Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany, AfD), which entered the German Bundestag in 2017 and has been doing scarily well—coming in second place in Germany’s recent national elections, with 20.8 percent of the vote. Its politics might best be described as a kind of postmodern fascism. “Postmodern” in the sense that it is cleverly self-reflexive and plays, gleefully, with the inevitable contestedness and instability of truth. “Fascist” because it is vehemently hostile to the ideals of human equality and solidarity and vicious towards those it identifies as vulnerable; because it proliferates racialized explanations for what are actually more complicated economic and social dynamics; and, not least, because it appeals to narcissistic longings for greatness. As the party’s primary unifying ethos is racism against migrants, it is also brazen in pushing against legal norms and limits, deploying novel concepts and promoting them until they become normalized. The most recent instance of this is “Remigration,” the plan to engage in mass deportations of migrants and asylum seekers. The term quickly lost its shock value precisely as it became ubiquitously discussed—also jumping across the ocean to be deployed by Donald Trump. Indeed, a main effect of introducing the concept is that *other* German political parties are now debating *which* migrants are so dutifully hardworking and sufficiently culturally integrated to deserve to be allowed to stay.

Taking up the example of the striking success of the AfD, I will, in the following pages, inquire into the emotional work of both long-past and present-day fascisms, focusing on two interrelated areas in particular: a phenomenon I have come to describe as “sexy racism,” and an obsessive hostility to disability, manifest in multiple ways in the present and, in the case of the AfD, especially in a preoccupation with rejecting inclusion of children with intellectual or emotional-behavioral impairments in mainstream classrooms.

Sexy racism—libidinally charged messaging to mobilize fear, outrage, and aversion or, alternatively, to convey the thrill of dominance vis-à-vis various forms of racialized vulnerability—has, as I will show, strong visual echoes with anti-Semitic and “Aryan”-perfection-celebrating images from the Third Reich. With regard to the AfD’s hostility to disability, this too has complex roots, as pernicious propaganda to promote the dream of a disability-free nation reaches back to before the Nazis but was certainly greatly exacerbated by them. Tracing the intellectual prehistory of Nazism’s coercive sterilization and murderous “euthanasia” politics, and stressing the rise of an erotically charged “eugenic” paradigm as a key enabling and intensifying factor for Nazism’s overall popular success, I hope to establish a deepened understanding for how it became socially acceptable, already before 1933—and seemed, to many, simply emotionally right—to express contempt for or to wish to invisibilize people with intellectual impairments or psychiatric illnesses.

No less important, however, is to place the above-described reinvigorated animus towards individuals designated as having cognitive or psychological impairments in the context of a far wider recent upsurge of cultural concern in Germany with “smartness” and IQ and an at once arrogant and anxious rejection of vulnerability of any kind reaching across significant portions of the ideological spectrum. Throughout, the aim here is to understand the multifunctional efficacy of both the eroticization of presumed superiority and the repetitive insistence on re-hierarchizing human value. Notably, moreover, all of the dynamics I discuss show up these days in variants on both sides of the Atlantic. Nonetheless, this essay seeks to consider what aspects of the transhistorically recurrent phenomenon of fascism we can understand better—based on what is evident in the strategies of the contemporary political movement AfD and on what we by now know about the historical experience of Nazism—when we look more

closely at the politics of sexuality and disability in conjunction.¹

Sexy Racism

One significant part of AfD's success involves its "family values" posturing—even as it also, in only seeming contradiction, luxuriates provocatively in deliberate sexiness. As noted, there are huge echoes here with Nazism's very similar mix of racism and titillating incitements. The deliberate contradictoriness, moreover, is itself highly functional, as it expands potential audiences, keeps opponents guessing, entertains with shrewd humor, and provides ready deniability in case of critical rebuke. Depending on the context, for example, the party styles itself as anti-gay *and* pro-gay. On the one hand, AfD politicians have embraced a nationalistic "pride month" (*Stolzmonat*)—replete with the slogan "against rainbow shit and gender madness"—in overt antagonism to LGBT pride advocacy. On the other hand, gay voters are appealed to via blunt racism with such slogans as "My partner and I don't value the acquaintance of Muslim immigrants, for whom our love is a deadly sin."²

The heterosexual messaging is similarly mixed. The party celebrates "traditional" families *and* jokingly advocates teen sex. It celebrates both sensually pregnant bodies *and* virtuously proper white motherhood *and* it portrays girls in skimpy bikinis as well as buxom barmaids. *And* it invokes the threat of rape by men of color as it simultaneously takes the opportunity to display female nudity in public spaces—for instance in a large outdoor billboard repurposing the Clark Art Museum painting *The Slave Market* (by Léon Gérôme, the same artist as on the cover of Said's *Orientalism*), together with the tagline "So that Europe does not become Eurabia." As feminist art historian Linda Nochlin pointed out decades ago about this category of painting: white men got to look at lovely naked flesh *and* feel indignantly morally superior to men of color at the same time.³ Again: this AfD poster is, after all, *also* nudity displayed in public space. Notably, the image was not so different from the many in the Nazi *Der Stürmer*, which attracted gaggles of teens and other "voyeurs" as it was always displayed in showcases in town squares and which repeatedly featured a naked blonde being violated by Jewish men—or by snakes with Jewish names.



Poster for the 2019 election campaign of the AfD in Saxony:
"Pepper spray doesn't always help. Good politics does."

More generally, then, and although other scholars seem not to notice this as much, the strategically successful use of sexiness is actually one of *the* strongest resonances between the AfD and the Nazis, who had their own portrayals of sexy-wholesome breastfeeding and plenty of lissome nudes.⁴ In an AfD billboard from 2019 the strategy is campy horror-film obvious. More recently, in 2024 the images were creepier and more cruel, as—speaking of "Remigration"—in the racism-sexiness mash-up video for a "Remigration Hit" AfD dance party song. The music video is deliberately audacious in creating with AI a visual echo of the infamous May 2024 dance party on the island of Sylt at which elite young Germans were captured on film singing "*Deutschland den Deutschen, Ausländer raus*."⁵ This is a different kind of arousal or rush, a flagrant display of a felt sense of virile superiority to brown and Black men. I think we can read here a

shift over the five years between 2019 and 2024: from sexualized danger-mongering (though that hasn't gone away—in fact the other parties, from the Christian Democrats to the Greens, are now jumping on that bandwagon)⁶ to a mode of full-on braggadocio, where Schadenfreude reigns and—as Adam Serwer put it about Trumpism—“the cruelty is the point.”⁷ There is, apparently, delicious pleasure in being able to cause hurt. The secret memo of fascism to its followers is not repression. On the contrary, it's a message of permission, of license and impunity. Or as political theorist Robyn Marasco notes, it's all about participation in power.⁸ Indeed, similar forms of sexy racism are embodied by Trump's secretary of Homeland Security, Kristi Noem.⁹



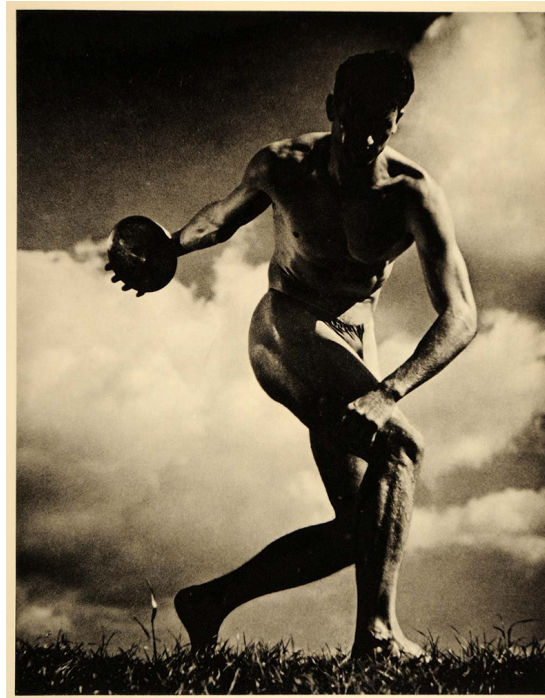
Adolf Ziegler, *The Four Elements (Fire, Water and Earth, Air)*, before 1937, Modern Art Collection, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich.

Obsessive Hostility to Disability

However, there is another distinctive element in AfD politics: overt and persistent anti-disability messaging. No other far-right party in the world is obsessed with disability the way the AfD is, borrowing from the anti-disability playbook—well developed already before the Nazis, but elaborated by them with massive propagandistic investment and special ferocity—time-honored strategies of stirring emotions, above all disgust, and economic worries. This combination was especially evident in a formal “inquiry” to the government in 2018 with regard to the (fabricated) issue of migrant families supposedly producing disproportionately more children with cognitive impairments because of the—again, imaginary—prevalence of “incestuous” marriage between blood relatives among refugees.¹⁰ As it turns out, this anti-Muslim claim was actually grafted onto an older anti-Semitic trope from the 1920s, in which it was contended that *Jews* produced proportionately more cognitively disabled offspring than gentiles due to *their* prevalence of marriages between blood relatives.¹¹ And while this stunt did meet with outraged response from disability rights organizations and the churches, the AfD was undeterred, with one member insisting that posing questions was merely a “form of research.”¹²

Yet the AfD's most consistent animus is directed against inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. Apparently, this has turned into the single most objectionable aspect of the only so recently won rights for people with disabilities, secured when Germany ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2009. The Convention has brought great improvements to Germany; it's been, as one legal expert put it, “an unprecedented success story.”¹³ For example, the federal “Law for the Strengthening of Participation and Self-Determination of Persons with Disabilities” (“Bundesteilhabegesetz” for short), going into effect between 2017 and 2023, treats people with disabilities as the authorities on their own lives; they—not bureaucrats or social workers—can determine with whom they will live, and hire the assistants they prefer. There's also been an important “paradigm shift in guardianship law,” newly guaranteeing respect for the will and the preferences of the person with impairments. In the realm of schooling, however, there has been public and political conflict. The UNCRPD, in its Article 24, mandates that the segregated special schools for children with various disabilities must be scaled down and that all children should be included in their neighborhood-near regular schools from the very start. Expectations were high

that the Convention would force the German school system to welcome children in all their diversity of abilities. Indeed, the UN's own handbook for politicians—translated into German as early as 2007—was cheerful about how unproblematic, easy and not-at-all-expensive it would be to train teachers in inclusive strategies from the get-go.[footnote *Von Ausgrenzung zu Gleichberechtigung: Verwirklichung der Rechte von Menschen mit Behinderungen* (United Nations, 2007), 82–85 →.] Yet that is not what happened. The reluctance to embrace inclusion in Germany goes beyond the AfD, as there remains strong attachment to the hierarchical competitive-selectionist three-tier school system in which children at age ten are distributed by anticipated achievement into Gymnasium (to go on to university), Realschule (white-collar jobs), and Hauptschule (blue-collar working class), supplemented by the segregated special schools.¹⁴ But the AfD took an early lead in mobilizing resistance—and the blatant malice in the language is noteworthy.



Leni Riefenstahl, *Olympia*, 1938.

What deep-seated insecurities about the citizenry's intelligence might cause the expectation of sustained proximity—of children with and without disabilities spending time together—to become such a bone of contention? Already the AfD party platform of 2016 objected not just that inclusion would incur “significant expenses” but also that it would “hamper other children in their ‘learning successes.’”¹⁵ In 2018, AfD politicians campaigned avidly on a reinstatement of the “achievement-principle” and an end to what was derisively described a “cuddle-curriculum.” One politician went so far as to assert that if children with Down syndrome spent time together in class with “normal, healthy” pupils, it was akin to placing people with “severe contagious diseases” in a hospital ward together with noninfected patients.¹⁶ And the obsession has persisted through the years since, evident over and over also in regional party platforms.¹⁷ Most notoriously, in a televised interview in summer 2023, prominent AfD member Björn Höcke—who led the campaign in Thuringia that just won 32 percent of the vote—again attacked inclusion of disabled children in schools on grounds that it harms the ability of the nondisabled to become the “skilled workers of the future.” “Healthy societies have healthy schools,” he declared, but presently German children were falling behind in the “most basic” German and math skills. The cause of this dismaying deterioration? The schools, he said, needed urgently to be “liberated” from “ideological projects such as inclusion.”¹⁸

There's a lot to say about this angst around somehow not being a smart-enough nation. As Kirsten Ehrhardt, a pro-inclusion activist and mother of a son

endowed with Down syndrome, asked already a decade ago with scathing sarcasm: “Will 1,000 pupils become stupider just because Henri is sitting there?”¹⁹ But an even more crucial point that requires emphasis is that in fact inclusion in German schools *has not actually happened*. It isn't true; it simply cannot be the cause of German pupils' purportedly poor abilities.²⁰ Signatory countries' compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is recurrently monitored, and Germany is consistently found seriously deficient, with the failure to provide inclusion in schools as one main reason for that assessment.²¹ So the AfD's attack on inclusion is *not* what it pretends to be. It is, we might say, a *preemptive counterrevolution*. Not a “backlash,” but rather what could better be called a frontlash—more like anticipatory hostility to something that has barely yet been tried on a broad scale.



The first national demonstration of disability rights activists took place in Frankfurt/Main in 1980. The demonstrators protested a court verdict that ordered a travel agency to reimburse a West German woman who had complained that her beach vacation in Greece had been blighted by the sight and sounds of individuals with physical disabilities residing in the same hotel. The banner hoisted above the crowd read: “Don't pity the disabled person; pity the society that rejects him.” Photo © 1980 by Walter Pehle.

For now, however, a question to hold onto is: What could possibly be the relationship between the titillating sexiness and the nastiness towards children with learning challenges? Another riddle is: What is going on in the culture of the nation that makes obsession with Germans' (supposed) levels of intelligence suddenly such an imperative matter? And a final question could be: Why should those who perceive themselves to be nondisabled even care—what do various fascisms' anti-disability provocations have to do with all of us?

Not incidentally, as with the sexy racism, so as well with nastiness towards those with (either purported or real) disabilities, whether cognitive or physical, Trump too has been, both publicly and privately, vituperative in his mockery and animus.²² This was evident in his aggressive and scornful imitation in 2015 of journalist Serge Kovalski, who happens to have joint contractures due to arthrogryposis.²³ It was manifest in his remarks to his nephew Fred Trump III, whose much-loved adult son William has significant impairments and who had brought other disability rights activist parents to the White House during Trump's

first term—after which the president opined to Fred that “those people,” i.e., adults with multiple and severe impairments, “the shape they’re in, all the expenses, maybe those kinds of people should just die.” (He later told Fred that perhaps this should be William’s fate as well.)²⁴ It has resonated in his absurd assertion that Kamala Harris was “retarded” in contrast to his endless self-description as “smart” and having “good genes”²⁵—and, just as ludicrously, in his proposition, shortly after he took office again, that the blame for a tragic plane crash could possibly be placed on federal aviation workers with “‘severe intellectual’ disabilities” supposedly hired by his predecessor Joseph Biden, whereas what was needed among air traffic controllers were only “our smartest people ... talented, naturally talented. Geniuses.”²⁶

Notes

- 1 My thinking about the phenomenon of fascism—its libidinal energies, its shape-shifting recurrences, and its functions in widely different political and economic settings (whether we mark its beginning with the Ku Klux Klan in the 1860s post-Civil War US or with Mussolini in 1920s post-liberal Italy and then Nazism in the 1930s)—has long been informed by the pioneering works of several crucial thinkers. Preeminent among these are: Theodor Adorno, Félix Guattari, Herbert Marcuse, Klaus Theweleit, and Anson Rabinbach. More recently, I have found exceedingly valuable the writings of Adam Serwer, Robyn Marasco, Alberto Toscano, Quinn Slobodian, Georg Feuser, Elissa Mailänder, Masha Gessen, Melinda Cooper, Simon Strick, Carolin Amlinger and Oliver Nachtwey, and Moira Weigel.
- 2 The party, in its platforms, is opposed to further expansion of LGBT rights; sometimes calls for undoing the equality of marriage law passed 2017; and expressly upholds reproductive, white, gender-polar heteronormativity with mom, dad, and kids as ideal. A happy family hopping at the beach declares “(You accuse us of being boringly) traditionalist? We like it!” (*Traditionell? Uns gefällt’s!*) Then again there’s a poster (self-consciously echoing Nazi anti-Bolshevism imagery, but also campily silly) portraying a Conchita Wurst–resembling drag queen “threatening” a child, to represent the danger of tolerance-teaching sex education. Yet not only is one of the party leaders a woman living in a same-sex partnership and continually asserting that the party is not homophobic; her likeness is additionally used to woo gay voters on a poster referencing the Christopher Street Day (CSD) parade (and here the message is suddenly pro-CSD, although usually the party styles itself as anti-CSD). The party, moreover, actually has an official organization of gay members (Alternative Homosexuals).
- 3 Cody Delistraty, “How Germany’s Far Right is Co-opting Art History,” *Frieze*, May 3, 2019 →; Linda Nochlin, “The Imaginary Orient,” *Art in America*, May 1983.
- 4 The best extant analysis of strong resonances between the AfD’s gender politics and that of the Nazis is Isabel Heinemann, “Volk and Family: National Socialist Legacies and Gender Concepts in the Rhetoric of the Alternative for Germany,” *Journal of Modern European History* 20, no. 3, July 5, 2022.
- 5 Thomas Wieder, “Germany Struck with Outrage after Racist Chants on a Jet Set Holiday Island,” *Le Monde*, May 29, 2024.
- 6 Cem Özdemir, “Sprache, Arbeit und Gesetzestreue,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, September 26, 2024; “Lauterbach kritisiert Merz scharf: ‘Ausländerhetze in Reinform,’” *t-online*, September 6, 2024 →.
- 7 Adam Serwer, *The Cruelty Is the Point: The Past, Present, and Future of Trump’s America* (Penguin Random House, 2021).
- 8 Robyn Marasco, “Reconsidering the Sexual Politics of Fascism,” *Historical Materialism*, June 25, 2021 →.
- 9 Jeff Sharlet, “That’s Bait: Kristi Noem and Fascism’s Sadistic Rorticismization of Power,” *Scenes from a Slow Civil War* (newsletter), March 27, 2025 →.

- 10 Nicole Höchst et al., "Kleine Anfrage ... Schwerbehinderte in Deutschland," Deutscher Bundestag 19/1444 (March 22, 2018) →. The federal government responded in a neutral tone and provided statistics that among other things indicated that 94 percent of all severe disability was to be found among native-born Germans. The rapidity of critical reaction was noteworthy; secular and religious spokespeople presented a united front. Eighteen advocacy organizations signed a protest declaration. Under the headline "This concerns all of us" it stated: "We are appalled by the AfD's inquiry in the German Bundestag about severe disability in Germany ... We say 'No' to any devaluation of people with disabilities and to any form of racism. Ideologies of inequality of human life have no place in this country." A spokesman for the Catholic bishops, Karl Jüsten, said the formal AfD query contained wording implying a difference between "life worthy and life unworthy of life, and as the Catholic church, we cannot accept this." Moreover: "For us, all disabled persons are equal, regardless of how the disability originated." And Ilja Seifert (former East German, Linke party member, and paraplegic) of the Allgemeiner Behindertenverband in Deutschland (General Association of Disabled People in Germany) said at the time: "Why don't they ask about family policy among nobles? No, the AfD is about presenting disabled life as something avoidable. As something that causes harm. In the past, there was talk of 'useless eaters,' of 'eternal sufferers' who needed to be relieved of their suffering. That is not new." Asked by a reporter whether this wasn't just an attempt to goad liberals and leftists into consternation, Seifert noted: "Of course, it is the usual provocation to stay in the conversation at the local pub. This falls on fertile ground with some people, that one should not feed the weaker ones, the 'ballast existences,' but rather promote the high achievers ... The AfD is always about the 'us versus you.' The Germans, the healthy, the Aryans on the one hand. The foreigners, the migrants and the disabled on the other. In my opinion ... this is no coincidence, no oversight on the part of any staff member. There is a concept behind it." It bears noting what an extraordinary and precious historic accomplishment such a consensus stance represents. See "Outrage of AfD 'Incest' Query," *Deutsche Welle*, April 13, 2018 →; "AfD stellte Anfrage zu Behinderten ...," *Merkur*, April 22, 2018; Der Paritätische Gesamtverband, Projekt Vielfalt ohne Alternative, "Es geht uns alle an: Wachsam sein für Menschlichkeit," →; "Erschütternd und völlig inakzeptabel," *Domradio.de*, April 12, 2018; Ilja Seifert and Markus C. Schulte von Drach, "Die AfD wertet das Leben von Behinderten als nicht lebenswert ab," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, April 23, 2018.
- 11 In 1924, for example, the grossly anti-Semitic Nietzsche acolyte Ernst Mann (pseudonym for Gerhard Hoffmann) published a much-discussed book in which he asserted that because Jews saw themselves as God's elect, they didn't mix with other peoples, and while he conceded that there was manifestly a small Jewish elite of intellectually superior people, there was also, he averred, a lower type proliferating, caused by "the excessive incest in Jewish circles." Ernst Mann (Gerhard Hoffmann), *Die Wohltätigkeit als aristokratische und rassenhygienische Forderung* (Fritz Fink, 1924), 116. His book touched on many themes, as reflections on artistic genius, animal rights, and the dangers of communism jostled with phantasmatic conjurings of the "unnatural" sexual activities engaged in within "idiot-institutions." It was unacceptable, Mann emphasized, that in the wake of "the collapse of 1918 ... thousands of healthy, gifted children were abandoned to misery and impoverishment, in order to keep the mentally dead and felons alive." The "moral principles" that the "annihilation of life unworthy of life" supposedly violated were really not so inviolable, he assured readers, and he endorsed the idea that commissions of doctors should comb through all institutions to choose those who would be "consigned to painless annihilation" (69–70, 72, 164).
- 12 "Outrage of AfD 'incest' query."
- 13 Robert Uerpmann-Witzack, "Die Umsetzung der UN-BRK in Deutschland" (lecture delivered at the conference "Die Umsetzung der UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz," Kassel, June 20–21, 2024) → (full version of the text can be requested from the author and will be published in the conference volume). See also Valentin Aichele, "Die UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention: Inhalt, Umsetzung, 'Monitoring'—Ein Überblick," *Newsletter Wegweiser Bürgergesellschaft*, no. 8 (April 30, 2010): 3 →; and *Wer Inklusion will, sucht Wege: Zehn Jahre UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention in Deutschland*, ed. Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte (Berlin, 2019).
- 14 For the most recent data and analysis, see "Nationaler Bildungsbericht—Bildung in Deutschland 2022 und Stellungnahme der Bundesregierung," Deutscher Bundestag 20/4980 (December 5, 2022) →. Also, those scholars who have most carefully examined the empirical evidence attested that as of 2021, "Only a few German states" were actively in the process of transitioning to an inclusive system, "which is why the majority of children and young people with special educational needs continue to be educated in special and segregated structures." See *Die Umsetzung schulischer Inklusion nach der UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention in den deutschen Bundesländern*, ed. Sebastian Steinmetz et al. (Nomos, 2021). The blogosphere, filled with anguished parent reports, makes recent trends yet clearer. And there is an additional scandal that has everything to do with Germany's difficulties in acknowledging that it is long since on its way to becoming a society of "superdiversity." This is most evident in a triangular correlational overlap between diagnoses of "learning disability" (or the recently fashionable "emotional-social" behavioral challenges), conditions of poverty, and a background of familial flight or migration. In this regard too there is tremendous regional variation across Germany, but all observers concur that the ethnicized tracking system persists. Whether they hail from the classic guestworker-supplying countries (Turkey, Italy, Greece) or, more recently, a succession of war zones (first ex-Yugoslavia, then Lebanon, Afghanistan, Syria, Russia, Ukraine), and even as the explanatory theories proffered range from the challenges of bilinguality to trauma, culture clash, or economic stress and social marginalization—or racism—statistically, children with migratory background are in almost all locales two or even three times more likely to be deemed to require special education services, whether in inclusive or segregated facilities.
- 15 Oliver Georgi, "So radikal will die AfD Deutschland umbauen," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, May 2, 2016.

- 16 Josef Dörr quoted in Ute Kirch, "Empörung im Landtag: AfD vergleicht Förderschüler mit ansteckenden Patienten," *Saarbrücker Zeitung*, April 19, 2018.
- 17 Jan Riebe, "'Ideologieprojekt Inklusion': Positionierungen der AfD zu Inklusion als Ausdruck ihres rechtsextremen Weltbildes," in *Wissen schafft Demokratie. Schwerpunkt Behindernde Gesellschaft*, vol. 15 (Institut für Demokratie und Zivilgesellschaft, 2024).
- 18 "Sommerinterview 2023 mit Björn Höcke," posted August 9, 2023 by Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk, YouTube video →.
- 19 Ehrhardt quoted in Lars Langenau, "'Werden tausend Schüler dümmer, weil Henri da sitzt?'" *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, June 3, 2015.
- 20 Florentine Anders, "PISA-Studie: Neue Sonderauswertung zur Informationskompetenz," *Deutsches Schulportal der Robert Bosch Stiftung*, December 5, 2023 →.
- 21 German Institute for Human Rights, "Parallel Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for Germany's 2nd/3rd State Party Review Procedure," July 2023 →.
- 22 When it comes to practical, as opposed to merely verbal, cruelty, the deliberate destruction of the US Department of Education and therewith of both the legal guardrails and the financial infrastructure to provide the necessary support for appropriate schooling for children with all manner of impairments was early on probably the most consequential articulation of contempt. Sara Nović, "The US Right Is Coming for Disabled People. Here's Why That Threatens Everyone," *The Guardian*, March 27, 2025.
- 23 Jonar Sabilano, "Trump's Remarks About Serge Kovalski Speak to a Bigger Problem," *Userway* (blog) →.
- 24 Fred C. Trump III, "My Uncle Donald Trump Told Me Disabled Americans Like My Son 'Should Just Die,'" *Time*, July 24, 2024.
- 25 John Haltiwanger, "Trump Told a Crowd of Nearly All White Supporters That They Have 'Good Genes,'" *Business Insider*, September 21, 2021; Sebastian Murdock, "Trump Called Harris 'Retarded,' Railed Against Jews Supporting Her: Report," *Huffpost*, October 12, 2024.
- 26 The statement given to the press in the wake of the crash exemplified his by now well-honed triple tactic of responding to any crisis by first of all going on attack, secondly admitting nothing, and thirdly claiming victory. But it was above all a ramble filled with an astonishing amount of inflated self-regard and assertions to the effect that "we have to have our smartest people" as air traffic controllers: "They have to be talented, naturally talented. Geniuses," followed up later the same day by a White House memo declaring that under his predecessor Joseph Biden, whose administration "egregiously rejected merit-based hiring," the Federal Aviation Administration had "specifically recruit(ed) individuals with 'severe intellectual' disabilities." See "Leading Disability Organizations: Blame of Deadly Crash on Disabled Federal Workers Is Baseless, Irresponsible," National Disability Rights Network, January 30, 2025 →. The White House memo remains online →.

Category
Fascism

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