

Critique of “learning what was never taught”

[People](#), [Adolf Hitler](#)



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Critique of " Learning What Was Never Taught" Short Story by Sabine Reichel

In this short story, author Sabine Reichel tells her tale of growing up in a post-WWII Germany education system. Her main focus is the lack of history being taught at that time. The specific history she is referring to being that of Adolf Hitler, the holocaust, and the Third Reich. She looks at her own experience with her teachers and then talks at length about an interview she conducted later in her life with an older man who was a teacher in post-war Germany. This teacher, Casar Hagener, was a relatively young man at the time of the war and was very much against what was going on. Reichel conducted this interview when Hagener was seventy-six. He speaks of being forced into the Nazi party, being drafted, and his contempt for his contemporaries. The majority of her experience with teachers involves them dancing and side-stepping around the entire block of time that Germany was at war. The piece concludes stating that the German students today know more about Hitler and the Third Reich than any previous generation. Reichel could give more fact than observation if this piece were to truly hit home. She merely gives her own biased observation of what was going on with her teachers rather than any facts or case studies. Her inductive makes the story a bit weak in my opinion. I didn't really find much to sink my teeth into in this story as Reichel only gives her point of view. There are no facts backing up her claim that German students today know more about Hitler and the Third Reich than any other generation. The language used in the story is quite descriptive. There were a few images that jumped off the page at me. One in particular was, " The dark clouds were gone, the past had been left behind, and he turned jocular and voluble again. " Another device used in the story is

the simile. For instance when Reichel says the German youth must be, " resilient as leather, fast as a weasel, and hard as Krupp steel. " The other example being, " A house without a fence is disorderly, like a coat with a missing button. " I read this story immediately after writing my response to Hotel Rwanda and it made me think about how much history repeats itself. In thinking about the genocide in Rwanda and the lack of action from the international community I think about the lack of action right now in Darfur. Watching Hotel Rwanda, I could only think that the international community would learn from what happened in Europe during WWII and learn from that.