**Jason Doerre**

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**Office hours:**

**W-10:00–11:00; TH-3:00–4:00 or by appointment**

***Inside the Third Reich***

**GRMN/LACS 268**

**T/TH: 1:30–2:45**

**Hallden Laboratory 121**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The Third Reich, national socialism, fascism, are terms that we hear daily. A flip through the television channels or browsing through a newspaper will almost certainly yield a reference to the theme of Nazi Germany, which continues to loom large in Western culture. Today, the concept of Nazism continues to connote brutality, dictatorship, inhumanity, repression, and of course *evil*. Although it has been over seventy years since the passing of this political system, it has nonetheless left an indelible imprint on world history. This course takes a deeper look at Nazi Germany in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the politics, social framework, and culture of this era.

This course is an in-depth look at life inside Nazi Germany. Topics include the role of propaganda in the media and entertainment industries, Volk, anti-Semitism, race, narratives of the persecuted, the aesthetics of fascism, gender, youth, resistance, and collapse. By reading/viewing primary, secondary, literary, and filmic texts, pertaining to these themes, we will discuss the rise and fall of the Third Reich and attempt to answer some of the larger questions of the twentieth century.

**COURSE PHILOSOPHY REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

As a seminar, this course is based around the fundamental components of the close reading of texts and thoughtful analysis of them in class and in writing. In order to achieve these objectives, you should ALWAYS take care to do the following: 1) carefully read and take notes on all assigned materials, being sure to identify major themes, key passages, new terminology, and formulate questions; 2) participate in class discussion, making reference to the assigned materials and your notes about them and engage with the ideas of your classmates; 3) to prepare for the graded assignments you should rely on the notes that you took while reading/viewing and those you took in class.

***REQUIREMENTS***

**About the Course Format:**

Please note that this course is designed as a ***seminar***. I may sometimes include shorter lectures that introduce themes and provide context for the assigned materials. The backbone of the course, however, is class discussion of the materials and topics at hand. The overall collective success of the course, as well as your personal success, depends upon your assiduous attendance, thorough preparedness, and thoughtful contribution in discussing the readings and viewings. Note that no prior knowledge to German history or World War II is necessary. However, I do require that everyone rise to the task of conducting herself/himself like an intellectual, and be dedicated to learning.

The assignments are designed to assess an array of perspectives regarding the experience of the Third Reich. There will be a book review that requires for you to analyze a novel in depth. A midterm exam consisting of short answer questions, and essay question that will be administered in class. The final project will consist of a paper (8-10 pgs.) on a topic of your choosing, approved by me.

**Workload and Expectations**

This course will entail viewings and readings that will be done on your time, collaborating with classmates, academic writing, and other preparation. ***There is no prerequisite in terms of prior knowledge about Germany, World War II, European History etc., but it is expected that you are willing to engage with the materials in an intellectual fashion fitting for a college seminar.***

According to the college’s guidelines, you should expect to spend about 9 hours of work outside of class for a one-credit course at Trinity. Please plan accordingly.

**Book Review Essay:**

You will write one critical book review on one or more of the three books that we will read over the course of the semester. In it, you should be able to forcefully explain why or why not this book is an important document about the Third Reich. Your analysis will be about three to five pages in length.

**Midterm:**

There will be a written midterm exam that will be administered in class. The midterm will consist of several short answer questions and one longer essay question pertaining to our readings and discussion. The midterm is open notes and you will get a study guide in advance to know the direction of the questions.

**Discussion Leads:**

Most class periods will have up to two discussion leaders who are responsible for leading the discussion. These students will be responsible for providing an overview of what the readings for that particular day are about. Rather than summarize the readings, the students should raise questions, point out problems, make connections, and introduce ideas for the discussion. Because each of you will be a discussion leader twice in the semester, it is expected that those who are not presenting be attentive and ready to respond. The leaders should prepare a PowerPoint presentation that outlines the discussion and has questions. This is NOT a formal presentation, but is intended to allow students some agency with the material.

**Final Paper:**

Towards the end of the semester, you will communicate with me about a final paper topic. This paper will be 8-10 pages in length and will be supported by no less than three outside scholarly sources. By the final weeks of classes, you will hand in a paragraph-length abstract that lays out what your paper will be about, as well as a bibliography that tells what sources you will be using.

**Participation:**

Regular attendance is required. Being in class is the most essential aspect of a seminar and I will be vigilant in holding students accountable to this. After a second unexcused absence, your participation percentage will be dropped. Please refer to the student handbook about excused absences. **If your circumstances meet the specifications of an excused absence, you must notify me per email before the beginning of class, or I will deem it as unexcused. Should your absence be excused, you will be responsible for making up for the material you missed that day. *If your notification of the absence is too late* (i.e., 2 hours before class) your absence will not count as excused.**

Your daily participation will be charted in my gradebook as follows:

√ = in attendance, came prepared, participated OR in the case of an unexcused absence made a satisfactory Moodle post.

— = Came exceptionally late, came insufficiently prepared, or seemed distracted and did not participate

+ = Was in attendance, came prepared, made significant contributions to discussion, thoughtful response

Note: Poor performance will necessarily lower your participation grade. Conversely, I gladly reward high performers.

Grade Breakdown

Participation: 25%

Midterm: 20%

Discussion Leads: 15%

Book Review: 15%

Final Paper: 25%

**COURSE MATERIALS**

Most of the readings will be available on the course’s Moodle page, and the films will be available via Kaltura on Moodle. Please bring all of the readings, as well as your notes about them to each and every class (digital or hard copy). Nevertheless, I ask that you procure a copy of the following books, which are available at the Campus Bookstore.

* Ernst Jünger, *On the Marble Cliffs*
* Ullrich Boschwitz, *The Passenger*

**OTHER RULES**

I allow students to use electronic devices in the class to view readings and to take notes. This means a laptop or tablet, NOT mobile phones. Please stay on task and use these devices only for class purposes.

**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Trinity College is committed to creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities who may need some accommodation in order to fully participate in this class are urged to contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center, as soon as possible, to explore what arrangements need to be made to assure access.

If you have approval for academic accommodations, please notify me by the end of week two of classes. For those students with accommodations approved after the start of the semester, a minimum of 10 days’ notice is required. Please be sure to meet with me privately to discuss implementation.

Student Accessibility Resources can be reached by emailing [SARC@trincoll.edu](mailto:SARC@trincoll.edu).

**USE OF AI PROGRAMS:**

You have certainly heard by now about increasingly popular publicly-available artificial intelligence (A.I.) tools that produce writing when given human input/prompts. There have been many concerns raised by teachers across grade levels and institutions about the prospect of students using such technologies to cheat by having an A.I. write their essays or other writing assignments for them. We will doubtless have ongoing conversations in this course about the role of A.I. writing in our own processes, and even the ways that A.I. can be helpful to us as writers. However, a word of caution: any attempt to pass off A.I. writing as your own in this class constitutes a violation of Trinity College's intellectual honesty policy. As the Student Handbook explains, “Intellectual honesty assumes that students do their own work and that they credit properly those upon whose work and thought they draw” (28-37; 28). Failure to abide by the policy may result in censure, suspension, or even expulsion. The use of A.I. writing tools for the purposes of cheating is also practically unwise for the following reasons:

* -  As with any other kind of cheating, **the main person you’re cheating is yourself** – if you don’t actually put in the work of developing your writing skills organically, you’ve just paid a bunch of money to learn nothing, and that lack of organic skill development will catch up with you eventually.
* -  In a word, **A.I. writing is not consistently good, and it’s risky to use**. A.I. writing software – in its best current iteration – produces writing that is mostly formulaic and generic, lacks the ability to meaningfully integrate critical contextual detail, and cannot properly cite / synthesize sources (in fact, it often fabricates them, which is a major academic integrity violation if caught).
* -  **For the assignments we will be completing, it is simply much easier to write your own work in this class**. A.I. writing tools are notoriously context-blind, and in a class where written work draws on localized concepts and points of discussion from our class (including written reflections on your own personal writing process), you’re likely going to get frustrated if you try to ask an A.I. to perform these tasks for you. I’ve tested the writing prompts & assignments I’ve developed this semester with some of the best A.I. writing tools out there, and none of them can consistently produce writing that meets the standard required for this course.
* -  As a human reader and your teacher, I don’t care what you can get an A.I. program to write. **I want to hear your unique voice** and help you develop it into something you can use and be proud of throughout your life, in a wide array of contexts. So please be genuine in your writing for this class – I promise that will make things far more enjoyable for all of us. (credit to **Alex Helberg** for this statement)

**Please note that some the readings listed below are tentative and might change over the course of the semester. All changes will be made on the course Moodle web page.**

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|  | **WWI, The Weimar Republic, and Premonitions of a Third Reich** |
| **Week 1:**  **Sept. 5, 7** | **Tuesday**  **Course Introduction**  **Thursday** Disillusionment after WWI  **Reading:**   * Paul von Hindenburg, “The Stab in the Back” * Willi Wolfradt, “The Stab-in-the-Back Legend?” * Otto Gmelin, “Prohn Fights for His People.” * Ernst Jünger, *Storm of Steel* (excerpts) |
|  | **National Socialism and Its Origins** |
| **Week 2:**  **Sept. 12, 14** | **Tuesday**  **Reading:**   * Richard Evans, “The Emergence of Nazi Ideology.”   **Thursday**  **Readings:**   * Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* [part II: chapters 1–5]   **Discussion Lead:** |
| **Week 3:**  **Sept. 19, 21** | **Tuesday**  **Readings:**   * Peter Fritzsche, “The NSDAP 1919–1934: from Fringe Politics to the Seizure of Power.” * Wilfrid Bade, “The SA Conquers Berlin: A Documentary Report.”   **Discussion Lead:**    **Thursday**  **Film:**   * Lutz Hachmeister, *The Goebbels Experiment*   **Discussion Lead:** |
|  | **The Consolidation of Power** |
| **Week 4:**  **Sept. 26, 28** | **Tuesday**  **Reading:**   * Peter Fritzsche, *Hitler’s First Hundred Days: When the Germans Embraced the Third Reich* (excerpt)   **Discussion Lead:**  **Thursday**  **Reading:**   * Richard Evans, “The Reichstag Fire.”   **Discussion Lead:** |
|  | **The Aesthetics of Fascism** |
| **Week 5:**  **Oct. 3**  **(No Class Oct. 5)** | **Tuesday**  **Reading/Film:**   * Peter Cohen, *The Architecture of Doom* * Susan Sontag, “Fascinating Fascism.”   **Discussion Lead:** |
| **Week 6:**  **Oct. 12 (No Class Oct. 10 Trinity Days)** | **Thursday**  **Film:**   * Leni Riefenstahl, *Triumph of the Will*   **Discussion Lead:** |
|  | **Nazi Youth** |
| **Week 7:**  **Oct. 17** | **Tuesday**  **Reading:**   * George Mosse, “The Key: Education of Youth” * Baldur von Schirach, “The Hitler Youth”   **Discussion Lead:**    **Film:**   * Hans Steinhoff, *Hitlerjunge Quex*   **Discussion Lead:** |
|  | **Art and Entertainment** |
| **Week 7:**  **Oct. 19** | **Thursday**  **Reading:**   * Susan Tegel, *Nazis and the Cinema*   **Film:**   * Rolf Hansen, *The Great Love*   **Discussion Lead:** |
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| **Week 8:**  **Oct. 24, 26** | **Tuesday**  **Reading:**   * Ernst Jünger, *On the Marble Cliffs* (part 1)     **Discussion Lead:**  **Thursday**  **Reading:**   * Ernst Jünger, *On the Marble Cliffs* (part 2)   **Discussion Lead:** |
| **Week 9:**  **Oct. 31** | **Tuesday**  **\*\*\*Midterm\*\*\*** |
|  | **The Racial Politics of the Third Reich** |
| **Week 9:**  **Nov. 2** | **Thursday**  **Reading:**   * Eric Rentschler, “The Elective Other: *Jew Süß*” * Alfred Rosenberg, “The Earth-Centered Jew Lacks a Soul” * Jakob Graf, “Heredity and Racial Biology for Students”   **Film:**   * Veit Harlan, *Jud Süß*   **Discussion Lead:** |
|  | **Perspectives of the Persecuted** |
| **Week 10:**  **Nov. 7, 9** | **Tuesday**  **Reading:**   * Ulrich Boschwitz, *The Passenger* (part 1)   **Discussion Lead:**  **Thursday**  **Reading:**   * Ulrich Boschwitz, *The Passenger* (part 1)   **Discussion Lead:** |
| **Week 11:**  **Nov. (Nov. 14 Bicentennial Day No Classes), 16** | **Thursday**  **Film:**   * Benjamin Cantu and Matt Lambert, *El Dorado: Everything the Nazis Hate* (2023) [This film is on Netflix]   **Discussion Lead:**  **\*\*\*Book Review Due\*\*\*** |
|  | **Resistance** |
| **Week 12:**  **Nov. 21 (No Class Nov. 23 Thanksgiving)** | **Reading:**   * Katharina Jacob, “Comrade–Woman–Mother– Resistance Fighter”   **Film:**   * Marc Rothemund, *Sophie Scholl*: *The Last Days*     **Discussion Lead:** |
|  | **The Third Reich at War** |
| **Week 13:**  **Nov. 28** | **Tuesday**  **Reading:**   * Edward Shils and Morris Janowitz, “Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht in WWII.” (1948)   **Film:**   * Joseph Vilsmaier, *Stalingrad* (1993)   **Discussion Lead:** |
| **Nov. 30** | **Thursday**  **Film:**   * Veit Harlan, *Kolberg* (1945)   **Discussion Lead:** |
| **Week 14:**  **Dec. 5, 7** | **Tuesday**  **Reading:**   * Uwe Timm, *In My Brother’s Shadow: A Life and Death in the SS* (part 1)   **Discussion Lead:**  **Thursday**  **Reading:**   * Uwe Timm, *In My Brother’s Shadow: A Life and Death in the SS* (part 1)     **Discussion Lead:** |
| **Week 15:**  **Dec. 12** | **Tuesday**  **Film:**   * Michael Verhoeven, *The Unknown Soldier*   **Discussion Lead:** |