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HIST 105-05, Topics in History: Why Hitler?, Spring 2009

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**HISTORY 105 – 05
29308**

Topics in History: Why Hitler?

Prof. Hatfield
History Office phone 843-3662

Spring Semester 2008-09
304 Clough - TR 9:30-10:45

Staying in Touch

Generally I am on campus only on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I will be available before class (8:45-9:15) and after class (10:45-11:15). Please feel free to contact me by E-mail (Hatfield@rhodes.edu). My home phone is 384-0556. (Please do not call after 10:30 P.M., unless it is an emergency.)

Course Objectives

- I. For each student to develop and write an original essay of historical interpretation that deals with the main issues of the question "Why Hitler?" (1) How and why was Hitler appointed to the office of Chancellor on 30 January 1933? (2) What were the subsequent moves made by Hitler to convert his position into a dictatorship, why did he do this, and why was this dictatorship accepted, even embraced, by the German nation? (3) Why did Hitler use his dictatorial power for the purposes of expansion, domination, and extermination, and what were the consequences for his followers, for his victims, and for the world at large? In all of this, students will be looking at ways that historians assess responsibility for the Second World War and the Holocaust.
- II. For each student to develop further the skills necessary to accomplish the main objective:
 - A. in the critical assessment of a wide variety of secondary sources
 - B. in interpreting selected primary sources
 - C. in writing effectively, in employing proper forms of documentation, and in writing persuasively, crafting sound arguments for his/her interpretations

Course Requirements

- I. Attendance and participation
 - A. Students are expected to attend all 28 class sessions for the semester.
 - B. Students are expected to read the assignment before each class session and to come to class with questions and points of discussion.
 - C. Students are expected to submit all work on the dates indicated in this Syllabus.
 - D. Students are expected to participate
 1. in general class discussions of the assigned readings,
 2. and by presenting oral reports on their book reviews on the specified dates.
- II. Required class readings (to be purchased in the College bookstore)
 - A. Henry A. Turner, Jr., *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power: January 1933*.

- B. Joachim Remak, ed., *The Nazi Years: A Documentary History*.
- C. Ron Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler: The Search for the Origins of His Evil*.
- D. Course packet containing extracts from:
 - 1. Karl D. Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*.
 - 2. Ian Kershaw, *Hitler. 1889-1936: Hubris*.
 - 3. Ian Kershaw, *Hitler. 1936-1945: Nemesis*.

III. Book Review Project

For this project, each student will select, from a list of approved titles, a book to read and review. These works of scholarly interpretation are available in Barret Library. The review project will be accomplished in the following stages:

- A. Book selection by lottery on Thursday 15 January.
- B. A preview of the book, submitted on the proper form on Tuesday 20 January.
- C. A formal **critical review** of the book, written in conformity with guidelines and instructions that will be distributed. The critical review will be due in class on Thursday 29 January.
- D. A **revised critical review** is due on Tuesday 10 February. (Hard copy and computer file, formatted for the book project)

IV. Interpretive Essay Project

Over the course of the semester each student will develop and write an original interpretive essay on the crucial issues encompassed in the question, "Why Hitler?" There will be three main phases in developing the essay:

Part One: How and why was Hitler appointed to the office of Chancellor on 30 January 1933?

Instructions distributed: Thursday 12 February.

Rough draft brought to class for discussion: Thursday 19 February.

Essay One Hard Copy due: Thursday 26 February.

Revised essay, as part of the final combined essay, due: Wednesday 6 May..

Part Two: Why and how did Hitler convert his office into a personal dictatorship and why was his dictatorship accepted, even embraced, by the German nation?

Instructions distributed: Tuesday 24 March.

Rough draft brought to class for discussion: Tuesday 31 March.

Essay Two Hard Copy due: Tuesday 7 April.

Revised essay, as part of the final combined essay, due: Wednesday 6 May.

Part Three: Why did Hitler use the power of the German state for the purposes of expansion, domination, and extermination, and how may one assess responsibility for World War II and the Holocaust?

Instructions distributed: Thursday 23 April.

Rough draft brought to class for discussion: Thursday 30 April.

Essay Three, included as part of the final combined essay, due: Wednesday 6 May.

Final Combined Essay, including General Introduction, Revised Part One, Revised Part Two, Part Three, and General Conclusion.

Instructions distributed: Thursday 30 April.

Hard Copy Final Essay due on or before Wednesday 6 May, 11:00 A.M.

V. Elements of the course grade

A. Attendance 5%

The grade for attendance will be determined according to the following scale:

Number of absences	Numerical grade	Number of absences	Numerical grade
0	100	5	75
1	95	6	70
2	90	7	60
3	85	more than 7	0
4	80		

B. Participation 15%

General class discussion 10%
Class presentation 5%

C. Written Book Review 20%

D. Essay project 60%

Part One 15%
Part Two 15%
Part Three 15%
Final, completed essay 15%

VI. Grade values

A	93-100	B+	88-89	C+	78-79	D+	68-69	F	0-59
A-	90 - 92	B	83-87	C	73-77	D	63-67		
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

GETTING STARTED:

1. Th 15 Jan Introduction to the Course
Lottery for review project books
2. T 20 Jan Overview of Hitler's Career and Impact (1)

Film: The Fatal Attraction of Adolf Hitler (Beginning)
Produced by Bill Treharne Jones for the BBC
Narrated by Dr. Christopher Andrew

Book preview due.

Reviewing works of historical literature

3. Th 22 Jan Overview of Hitler's Career and Impact (2)

Film: The Fatal Attraction of Adolf Hitler (Conclusion)
Produced by Bill Treharne Jones for the BBC
Narrated by Dr. Christopher Andrew

Documentary film as a historical source

PART ONE: THE POLITICIAN

The issue: How and why was Hitler appointed to the office of Chancellor on 30 January 1933?

4. T 27 Jan The Collapse of the Liberal Democratic Experiment, 1929-1932

Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, 3-45, Course packet, 1-23b
5. Th 29 Jan Hitler and the Rise of the Nazis, 1929-1932

Kershaw, *Hitler 1889-1936: Hubris*, xi-xiv, xix-xxx, Course packet, 33-43

Book Review is due

6. T 3 Feb 1932 — The Decisive Year

Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, 1-29

7. Th 5 Feb Beginning of the Conspiracy Against Schleicher and the Lippe Landtag Elections
Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, 31-78
8. T 10 Feb Schleicher Miscalculates
Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, 79-108
Revised book review is due (hard copy and computer file, formatted for the book project)
9. Th 12 Feb Schleicher's Fall
Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, 109-133
Instructions for writing Essay One
10. T 17 Feb Appointment of the Hitler/Papen Government
Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, 45-49, Course packet, 23b-25;
Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, 135-183;
Kershaw, *Hitler, 1889-1936: Hubris*, 423-427, Course packet, 65-67
11. Th 19 Feb Why Hitler? Part One
(Bring rough draft of Essay One to class)
Historical Writing and Documentation
Sharing Interpretive Approaches

PART TWO: THE DICTATOR

The Issues: How and why does Hitler change his constitutional office (Chancellor) into a personal dictatorship (Führer) and why is his dictatorship accepted, even embraced, by the German nation?

12. T 24 Feb Creating Dictatorship
Remak, *The Hitler Years*, 49-55
Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, 163-164
13. Th 26 Feb Introduction to Rosenbaum's Project
Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, xi-xlvi
Interpretive Essay One is due.

14. T 3 March The child is father to the man

Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, 57-67, Course packet, 27-32;
Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, 3-59

15. Th 5 March Institutional "Co-ordination" (*Gleichschaltung*)

Remak, *The Hitler Years*, 55-69

16. T 10 March "Revolutionizing" Society

Remak, *The Hitler Years*, 71-82

17. Th 12 March The Roles of Propaganda and Police Terror

Remak, *The Hitler Years*, 83-92

[T 17 March No class – Spring Break.]

[Th 19 March No class – Spring Break]

18. T 24 March Resistance to *Gleichschaltung*: The Churches

Remak, *The Hitler Years*, 93-105

Instructions for writing Essay Part Two

19. Th 26 March Resistance to Dictatorship

Remak, *The Hitler Years*, 161-176

20. T 31 March Why Hitler? Part Two

(Bring rough draft of Essay Two to class)
Effective writing
Sharing interpretive approaches

PART THREE:THE PROPHET

The issue: The war for living space and the war against the Jews: The Question of Responsibility

21. Th 2 April Hitler's Character: "The Dark Matter"

Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, 63- 96, 135-152
Interpretive Essay Two is due.
22. T 7 April The Origins of Hitler's Anti-Semitism

Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, 239-250
Kershaw, *Hitler, 1889-1936: Hubris*, 97-125, Course pack, 49-63
- [Th 9 April No class – Easter Break]
23. T 14 April Living Space

Kershaw, *Hitler, 1936-1945: Nemesis*, xv-xviii, xxv-xlvi,
Course pack, 69-79
Remak, *The Hitler Years*, 107-128
24. Th 16 April Functionalist or Intentionalist?

Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, 221-236;
Remak, *The Hitler Years*, 133-143
25. T 21 April Blaming God and Blaming Victims

Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, 279-318
26. Th 23 April Blaming the Germans

Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, 337-368

Instructions for Interpretive Essay, Part Three
27. T 28 April Assessing Historical Responsibility

Kershaw, *Hitler, 1936-1945: Nemesis*, 461- 495, course packet, 81-99
Remak, *The Hitler Years*, 145-160

28. Th 30 April Assessing Moral Responsibility

[Bring to class rough draft of Essay Three]
Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler*, 369-395

Instructions for the final combined essay
Sharing Interpretive Insights for Part Three

W 6 May **Combined Interpretive Essay Due at 11:00 A.M.**