



Was Nazi Germany the incarnation of evil in the modern world? Did its culture consist only of propaganda? Why were art and culture considered so central to the Nazi project?

Such perceptions arose after World War II, colored by a Cold War tendency to see similarities between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, as well as by the hasty, controversial program of denazification conducted under Allied occupation. In the past 20 years scholars have taken a serious look at Nazi culture and revealed a much more complex set of factors at work in all areas of cultural life.

This course introduces students to the contradictory conditions that led to cultural shifts when the Nazis came to power in 1933 and then examines how Nazi policies influenced cultural life. We will consider propaganda and entertainment films, music and theater, art and architecture, youth education and consumer culture. The team-taught course aims to identify common misconceptions about culture in Nazi Germany, to gain a deeper understanding of the workings of its cultural policy, and to assess whether political ideology was able to form something we can identify as a distinct “Nazi culture.”

# Nazi Culture

German 278 / 001

Instructors: Profs. Jost Hermand and Marc Silberman

Lecture: Wed. 6 – 7:40 pm

Discussion: Mon. 7 – 7:50 pm (Silberman) or Wed. 4:35 – 5:25 pm (Hermand)

Open to Freshmen. This course counts towards the humanities breadth requirement.

Students register both for the lecture and one of the discussion sections. The discussion section offers an opportunity to talk gain a deeper understanding of the issues raised in the lecture. There will be short writing assignments as well as readings designed to augment the lecture topic each week. In addition, there will be a mid-term and final examination.

