

The University of Western Ontario
Department of Film Studies
Film 2191F/German 2160F/CLC 2105A

**Ministry of Fear:
Media and Propaganda in the Third Reich**
Mondays 2:30-4:30 and Thursdays 1:30 to 4:30 pm
Fall 2015

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Office Hours:

Monday 12:30-2:30am or by appointment

Course Objectives:

In this course we will study the history and techniques of German propaganda under National Socialism, focusing on major propaganda campaigns and the restructuring of mass media: film, radio, newsreel, and print. We will read key texts on Nazi ideology and examine cartoons and caricatures, Nazi feature film, newsreel and documentary, and the discourse on jazz and degenerate art. The final unit of the course also includes a contemporary novel on radio technology and the acoustics of the Third Reich.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course you will be able to identify key propaganda techniques used in a variety of media during the Third Reich. You will be able to identify rhetorical strategies used and discuss, analyse and compare how propaganda is utilized across a variety of media, both in general terms and in the specific context of the works studied.

Course Requirements:

Attendance and Classroom Participation (includes 1 quiz) 30%

Propaganda Analysis I and II (6 pages each) 35%

Final Exam 35%

All students are required to complete the required reading assignment and come to class with questions and substantive comments concerning assigned readings.

Textbooks:

Available for purchase at the UWO Bookstore:

Marcel Beyer, *The Karnau Tapes* (available as custom course packet)

Additional readings for the course are available on *Owl*

Course Schedule*:

PROPAGANDA AND NAZI GERMANY

September 10—Screening: *Divide and Conquer* (Dir. Lewis Seiler, Prod. Warner Brothers/US War of Information, 1942) *Prelude to War* (Frank Capra, 1942 - 'Why We Fight' Propaganda Film Series on the Nazi conquest of Western Europe)

September 14—Discussion: PROPAGANDA AND NAZI GERMANY

Reading: Mary Fulbrook, "The Weimar Republic: Origins and Orientations" and "Collapse of Democracy" (*Suggested Reading*, OWL), David Welch "The Führer Myth and Consent in Everyday Life" (OWL); Goebbels 15. March 1933: "The Tasks of the Ministry for Propaganda" (OWL)

MARTYRDOM: 'EMOTIONAL ENGINEERING'

September 17—Screening: *Hitler Youth Quex* (Hans Steinhoff, 1933)

September 21— Discussion: MARTYRDOM: *HITLER YOUTH QUEX*

Reading: Eric Rentschler "Emotional Engineering: *Hitler Youth Quex*" (OWL); Linda Schulte-Sasse, "Foreign Contamination: *Hitler Youth Quex*, Hans Westmar, S. A. Man Brand, For Human Rights, and Pour le Merite" (OWL)

MASS ORNAMENT AND FASCISM: LENI RIEFENSTAHL

September 24— Screening: *Triumph of the Will/Triumph des Willens* (Riefenstahl, 1935)

September 28— Discussion: MASS ORNAMENT AND FASCISM: *TRIUMPH OF THE WILL*

Reading: Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism" (OWL), Tomasolu, "The Mass Psychology of Fascist Cinema: Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*" (OWL); Loiperdinger, Martin and David Culbert, "Leni Riefenstahl, the SA, and the Nazi Party Rally Films, Nuremberg 1933-1934: 'Sieg des Glaubens' and 'Triumph des Willens'" (OWL)

October 1— Screening: *Olympia* (Riefenstahl, 1938), clips

October 5 – Discussion: MASS ORNAMENT AND FASCISM: *OLYMPIA*

Reading: "Once the Olympics are through, we'll beat up the Jew": German Jewish Sport 1898-1938 and Anti-Semitic Discourse" (OWL); "Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia*: Brilliant Cinematography or Nazi Propaganda?" (OWL); Suggested Excerpts: "From Athens to Berlin: The 1936 Olympics and Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia*" (*Suggested Reading*, OWL)

POPULAR NAZI CINEMA: MARTYRDOM AND MELODRAMA

October 8 – Screening: *Ich klage an/I accuse* (Wolfgang Liebeneier, 1941)

October 12 – Thanksgiving, Class Cancelled

October 15 -- Discussion: MARTYRDOM AND MELODRAMA

Reading: Patrice Petro, “Nazi Cinema at the Intersection of the Classical and the Popular” (OWL), Mary Elizabeth O’Brien “Melodrama” [excerpt] from *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment: The Politics of Entertainment* (OWL)

GERMAN HEROISM: THIRD REICH NEWSREELS AND CAMPAIGN FILMS

Screening -- Clips from newsreels, documentaries and campaign films including *Gestern und heute/Yesterday and Today* (Hans Steinmann, 1938) and *Sieg im Westen/Victory in the West* (Brunsch and Kortwich, 1941). Clips from Anti-Axis Propaganda film and cartoons, some using re-edited Nazi newsreel (Disney, *Cartoons at War; Divide and Conquer*); *Lambeth Walk Nazi Style* (Len Lye and Charles Ridley, 1942)

October 19 -- Discussion HEROISM: THIRD REICH NEWSREELS AND CAMPAIGN FILMS

Reading: Susan Tegel, “Third Reich newsreels--an effective tool of propaganda?” (OWL); “A Cinematic Epic of German Heroism”: Newsreel and documentary films as propaganda devices” (OWL); Welch, “Propaganda and Public Opinion” (OWL); Suggested Reading: Excerpts from Siegfried Kracauer “Conquest of Europe on the Screen: The Nazi Newsreel 1939-1940” and Hans Spier on the use of maps in propaganda “Magic Geography” (OWL)

ANTI-SEMITISM: THEORY AND MEDIA CONSTRUCTION

October 22 -- Screening *Der ewige Jude/Eternal Jew* (Fritz Hippler, 1940) and Clips: *The Rothschilds* (Waschneck, 1940)

October 26 -- Discussion: ANTI-SEMITISM: *Eternal Jew*
PROPAGANDA ANALYSIS I DUE

Reading: “A Cinematic Construction of Nazi Anti-Semitism: The Documentary *Der ewige Jude*” (OWL); George L. Mosse, “The Jews: Myth and Counter-Myth” and Jeffrey Herf, “The Jews, The War, and the Holocaust” (OWL)

October 29 -- Fall Break Class Cancelled

November 2 – In-Class QUIZ

In-Class Clips: *Television under The Swastika: The History of Nazi Television*

Discussion and Reading: “Restructuring the Means of Mass Communication” (OWL)

November 5 -- Screening *Jud Süß* (Veit Harlan, 1940)

November 9 -- Discussion: **ANTI-SEMITISM: *Jew Süß***

Reading: David Culbert, “The Impact of Anti-Semitic Film Propaganda on German Audiences: *Jew Süß* and *The Wandering Jew* (1940)” (OWL); Rentschler, “The Elective Other: *Jew Süß* (1940)” (OWL); Susan Tegel, “Veit Harlan’s *Jew Süß*” (OWL)

PROPAGANDA IN THE SHADOW OF THE DEATH CAMPS AND THE DISCOURSE ON “DEGENERATE” MUSIC AND ART

November 12 -- Screening: *The Führer Gives a City to the Jews* a.k.a *Theresienstadt: Ein Dokumentarfilm aus dem jüdischen Siedlungsgebiet* (Germany, Kurt Geron 1944, 23 min; incomplete); Clips: *Propaganda Swing: Dr. Goebbels Jazz Orchestra* (Eisermann, 1989)

November 16 -- Discussion: **Propaganda in the Shadow of the Death Camps and the Discourse on Degenerate Art and Music**

Reading: Jeffrey Herf, “Propaganda in the Shadow of the Death Camps” (OWL); Lutz Becker, “Film Documents of Theresienstadt” (OWL); Zdenka Fantlova-Ehrlich, “*Terezin: the town Hitler gave to the Jews*” (OWL); “The Target of Racial Purity: The Degenerate Music’ Exhibition in Duesseldorf, 1938” (OWL)

ACOUSTICS OF THE THIRD REICH: CONTEMPORARY FILM

November 19 -- Screening: *The Fall Gleiwitz* (East Germany, 1961, dir. Gerhard Klein)

November 23 -- Discussion: *Fall Gleiwitz* (no reading **PROPAGANDA ANALYSIS II DUE**)

In-Class Analysis of Propaganda Documents: *Hitler’s Airwaves* (propaganda lyrics), Ministry of Propaganda Short Film Sketches, *Tran und Helle* (1939), Episodes: “Ausländische Sender/Foreign Radio Broadcasts” and “Feind hört mit/The Enemy is Listening in”)

ACOUSTICS OF THE THIRD REICH: CONTEMPORARY NOVEL

November 26 Reading: *The Karnau Tapes*, Ch. I- II (pp. 1-51)

November 30 Reading: *The Karnau Tapes*, Ch. III-IV (pp. 52-112)

December 3 Reading: *The Karnau Tapes*, Ch. V–VI (pp. 113-163)

December 7 Reading: *The Karnau Tapes*, Ch. VII-IX (pp. 164-227); Suggested reading: Ulrich Schoenherr, “Topophony of Fascism: On Marcel Beyer’s *The Karnau Tapes*” (OWL)

FINAL EXAM TBA

Prerequisite: none

Antirequisite: none

Please Note: The film screenings for the course are mandatory. If you miss a class or a screening you are responsible for arranging a viewing of the assigned film at the Film Resource Centre in AHB 1G19. Please note that not all films are available at the Film Resource Centre. More than one unexcused absence will be reflected in your attendance mark. Assignments handed in late without prior approval will be penalized 3% per day. You must request an extension *before* the due date, and extensions will be given at my discretion.

1. Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a major academic offence. Students must write their essays in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage, from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations.

www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

2. Plagiarism Checking: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between the University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

3. Prerequisites: Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

4. UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness: Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and or assignments must apply to their Academic Counseling Office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

Please go to the following site for information on the university Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness: www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

For information on the examination services provided by the Student Development Centre, please visit: www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd

5. Mental Health: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>

6. Complaints: If students have a complaint concerning a course in which they are enrolled, they must discuss the matter with the instructor of the course. If students are still not satisfied, they should then take the complaint to the Film Studies Office, IGAB 0N64. These regulations are in place because a failure to follow these procedures creates the potential for injustices of various kinds affecting either the instructor or the students themselves, or both parties. Concerns should not be allowed to fester but should be raised with the instructor in a timely manner, so that they can be addressed in time to make a difference to the course.

*This course schedule is subject to change.

Grading Criteria for Written Assignments

A (80 and up)

Clear development of a specific and challenging thesis, with proper paragraphs

Sentence structure correct, with full range of sentence types (compound, complex, and compound-complex), with full range of punctuation (including semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses)

Graceful style, neither pompous nor breezy, and few errors

Detailed reference to appropriate texts, with evidence of individual response

Quotations well integrated into text, with proper documentation

Ability not only to expound subject but to see it around—subtleties and ambiguities, qualifications and concessions, relations to other subjects, etc.

B (70 to 79)

Clear development of a specific thesis, with proper paragraphs

Sentence structure correct, with reasonable range of sentence types and full range of punctuation

Style not too wordy, with errors relatively few and minor

Adequately detailed reference to texts

Quotations well integrated into text, with proper documentation

Ability to expound reasonably sophisticated ideas with clarity

C (60 to 69)

Reasonably clear development of a thesis, with proper paragraphs

Sentence structure correct, but perhaps overly simple, with tendency to avoid punctuation besides period and comma

Errors relatively few, but occasionally serious, with evident misunderstanding of some point of elementary grammar (comma splices, fragments, semicolon errors, subject-verb disagreements, poorly integrated quotations)

Effort to support points with references to the text, with reasonable effort at documentation

Basic ability to expound ideas

D (50 to 59)

Inadequacy at *one* of the following levels:

Difficulty with paragraphing or consecutive thought

Errors of grammar or diction frequent enough to interfere with understanding

Ideas inchoate, but clouded by weak expression

Overgeneralization with inadequate support, or with examples that run to lengthy irrelevant paraphrase

F (49 and down)

Inadequacy on *several* levels at once

Ideas too simple for level of course

Content largely “borrowed” from sources with no individual distillation, but no apparent attempt to deceive

0 (Report to Department)

Plagiarism with intent to deceive