

**HIST 4990-02: Nazi Germany and the Holocaust**

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**Office:** History Building, Rm 256

**Office Hours:** Tuesday, Thursday 1-2 p.m.

Zoom/E-mail/Phone



**Course Introduction:**

The Third Reich orchestrated the mass murder of nearly twelve million men, women, and children between 1939 and 1945. This course will explore the history of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust by scrutinizing the rise of Adolf Hitler, the evolution of his genocidal program, and the legacy of National Socialism in the world today. Among the queries that we will consider include: how did the National Socialist German Workers Party turn economic crisis, social unrest, and political gridlock into the largest murder campaign in history? What drove perpetrators to participate in acts of genocide? How do we comprehend notions of guilt and responsibility, and where do we see departures from customary answers to these questions?

**Course Significance:**

Nazism and its legacy continue to cast a menacing shadow around the globe. The growing popularity of extreme-right populism and white nationalist groups, notably in Europe, Russia, and the United States, represent central threats to the foundational tenets of liberal democracy. I have no presumption that this course alone will prevent another “final solution” to a so-called “undesirable problem.” But I firmly believe that people in the twenty-first century must continue to learn about the history of the Holocaust in order to identify the conditions that helped make it possible. Democracy is a fragile thing, society an unstable construction, each threatening to spin wildly out of control. We can no longer comfort ourselves in a false logic that regards primordial racism as the exclusive property of Adolf Hitler and the distant past. Racism endures today in many forms and guises. Individuals who mask their nativist fantasies in euphemisms, pejorative generalizations, and catch-all promises are particularly dangerous. History cautions us to be wary of such people. What comes next can be very frightening, even worse than imaginable.

**Required Texts:**

Browning, Christopher. *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*. New York: HarperCollins, 2017.

Campt, Tina Marie. *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender, and Memory in the Third Reich*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005.

Fritzsche, Peter. *Hitler's First Hundred Days: When Germans Embraced the Third Reich*. New York: Basic Books, 2020.

Koonz, Claudia. *The Nazi Conscience*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005.

Lipstadt, Deborah E. *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2006.

Paxton, Robert. *The Anatomy of Fascism*. New York: Vintage Press, 2004.

Scholl, Inge. *The White Rose: Munich, 1942-1943*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1983.

**Optional Text:**

Bergen, Doris. *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*. New York: Rowman, 2017.

**WyoCourse Page:**

Along with the required texts, please find supplementary materials on the course webpage. These readings will often comprise the entire source base for the week. Also note that some of these readings are primary sources, so think about how they fit into the themes of the course. Students must complete all readings before the start of each class.

**Assignments:**

I will determine your final grade as follows:

UW Art Museum gallery project:	15%
USHMM "History Unfolded" project	20%
Three Analytical Essays	40%
<i>History on Trial</i> Reflection essay	25%

*\*I will not tolerate any form of Holocaust denial in this course. Such efforts will result in a failing grade and permanent dismissal from class.*

**\*While student health and safety are my primary concerns every year, the COVID-19 pandemic has created considerable uncertainty for all of us. As a result, if you feel ill or unsafe, please let me know in due course so that I can make special arrangements.**

15% UW Art Museum gallery project

(Due: Before the conclusion of the semester)

The University of Wyoming Art Museum is graciously in the process of crafting an art exhibition exclusively for this course. Raechel Cook, curator of academic engagement for the UW Art Museum, asked me to select from a wide variety of pieces, photographs, and contemporary artwork to feature in the exhibition. Once the digital exhibition is complete, she will reach out to us with a special link to the gallery.

Before the conclusion of the semester, students will need to write one **3-4-page** (750-1000 words) essay on a piece of your choosing. Students can also write about the entire collection and how it fits together thematically or otherwise. I intend for this assignment to be more of a thought piece, a personal essay that allows each of you to connect with an aspect of the Holocaust that exists beyond our class and secondary readings. Some potential guiding questions include:

*Who was the artist? What was she/he trying to express in the piece? Who was the intended audience? How do the pieces connect to our class or to others in the exhibition? What emotions do they evoke for you or for collective audiences?*

I encourage you to think creatively about this assignment and to express yourself as however you see fit. The Holocaust is a deeply emotional topic to consider and study. I hope that this assignment provides an occasion to explore this history in a manner beyond traditional texts and presentations.

20% USHMM “History Unfolded”

(Due: Before the conclusion of the semester)

The Mandel Center at United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) recently launched a new project, entitled “History Unfolded: US Newspapers and the Holocaust,” which traces what Americans knew about Nazi persecution of Jews and other peoples between 1933 and 1945. Before the conclusion of the spring semester, students must visit the Albany County Public Library (online or in-person if the pandemic allows) and search the repository’s newspaper collections for articles, headlines, and stories on

human rights violations in Nazi Germany. Other potential sites include the American Heritage Center and the Laramie County Public Library.

Students are required to upload a **minimum of three sources** to our course page on the USHMM's website (<https://newspapers.ushmm.org>) In the "Create and Account" tab, fill out the required information, and then join the group "University of Wyoming, Nazi Germany and the Holocaust." The USHMM will publish these materials and acknowledge you as an author when the site launches after the end of the semester!

### *About History Unfolded*

History Unfolded is a project of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. It asks students, teachers, and history buffs throughout the United States what was possible for Americans to have known about the Holocaust as it was happening and how Americans responded. Participants look in local newspapers for news and opinion about 39 different Holocaust-era events that took place in the United States and Europe, and submit articles they find to a national database, as well as information about newspapers that did not cover events. History Unfolded raises questions for scholars and will inform the Museum's initiative on Americans and the Holocaust.

### 40% Three Analytical Essays

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|-----|----------|-------------------------------|
| 10% | Essay #1 | (Due: 27 September – Part I)  |
| 15% | Essay #2 | (Due: 01 November – Part II)  |
| 15% | Essay #3 | (Due: 06 December – Part III) |

Students will write three **4-5-page** (1000-1250 words) essays over the course of the semester (12-point, Times New Roman font, and double-spaced). The instructor will distribute an essay prompt two weeks prior to the respective due date. Do not cite materials that are not included on the course syllabus. Essays will cover material exclusively from each respective "Part" of the syllabus.

These essays must establish a clear and easily identifiable argument that thoroughly answers the questions in the prompt. Each essay must provide a detailed commentary on the selected readings (not summary of the reviewed works). Successful papers will situate the merits of the readings in a larger historical context. This enables one to enter into a "conversation" with the materials under review. Successful essays do not need to agree with an author's argument or the instructor's position in class. Whether one supports or disagrees with a thesis is important, but the most important aspect of any argumentative essay is *how* and *why* an historian arrives at a position. As a means to supplement a point-of-view, students should consider a scholar's methodology, historical evidence,

organization, and methods of analysis. Students are not required to reference every reading in their respective essays, but should demonstrate a command of the relevant themes/information.

25% *History on Trial* Reflection Essay

(Due: 11 December 2020)

Dr. Deborah E. Lipstadt is a leading scholar of Jewish Studies and Holocaust denial at Emory University. In September 1996, David Irving, a Holocaust denier and independent historian, sued Lipstadt for libel in the United Kingdom. Irving claimed that she unfairly attributed him with Holocaust denial, and that her scholarship failed to account for what he considered “the real history” of the Third Reich and World War II. The trial attracted considerable attention in the international press and among historians of the Holocaust. After the proceedings ended, Dr. Lipstadt wrote a book about her experience, entitled *History on Trial: My Day in court with a Holocaust Denier*, which chronicled the significance of her victory.

Before the conclusion of the semester, students will read this book in its entirety and prepare a **6-8-page** (1500-2000 words) essay in response to a previously-circulated prompt. While students should consider *History on Trial* as the primary source for this assignment, they are also encouraged to draw upon other materials from the course, as well as any other sources that they deem helpful and appropriate. Students will have until the last day of Finals Week to submit these essays via WyoCourses.

**Grading Rubric:**

This course will follow the University of Wyoming’s standard grading scale:

*A=90-100 B=80-89 C=70-79 D=60-69 F=59 and below.*

**General Evaluation Rubric for Writing Assignments:**

I will evaluate all written assignments based on the rubric below:

- Thesis/argument is easily identifiable and insightful. It will serve as the thumbnail sketch for the entire paper.
- The use of evidence includes primary source material and relevant historiographical literature throughout the paper.
- The analysis requires the author to incorporate quoted material, primary evidence, and sound historical viewpoints to support the proposed argument.
- The structure requires a clear introduction, body, and conclusion that are easily identifiable by the instructor. Students should present their thesis statement within the

introduction; provide evidence throughout the body section; and adequately summarize their findings in the conclusion section.

- The mechanics of the paper include proper/clear sentence structure, grammar, and dictation.

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

Plagiarism means presenting someone else's writing as your own. This includes copying with slight changes and direct quotes without quotation marks. Plagiarism is a serious offense. It corrodes the university system and defeats the educational efforts of our society. A case of plagiarism will result in punishment to the full extent allowed by University regulations. To avoid plagiarism, I suggest the following steps when writing:

- Consult your written sources and take notes.
- Discuss the topic with fellow students and take notes.
- Discuss the topic with the instructor and take notes.
- Take your notes with you and write alone.
- Edit papers carefully before submission day.
- Ask the instructor about potential cases of plagiarism in class or during office hours.

I reserve the right to use plagiarism detection software to determine if material has been taken from the internet without attribution. Do not make the mistake of cheating in this way. If you need more time or other help, I will work with you. If you cheat and I catch you, I will punish you out of respect for the honest students.

### **Diversity Statement:**

The University of Wyoming values an educational environment that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive. The diversity that students and faculty bring to class, including age, country of origin, culture, disability, economic class, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, linguistic, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, worldview, and other social and cultural diversity is valued, respected, and considered a resource for learning.

### **Disability Support:**

The University of Wyoming is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you have a disability, including but not limited to physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities, and would like to request accommodations in this course due to your disability, please register with and provide documentation of your disability as soon as possible to Disability Support Services (DSS), Room 128 Knight Hall. You may also contact DSS at (307) 766-3073 or [udss@uwyo.edu](mailto:udss@uwyo.edu). It is in the student's best interest to request accommodations within the first week of classes, understanding that accommodations are not retroactive. Visit the DSS website for more information at: [www.uwyo.edu/udss](http://www.uwyo.edu/udss)

**Campus Resources:**

Disability Support Services: [udss@uwyo.edu](mailto:udss@uwyo.edu), 766-3073, 128 Knight Hall, [www.uwyo.edu/udss](http://www.uwyo.edu/udss)

Counseling Center: [uccstaff@uwyo.edu](mailto:uccstaff@uwyo.edu), 766-2187, 766-8989 (After hours), 341 Knight Hall, [www.uwyo.edu/ucc](http://www.uwyo.edu/ucc)

Academic Affairs: 766-4286, 312 Old Main, [www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs)

Dean of Students Office: [dos@uwyo.edu](mailto:dos@uwyo.edu), 766-3296, 128 Knight Hall, [www.uwyo.edu/dos](http://www.uwyo.edu/dos)

UW Police Department: [uwpd@uwyo.edu](mailto:uwpd@uwyo.edu), 766-5179, 1426 E Flint St, [www.uwyo.edu/uwpd](http://www.uwyo.edu/uwpd)

Student Code of Conduct Statement: [www.uwyo.edu/dos/conduct](http://www.uwyo.edu/dos/conduct)

**Duty to Report:**

UW faculty are committed to supporting students and upholding the University's non-discrimination policy. Under Title IX, discrimination based upon sex and gender is prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex- or gender-based discrimination, we encourage you to report it. While you may talk to a faculty member, understand that as a "Responsible Employee" of the University, the faculty member MUST report information you share about the incident to the university's Title IX Coordinator (you may choose whether you or anyone involved is identified by name). If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you privacy or confidentiality, there are people who can meet with you. Faculty can help direct you or you may find info about UW policy and resources at <http://www.uwyo.edu/reportit>

You do not have to go through the experience alone. Assistance and resources are available, and you are not required to make a formal complaint or participate in an investigation to access them.

**Freedom in Learning:**

The instructor will evaluate students' performance solely on an academic basis—not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion. They are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact the chair of the department in which the course is being taught to initiate a review of the evaluation.

**Changes to Syllabus:**

This syllabus is a guide. Circumstances may alter the reading and/or test schedules. Students are required to check WyoCourses and their email at least once a week.

FALL 2020  
CLASS SCHEDULE

**PART I: From Wilhelm to Weimar: Postwar Europe's Dangerous Potentials**

Week One: Nineteenth-Century Europe: From *Belle Époque* to the Great War

*25 August* Course Introduction and Discussion

*27 August* Barbara Tuchman, "A Funeral," in *The Guns of August*, 1-18 (WyoCourses)

Doris Bergen, "Dry Timber," in *War and Genocide*, 13-20 (WyoCourses)

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Week Two: A Leap into the Dark and its Consequences

*01 September* Christopher Clark, "The Leap into the Dark," in *Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914*, 515-527 (WyoCourses)

Peter Fritzsche, "July 1914," in *Germans into Nazis*, 51-82 (WyoCourses)

*03 September* Eric D. Weitz, "From the Vienna to the Paris System: International Politics and the Entangled Histories of Human Rights, Forced Deportations, and Civilizing Missions," *American Historical Review* 113, No. 5 (December 2008): 1313-1343 (WyoCourses)

Volker Ulrich, "The Leap into Politics," in *Hitler: Ascent*, 73-91 (WyoCourses)

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Week Three: The Invention of Fascism

*08 September* Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, 24-54

Tara Zahra, "The Minority Problem and National Classification in the French and Czechoslovak Borderlands," *Contemporary European History* 17 (2008): 137-165 (WyoCourses)



10 September Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, 55-86

Tina M. Campt, *Other Germans*, 31-62

“The Nazi Party Program,” in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 63-66  
(WyoCourses)

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Week Four: A Troubled Beginning: Germany and Italy

15 September Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, 87-91.

Volker Ulrich, “The King of Munich,” in *Hitler: Ascent*, 92-130 (WyoCourses)

Wilfrid Bade, “The Hitler Trial,” in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 27-30  
(WyoCourses)

17 September Volker Ulrich, “Dark Star Rising,” in *Hitler: Ascent*, 222-266 (WyoCourses)

Hermann Führbach, “How I Became a National Socialist,” in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 35-36 (WyoCourses)

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Week Five: *Machtergreifung*, “Backstairs Conspiracy,” or Inevitable Ascension?

22 September Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, 91-118

Peter Fritzsche, *Hitler’s First Hundred Days*, 1-47

Larry E. Jones, “‘The Dying Middle’: Weimar Germany and the Fragmentation of  
Bourgeois Politics,” *Central European History* 5 (1972): 23-54 (WyoCourses)

24 September Peter Fritzsche, *Hitler’s First Hundred Days*, 48-90

Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis*, 197-214 (WyoCourses)

(Essay #1: Due 27 September)

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**PART II: Nazism in Power: The (Twisted) Road to the Holocaust**

Week Six: Reichkanzler Adolf Hitler: Nazism in Power

29 September Peter Fritzsche, *Hitler's First Hundred Days*, 91-133

Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, 4-45

01 October Peter Fritzsche, *Hitler's First Hundred Days*, 134-175

Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, 119-147

Anonymous, "The Reichstag Fire," in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 49-50 (WyoCourses)

Otto Wels, "Speech against the Passage of the Enabling Act," in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 50-52 (WyoCourses)

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Week Seven: "Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer"

06 October Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, 46-102

Peter Fritzsche, *Hitler's First Hundred Days*, 176-228

Rudolf Hess, "The Oath to Adolf Hitler," in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 74-76 (WyoCourses)

*Film* (In class): Leni Riefenstahl, "Triumph des Willens," (1935)

08 October Peter Fritzsche, *Hitler's First Hundred Days*, 229-262

Franz Alfred Six, "The Propaganda of the Street and the Masses," in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 82-85 (WyoCourses)

Ernst Krieck, "The Racial-Völkisch-Political Conception of History," in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 120-124 (WyoCourses)

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Week Eight: The Nazi Racial State

13 October Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, 103-162

Peter Fritzsche, *Hitler's First Hundred Days*, 263-300

Ludolf Haase, "We Need a Reich Office of Racial Affairs," in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 153-157 (WyoCourses)

15 October Tina M. Campt, *Other Germans*, 63-80

Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, 163-189

"The Nuremberg Laws," in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 209-210 (WyoCourses)

"Letter by League of Jewish Women," in *Jewish Responses to Persecution, 1933-1946: A Source Reader*, 14-15 (WyoCourses)

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Week Nine: Sex, Society, and Jesse Owens

20 October Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, 190-220

Tina M. Campt, *Other Germans*, 91-135

Walter Gross, "A Speech to German Women (1934)," in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 157-163 (WyoCourses)

22 October Tina M. Campt, *Other Germans*, 136-167

Henry Friedlander, "The Setting," in *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, 1-22 (WyoCourses)

Geoffrey J. Giles, "The Institutionalization of Homosexual Panic in the Third Reich," in *Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany*, 233-255 (WyoCourses)

Charles Fremont Dight, "Letter to Adolf Hitler," Charles Fremont Dight Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, P1628, Box 8 (WyoCourses)

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Week Ten: Molotov and Ribbentrop: A March Toward War

27 October Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, 221-252

Doris Bergen, "Open Aggression: In Search of War, 1938-1939," in *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*, 101-127 (WyoCourses)

29 October Wolfgang Benz, "The Road to War," in *A Concise History of the Third Reich*, 155-170 (WyoCourses)

"Letter by Georg Landauer to Henry Montor," in *Jewish Responses to Persecution, 1933-1946: A Source Reader*, 34-35 (WyoCourses)

(Essay #2: Due 01 November)

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**PART III: "The Abstract Nakedness of Being Human": Europe, 1939-1945**

Week Eleven: French Collaboration and Jewish Ghettoization in Poland

03 November Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, 253-274

Doris Bergen, "Brutal Innovations: War against Poland and the So-called Euthanasia Program, 1939-1940," in *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*, 129-165

05 November Robert O. Paxton, "The French Quest for Collaboration, 1940-1942," in *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944*, 51-68 (WyoCourses)

Christopher Browning, "The Polish Ghettos," in *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942*, 111-137 (WyoCourses)

Shimon Huberband, "The Destruction of Synagogues," in *Jewish Responses to Persecution, 1933-1946: A Source Reader*, 39-41 (WyoCourses)

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Week Twelve: War as Calculus for Extermination

10 November Omer Bartov, "The Destruction of the Primary Group" in, *Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich*, 29-58 (WyoCourses)

"Guidelines for the Treatment of Political Commissars" ("Kommissarbefehl"), in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 277-278 (WyoCourses)

"Einsatzgruppen Operational Reports," in *The Einsatzgruppen Reports: Selections for the Dispatches of the Nazi Death Squads' Campaign Against the Jews, July 1941-January 1943*, 2-3, 40-41, 164-165, 164-168, and 246-248 (WyoCourses)

12 November Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, 1-77

"The Wannsee Conference, January 1942," in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook: An Anthology of Texts*, 345-352 (WyoCourses)

Film (In class): Frank Pierson, "Conspiracy," HBO (2001)

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Week Thirteen: The Perpetrators: "Ordinary Men" or "Willing Executioners"?

17 November Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, 78-132

Raul Hilberg, "Helpers, Gainers, and Onlookers," in *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders: The Jewish Catastrophe, 1933-1945*, 212-216 (WyoCourses)

19 November Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, 133-189

Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen, and Volker Riess, eds., "Execution as Popular Entertainment," in *"The Good Old Days:" The Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders*, 107-135 (WyoCourses)

Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors*, 43-81 (WyoCourses)

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Week Fourteen:        German Resistance: Courageous or Convenient?

24 November Inge Scholl, *The White Rose: Munich, 1942-1943*, ix-72, 91-93

26 November Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, 148-171

Matthew Olex-Szczytowski, "Hitler's would-be assassins were, themselves, Nazi war criminals. Why celebrate them?" *Spectator* (21 July 2018): Online (WyoCourses)

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Week Fifteen: *Götterdämmerung*: Defeat, Memory and Legacy

01 December Doris Bergen, "Death Throes and Killing Frenzies," in *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*, 275-295 (WyoCourses)

Adolf Hitler, "Political Testament," in *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook*, 872-874 (WyoCourses)

03 December Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, 172-205

Doris Bergen, "Legacies of Atrocity," in *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*, 297-310 (WyoCourses)

*Film* (In class): David Wnendt, "Look Who's Back," Netflix (2015)

(Essay #3: Due 06 December)

**Final Essay** Due 11 December