

# Overview of Cal Humanities/Searching for Democracy and California Reads

Leading into the national 2012 elections, *Searching for Democracy* is the culmination of a two-year long initiative that provides Californians with various ways to explore how the humanities can provide insight and opportunities to converse about the nature, state and needs of our vibrant American democracy. Cal Humanities and its partners will explore these complexities—through a series of local, regional, and statewide humanities-inspired activities—to accomplish a greater understanding of what is needed to sustain a healthy democracy in an increasingly interdependent world.

Students, families and people from all walks of life will explore—online and in person—what discoveries and lessons lie in works of fiction and nonfiction, provocative cultural exhibits and public conversations. The Cal Humanities website ([www.calhum.org](http://www.calhum.org)) will be an online hub for all activities, where participants of events, readers of the initiative’s books or people new to our effort can learn more and share what they have discovered.

Our *Searching For Democracy* program partners include: California libraries, California Center for the Book, California History-Social Science Project, Exhibit Envoy, and Zócalo Public Square, in collaboration with California State Library, California Community Colleges, California State University, and University of California Television.

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**California Reads** is a new program of Cal Humanities developed in partnership with the California Center for the Book and the California State Library. It invites Californians from all walks of life throughout our state to participate in reading and discussion programs and related activities hosted by libraries, schools, colleges, bookstores and other community institutions.

We have selected a slate of books this year to stimulate a thoughtful reflection of, and lively discussion among friends and neighbors, family and strangers about the past, present, and future of democracy. Five thought-provoking books were chosen from a pool of over 300 titles nominated by members of the public, based upon the recommendations of an advisory group of librarians, authors, scholars, publishers and critics. These five books were selected:

- *The Penguin Guide to the United States Constitution: A Fully Annotated Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution and Amendments, and Selections from The Federalist Papers*, by Richard Beeman. Annotated by one of the nation’s foremost Constitutional scholars, this compact edition of our nation’s founding documents provides text and context for readers seeking to understand the framework of our democracy as well as its meaning, past and present.

- *Farewell to Manzanar* (1983), by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston. A heartbreaking and compelling memoir about the Japanese American internment experience as seen through the eyes of young girl, this personal story bears witness to a failure of American democracy.
- *A Paradise Built in Hell: The Extraordinary Communities That Arise in Disaster* (2009), by Rebecca Solnit. A masterwork of narrative nonfiction by a contemporary California writer reaches some surprising conclusions about our need for community and common purpose, which she argues are fundamental to democratic forms of social and political life.
- *It Can't Happen Here* (2005), by Sinclair Lewis. This underappreciated classic by one of America's greatest novelists, first published in 1935, imagines a chillingly undemocratic America. It details the rise of a populist politician as he creates a fascist regime, and reminds us of the fragility of our democratic institutions.
- *Lost City Radio* (2008), by Daniel Alarcón. A haunting novel by a young California writer explores the aftermath of a traumatic civil war in a fictitious South American country, and raises questions about the importance of historical knowledge, collective memory, and public access to information in a democratic society.

The California History-Social Science Project has developed a K-12 curriculum guide for each book to support classroom discussion and activities. The guides and materials, along with additional resources and information about *Searching for Democracy*, **California Reads**, and public programs and activities at libraries and other community venues, can be found online at [calhum.org/searchingfordemocracy](http://calhum.org/searchingfordemocracy).

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# Curriculum Guide for *It Can't Happen Here*

By Sinclair Lewis

## “How It Can Happen Here: Fascism and the Great Depression”

By Kevin Williams (Davis Senior High School, Davis, CA),  
Andreas Agocs (UC Davis), and  
Beth Slutsky, editor (CHSSP)

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### Major Topics:

- ✓ **The rise of totalitarian leaders during the inter-war years**
- ✓ **Politics in America during the Great Depression**
- ✓ **Uses of propaganda in spreading political messages**

How do economic crises embolden voices of dissent? Why do fascist regimes emerge and appeal to the public through propaganda?

In 1935, Sinclair Lewis published *It Can't Happen Here*. Lewis' book was a product of the times when it was written. The title was meant as sarcasm – IT (meaning fascism) can happen here, just as it had in numerous places around the world. A decade before Lewis began writing his book, Benito Mussolini rose to power as the first “fascist” leader. Then, in 1933 (only two years prior to the publication of *It Can't Happen Here*), Adolf Hitler rose to power using fascist strategies and doctrine. As the United States confronted the Great Depression, dissident voices also emerged, including Senator Huey Long (the Kingfish) of Louisiana and the writer Upton Sinclair.

This Curriculum Guide is designed to show how and why Lewis' 1935 novel was influenced by developments of the prior decade. There are four lessons that ask tenth and/or eleventh-grade students to consider the real-life events upon which Lewis based his book. The lessons also contextualize excerpts from Lewis' book in the dialogue of American politics in the 1930s. Prior to this lesson, students should be familiar with World War One and its economic consequences. Economic crises in Europe and then later the Great Depression all gave rise to totalitarian leaders. In this Curriculum Guide, students will add the key component of fascism to their prior knowledge. They should be aware that difficult economic times produced leaders who wielded significant power.

## STANDARDS ADDRESSED

### California History-Social Science Standards

10.6 Students analyze the effects of the First World War.

1. Understand the widespread disillusionment with prewar institutions, authorities, and values that resulted in a void that was later filled by totalitarians.

10.7 Students analyze the rise of totalitarian governments after World War I.

3. Analyze the rise, aggression, and human costs of totalitarian regimes (Fascist and Communist) in Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union, noting especially their common and dissimilar traits.

11.6 Students analyze the different explanations for the Great Depression and how the New Deal fundamentally changed the role of the federal government.

4. Analyze the effects of and the controversies arising from New Deal economic policies and the expanded role of the federal government in society and the economy since the 1930s (e.g., Works Progress Administration, Social Security, National Labor Relations Board, farm programs, regional development policies, and energy development projects such as the Tennessee Valley Authority, California Central Valley Project, and Bonneville Dam).

### Common Core State Standards

#### Key Ideas and Details

1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

#### Craft and Structure

6. Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning and evidence.

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media.

## Procedures for this Historical Investigation

**Part 1:** Students gain **context** for the historical investigation and a **basic grasp** of the issue(s) through structured discussion, image analysis, and/or close reading. This initial understanding will be challenged, extended, or supported by subsequent documents in this investigation.

### Materials and Resources—

- Images and information from Part One of “What is the “It” that “Can’t Happen Here” Powerpoint (handout #1) (Source: See Teacher Notes and Powerpoint for links. All images in public domain for educational purposes)
- Selected quotes from Mussolini’s article “What is Fascism” (1932) (handout #2) <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/mussolini-fascism.asp> (source in the public domain as part of the Internet Modern History Sourcebook)

Time Allotted	Procedures
<p><b>1 class period (55 minutes)</b></p>	<p>This lesson will provide an explanation of the establishment of fascist states that emerged in Europe between the two World Wars, notably in Italy and Germany. Using PowerPoint slides of images, the lesson will address major components of fascist and national socialist politics.</p> <p>This lesson utilizes primary source documents and images. Images will allow students to connect with the visceral appeal of fascist techniques.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For Homework: have students read selection “What Is Fascism?” (<u>Handout #2</u>). This is edited from Mussolini’s article “What Is Fascism?” published in 1932.</li> <li>2. In class: Use images from “What is the “It” that “Can’t Happen Here” Powerpoint Presentation (PPT) (Teacher Notes on <u>Handout #1</u>).</li> <li>3. Select images from “What is the “It” that “Can’t Happen Here” PPT. Have students point out specific slides and images in the slides which reflect Mussolini’s definition of fascism from his writing “What Is Fascism?”             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A discussion point could be the comparison between an image of Mussolini holding a speech in uniform and FDR giving a “fireside chat.”</li> <li>b. Using Teacher Notes (<u>Handout #1</u>), ask students to discuss how these images reflect differences in politics and concepts of the government and state. By looking at these differences it is hoped that students will see what makes a fascist state and what doesn’t.</li> <li>c. On Teacher Notes (<u>Handout #1</u>), you’ll find annotations for EACH slide in the PPT What is the “It” that “Can’t Happen Here”. This should help make each slide useable as you try to choose the ones that fit your class needs best.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

**Part 2:** Students **analyze documents**—textual, visual, and/or audio—related to the **key historical investigation question**, as they examine the literal aspects of each source, consider multiple perspectives, determine what can be learned from various pieces of evidence, and compare different pieces of evidence.

**Materials and Resources—**

- President Franklin Roosevelt’s Inaugural Address: <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5057/> (handout #3) (Source: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933, as published in Samuel Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Volume Two: The Year of Crisis, 1933* (New York: Random House, 1938), 11–16.)
- Senator Huey Long’s “Every Man A King” radio address: <http://www.hueylong.com/programs/share-our-wealth-speech.php>(handout #3) (Source: Fair use for educational purposes)
- Upton Sinclair’s End Poverty in California (EPIC) speech: <http://www.sfmuseum.org/hist1/sinclair.html> (handout #3) (Source: public domain)
- Berzelius Windrip’s Platform: Sinclair Lewis, *It Can’t Happen Here* (New York: New American Library, A Division of Penguin Books, 1935) P. 61-64. (handout # 3)
- Propaganda Types: <http://www.propagandacritic.com/> (handout #4) (Source: Fair use for educational purposes)
- Book excerpts from Sinclair Lewis, *It Can’t Happen Here* (New York: New American Library, A Division of Penguin Books, 1935) (handout #5)

Time Allotted	Procedures
<p><b>1-1 ½ class periods (75 minutes)</b></p>	<p>Since <i>It Can’t Happen Here</i> is historical fiction, it is important for students to be able to put that fiction in its correct historical content. This lesson seeks to have students compare and contrast one of Lewis’ characters, Buzz Windrip’s, platform with three famous political thinkers of the 1930s: President Franklin Roosevelt, Senator Huey Long, and writer and California politician Upton Sinclair.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Break students into groups of four. Each group will get one set of the four documents (<u>Handout #3</u>).</li> <li>2. Students will read their document source and summarize how their leader sought to solve the problems created by the Great Depression. They will summarize their information in the appropriate grid on <u>Handout #3</u>.</li> <li>3. After reading and summarizing their document, students will share their source with the other members in their group. Group members will fill in the appropriate parts of the grid box.</li> <li>4. When finished, the group will answer the overall questions on <u>Handout #3</u> – comparing and contrasting the methods and strategies of the four American leaders to the problems created by the Great Depression.</li> </ol>



<b>1 class period (55 minutes)</b>	<p>This lesson explains how and why propaganda was used in a historical context and asks students to make connections to the present. Propaganda was essential to the growth and survival of the fascist state. Yet, propaganda also plays a role in modern-day politics and society.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hand out “Propaganda Techniques Worksheet” (Handout #4). This will familiarize students with eight propaganda techniques. For homework, ask students to find examples of them in modern-day America. This will connect them to the real-life application of propaganda techniques. They should use the second page of the worksheet to complete this task.</li> <li>2. Review some student examples of propaganda and its techniques from the previous night’s homework.</li> <li>3. Once students are familiar with the techniques of propaganda, use the worksheet with various excerpts taken from Lewis’ book <i>It Can’t Happen Here</i> (Handout #5).</li> </ol>
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**Part 3:** Students **construct an explanation** about history, **marshalling evidence** for their **interpretation** from the sources analyzed to advance an **argument** in response to the key question. Teachers can **assess** students’ understanding of the standard and the historical process by evaluating this product.

<p><b>Materials and Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Images and information from “Why IT Can’t Happen Here” (PPT and <u>handout #6</u>)</li> <li>• Selections from Sinclair Lewis, <i>It Can’t Happen Here</i> (New York: New American Library, A Division of Penguin Books, 1935) (<u>handout #7</u>)</li> </ul>
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<b>Time Allotted</b>	<b>Procedures</b>
<b>1 class period (55 minutes)</b>	<p>In this lesson students will examine the social and political trends in the U.S. during the 1920s and 1930s that Sinclair Lewis saw as threatening to U.S. democracy. They will learn about how these trends in the U.S. compared to the fascist dictatorships in Italy and Germany at the time. In full context, students should be aware of the “key” ingredients of fascism. A major point of discussion will be the way all countries, including the U.S. under the FDR administration, responded to the challenges that the Great Depression offered to their democratic politics.</p> <p>This lesson is an attempt to integrate 10<sup>th</sup>-grade (World History) standards and 11<sup>th</sup>-grade (U.S. History) standards with the goal of illustrating the connections between U.S. society and worldwide patterns.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Show slides from PPT “Why It COULD Have Happened Here” (Notes <u>Handout #6</u>).</li> <li>2. Ask students to answer Question 1 as they watch the powerpoint.</li> <li>3. Ask students to then answer question 2. What would fascism have looked like in the United States?</li> <li>4. Finally, after students have answered question 2, share with them the excerpts from <i>It Can’t Happen Here</i> (<u>Handout #7</u>). Then have them evaluate question 3.</li> </ol>

# LESSON 1: WHAT IS THE “IT” THAT “CAN’T HAPPEN HERE”?

Fascist and National Socialist  
Dictatorships in Italy and Germany in  
the 1920s and 30s

# TWO DIFFERENT CONCEPTS OF STATE LEADERSHIP: BENITO MUSSOLINI'S FASCISM AND FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT'S "FIRESIDE CHAT"



<http://vahsibhistory.wikispaces.com/Mussolini%27s+Rise+to+Power>



Courtesy of the Schenectady Museum Archives: [http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/nvh/88\\_2/storm.html](http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/nvh/88_2/storm.html)

# THE EMERGENCE OF THE FASCIST MOVEMENT: BENITO MUSSOLINI AND HIS BLACK SHIRTS, 1922

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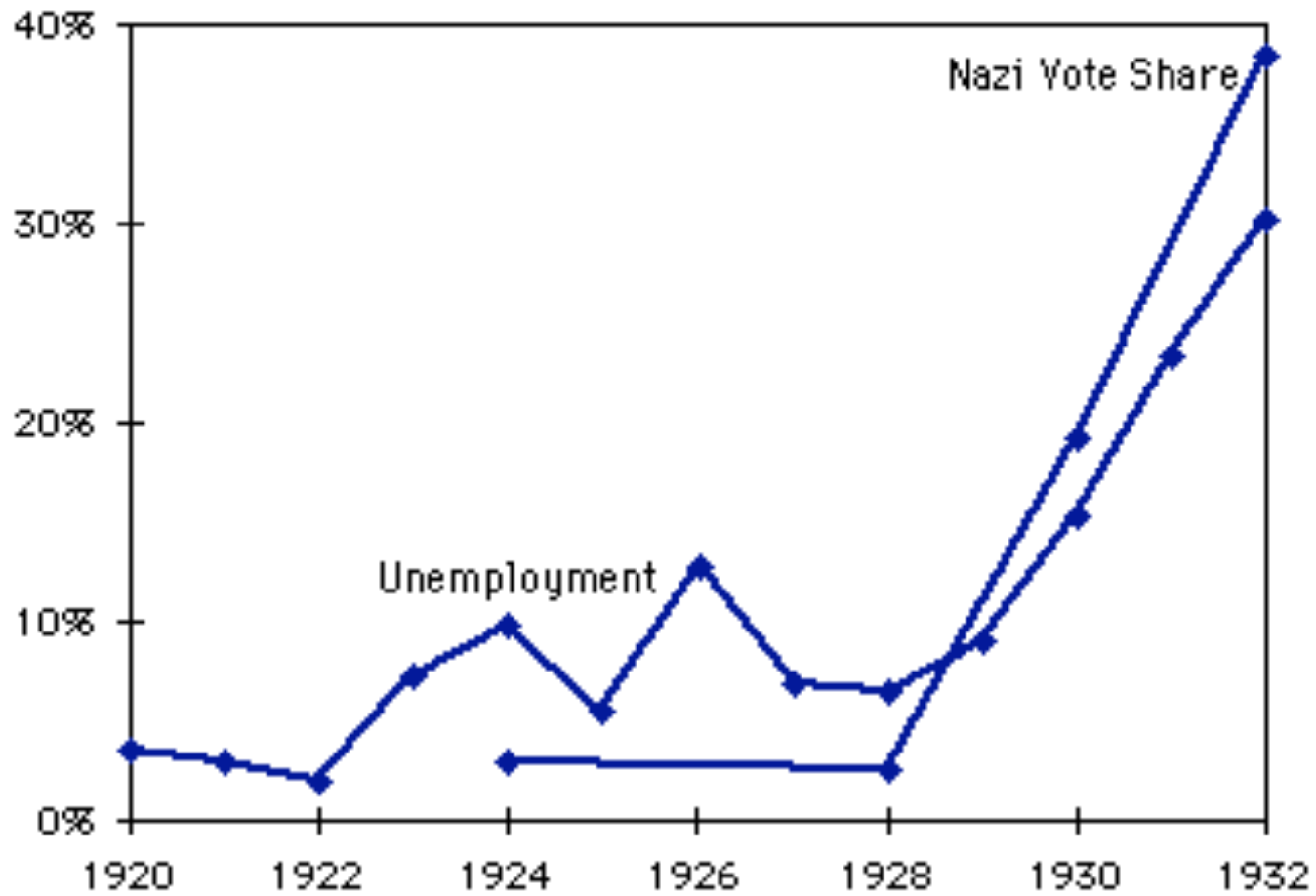
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Musssd.jpg>

## HITLER CAMPAIGNING FOR ELECTION IN THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC



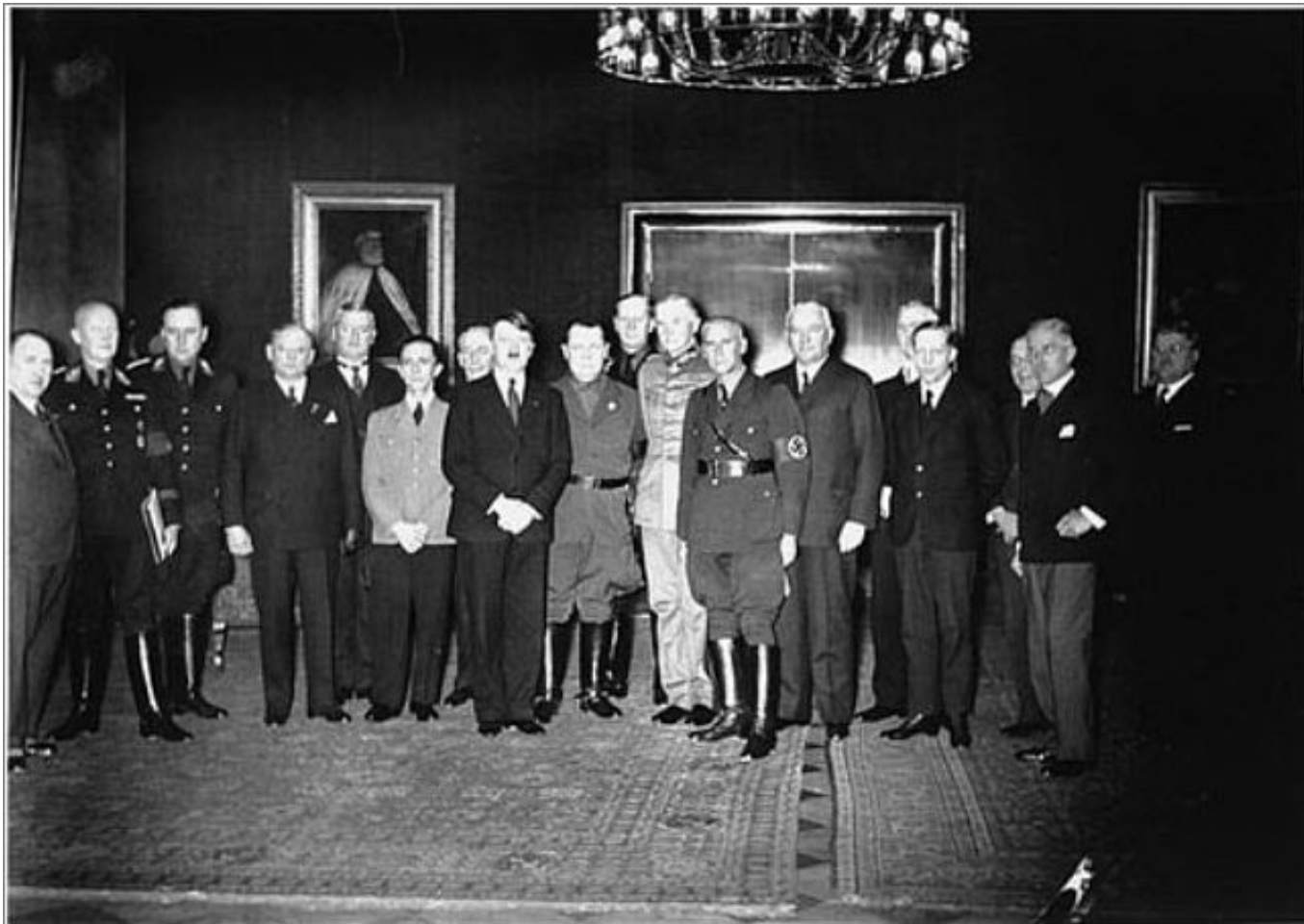
<http://www.uncp.edu/home/rwb>

# GERMAN EMPLOYMENT AND NAZI VOTE SHARE



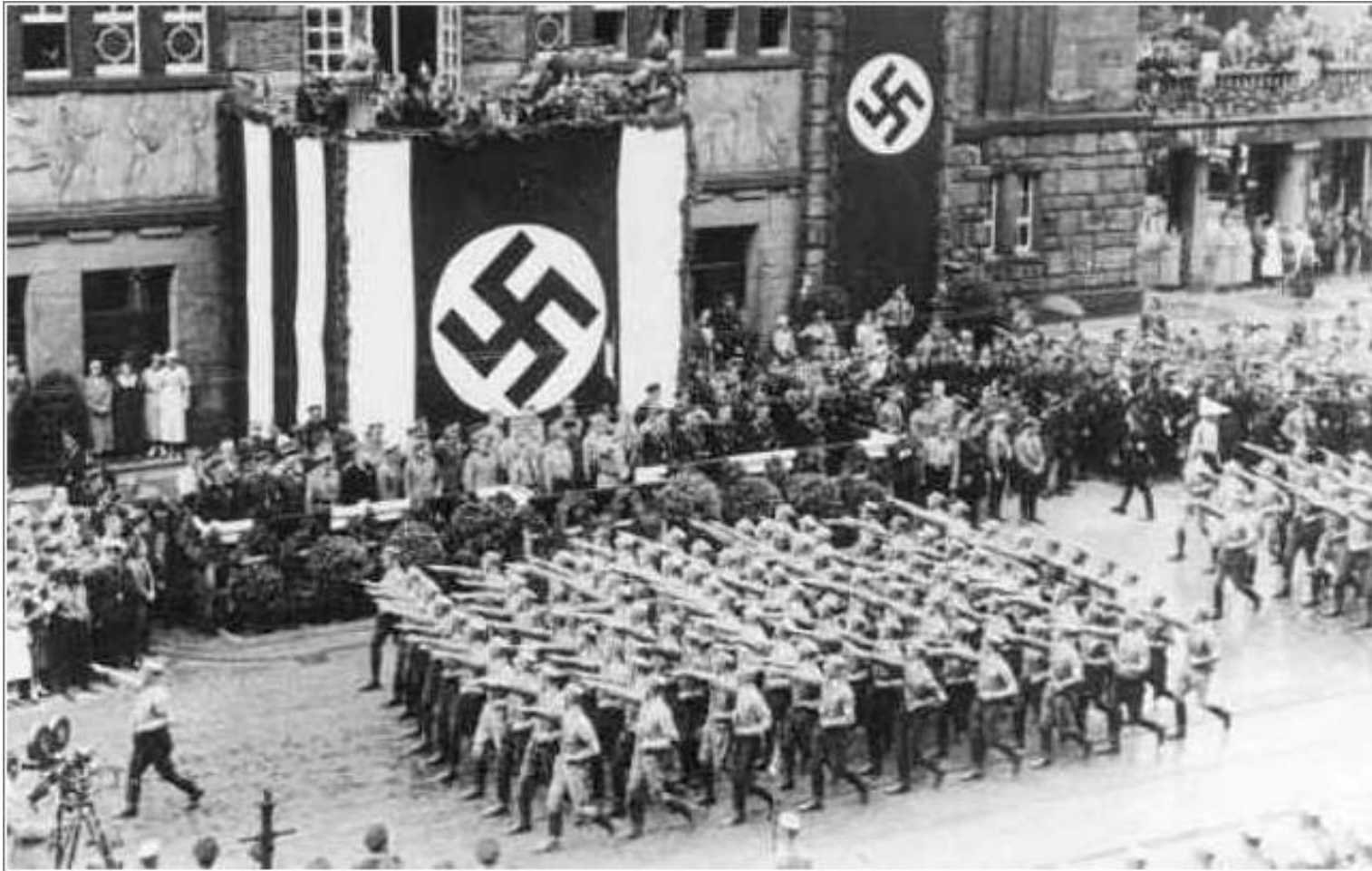
# LEGAL ASCENSION TO POWER: HITLER'S CABINET AFTER HIS APPOINTMENT AS GERMAN CHANCELLOR, JANUARY 1933

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"Courtesy of the Holocaust Education & Archive Research Team [www.HolocaustResearchProject.org](http://www.HolocaustResearchProject.org) "

# NAZI STORMTROOPERS PARADE THROUGH GERMAN CITY, 1933



"Courtesy of the Holocaust Education & Archive Research Team [www.HolocaustResearchProject.org](http://www.HolocaustResearchProject.org) "



# NAZI SEIZURE OF POWER: ARREST OF COMMUNISTS BY STORMTROOPERS, 1933

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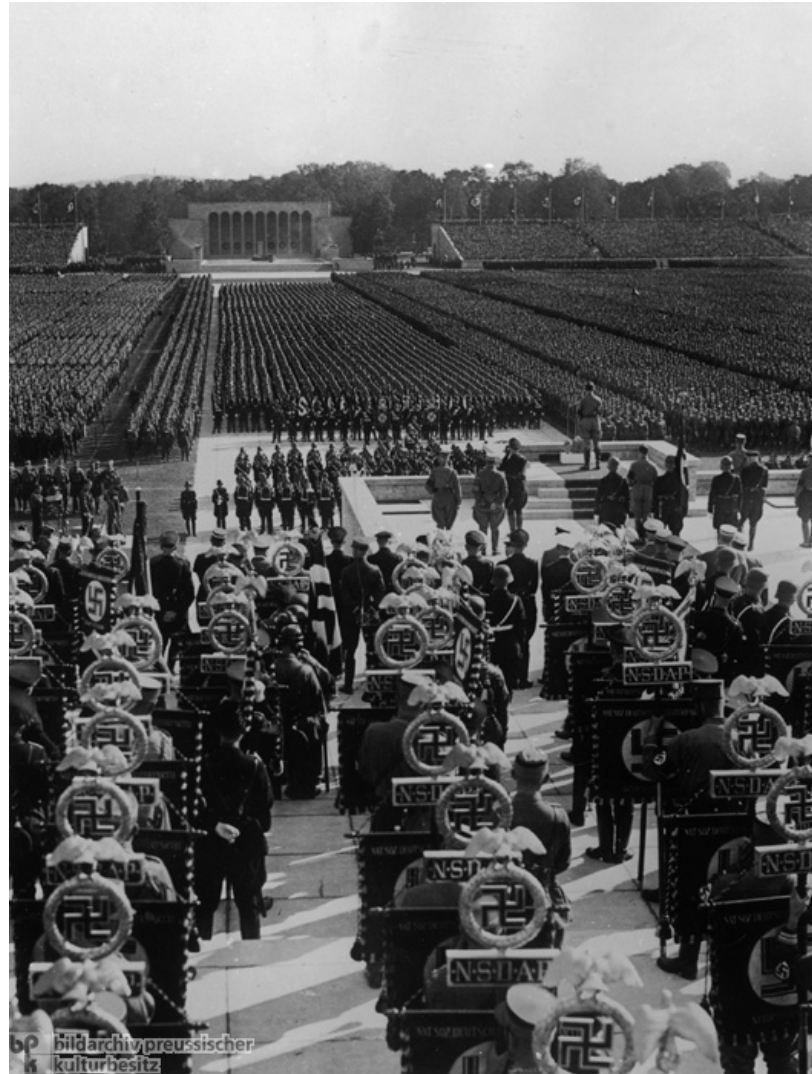
Jaraus, Konrad, and Helga Welsh, eds. *One Germany in Europe, 1990 – the Present*, volume 10, *German History in Documents and Images*, German Historical Institute, Washington, DC ([www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org](http://www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org)).

# NAZI ANTI-SEMITISM: BOYCOTT OF JEWISH-OWNED BUSINESSES



Jaraus, Konrad, and Helga Welsh, eds. *One Germany in Europe, 1990 – the Present*, volume 10, *German History in Documents and Images*, German Historical Institute, Washington, DC ([www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org](http://www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org)).

## NAZI PARTY RALLY, 1935



Jarausch, Konrad, and Helga Welsh, eds. *One Germany in Europe, 1990 – the Present*, volume 10, *German History in Documents and Images*, German Historical Institute, Washington, DC ([www.germanhistorydocs.gi-hi-dc.org](http://www.germanhistorydocs.gi-hi-dc.org)).

# RIFLE INSTRUCTION IN THE HITLER YOUTH

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Jaraus, Konrad, and Helga Welsh, eds. *One Germany in Europe, 1990 – the Present*, volume 10, *German History in Documents and Images*, German Historical Institute, Washington, DC ([www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org](http://www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org)).

# WHITE ROSE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

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[http://www.aref.de/kalenderblatt/2003/08\\_geschwister-scholl.php](http://www.aref.de/kalenderblatt/2003/08_geschwister-scholl.php)

## MAIN IDEOLOGICAL COMPONENTS OF FASCISM

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- Centrality of the *State* and the *Nation*: Against Both Liberal Emphasis on Individual Rights and of Socialist/Marxist Demand for International Class Solidarity
- Rejection of Parliamentary Democracy in Favor of One-Party Rule and “Charismatic” Leadership
- Social Darwinist Glorification of Violence, Struggle, and War
- Mass Mobilization Through Paramilitary Organizations and Propaganda
- Large Degree of State Control over the Economy but Leaves Capitalism and Business Interests Intact
- National Socialism (Nazism): Ideal of a National Community; Extreme, Racialized Anti-Semitism

## TEACHER NOTES FOR POWERPOINT SLIDES OF SELECTED IMAGES

**Source:** All images, unless indicated otherwise, can be found on the public (fair use) web site of the German Historical Institute: [http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub\\_imgs.cfm?section\\_id=13](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_imgs.cfm?section_id=13)

Jarausch, Konrad, and Helga Welsh, eds. *One Germany in Europe, 1990 – the Present*, volume 10, *German History in Documents and Images*, German Historical Institute, Washington, DC ([www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org](http://www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org)).

The images illustrate the rise to power of the Fascist and National Socialist regimes in Italy and Germany, respectively, between the two world wars.

**Slide 2:** The image on the left depicts Benito Mussolini, the leader and founder of the Italian Fascist Party, giving a speech in characteristic pose. The image is contrasted with the picture of Franklin Roosevelt during one of his “Fireside Chats.” Students should point out the differences in the two pictures and discuss a) how the contrasts in style reflect different understandings of politics, and b) the possible reactions of the two speakers’ respective audiences.

**Slide 3:** On page 275/76 of “It Can’t Happen Here”, Doremus’s daughter Sissy says that the “New Civilization” began in “say, 1914.” The year 1914 saw the outbreak of the First World War, which meant the end of many of the social, political, and cultural structures of Europe. The other “beginning of a New Civilization” was the Bolshevik (Communist) Revolution in Russia in 1917. As a result of both events, in countries such as Italy and Germany, which experienced both economic and political instability, extreme right-wing, i.e. ultranationalist groups and political parties emerged. The Italian politician Benito Mussolini coined the term “fascism” for these movements, which often gained supporters among disaffected veterans, and which glorified violence and war and rejected democracy and communism. Mussolini (the bald man next to the mustached man) is here shown among his supporters, the “Black Shirts.” Just like the M.M.s in the novel, the uniformed and often violent Black Shirts underscore fascism’s understanding of politics as combat.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mussd.jpg>

**Slide 4:** The image shows Adolf Hitler at a Nazi Party street rally in the 1920s. After the First World War Germany established a democratic government (the ill-fated “Weimar Republic”) but economic troubles and lack of support for democratic forces undermined the stability of the state. Hitler, as head of the initially small National Socialist Party (only their enemies called them “Nazis”), already tried to grab power in 1923 but his attempt failed and he was sentenced to prison. The Great Depression in Germany gave the Nazis a second chance to gain power, this time legally. Hitler is supported by members of Nazi paramilitaries, the Stormtroopers (SA), the model for Buzz Windrip in *It Can’t Happen Here*. M.M.s. Source: [http://www.uncp.edu/home/rwb/hitler\\_weimar.jpg](http://www.uncp.edu/home/rwb/hitler_weimar.jpg)

**Slide 5:** The graphic shows that the Depression and the resulting unemployment boosted the Nazi vote in elections from 1930 to 1932 (The high number of elections in a three-year span is a reflection of the political instability of the period). In November 1937, the Nazi party gained 37% of the votes. Source: [http://econ161.berkeley.edu/tceh/Slouch\\_Purge15.html](http://econ161.berkeley.edu/tceh/Slouch_Purge15.html)

**Slide 6:** The image shows Hitler's cabinet after his appointment as Chancellor (prime minister) in January 1933. Conservative politicians, along with leading industrialists, thought they could control and use Hitler for their interests. Hitler, dressed uncharacteristically not in uniform, swore to uphold the constitution, a promise he would break almost overnight.

Source:

<http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/holoprelude/nsdapgal/Adolf%20Hitler%20poses%20with%20members%20of%20his%20new%20government%20soon%20after%20his%20appointment%20as%20Chancellor.html>

**Slide 7:** Even before Hitler's assumption of power, his brownshirts (SA) had an increasingly visible presence in German society. This SA parade in a German town in 1933 can be used to discuss the mixture of intimidation and admiration that the parade of uniformed men may strike in the town's population.

Source:

<http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/holoprelude/nsdapgal/Battalions%20of%20Nazi%20street%20fighters%20salute%20Hitler%20during%20an%20SA%20parade%20through%20Dortmund.%20Germany,%201933.html>

**Slide 8:** Within days of Hitler's assumption of power, Communists in Germany were rounded up and imprisoned as enemies of the state. Many were killed or abused. The Nazis also arrested many members of the Social Democratic Party, whose representatives in parliament had voted against giving Hitler unrestrained power. Like all outspoken opponents of the Nazis in Germany after 1933, they paid a bitter price.

**Slide 9:** Antisemitism was one of the most central cornerstones of the Nazi state. Hitler's racial ideology initially aimed at making Germany "pure" of Jewish influence by driving German Jews out of the country, regardless of the fact that most Jews in Germany were assimilated and identified with the country. The Nazis' terror against the Jews started with the appeal to boycott Jewish-owned businesses. The image shows how the Nazis used propaganda (the sign reads: "Germans, defend yourselves: Don't buy at Jewish stores!") and intimidation to drive a wedge between Germany's Jewish and non-Jewish population. The Nazis officially stripped German Jews of all citizenship rights in 1935, setting the stage for gradually escalating persecution that culminated in the murder of almost 6 million Jews during World War II.

**Slide 10:** The spirit of the Nazi state is manifested in this famous image of a Nazi party rally at the city of Nuremberg in 1935. Students can discuss the image of power, uniformity, discipline, and almost



religious devotion to the party and its leader that is expressed here. It also highlights fascism's central idea that the individual must be subordinate to the state.

**Slide 11:** Repeatedly in Lewis's novel, supporters of the Corpo state—among them Doremus's own son, Philip, express discontent with a materialist and pacifist youth. ("Why, ever so many young men were refusing to take military drill, and the discipline and will power and good-fellowship that you only get from military training ... you ought to listen to the voice of Youth." P. 339). Like the Corpos, fascism aimed to be the "voice of youth." The effort to shape children early on is exemplified by Hitler youth. The rifle training gives expression to the mix of boy scout activism and military training that created much enthusiasm among young German boys, sometimes—like Doremus's grandson David—contradicting the political beliefs of their parents.

**Slide 12:** Resistance movements like the "New Underground in *It Can't Happen Here* were small, limited in their means, and all too easily crushed by Hitler's secret police. Reminiscent of Sissy and Julian in the novel, the student Sophie Scholl and her brother Hans, a drafted soldier, were at the center of a small secret resistance group, the White Rose. Sophie and Hans Scholl produced and secretly distributed leaflets exposing Nazi crimes in Germany and in the war. The group was denounced and its members executed in 1943. Today many schools and public buildings in Germany are named after the Scholl siblings. Source: [http://www.aref.de/kalenderblatt/2003/08\\_geschwister-scholl.php](http://www.aref.de/kalenderblatt/2003/08_geschwister-scholl.php)

**Slide 13:** The presentation concludes with a brief summary of the main ideological components of fascism and national socialism. Students could discuss which of these elements can be found in the book and give examples for it.

## KEY

Students should discern major elements of Mussolini's article in the images, for example fascism's celebration of violence, struggle, and the importance of the "tension of war". Students should notice the reliance on uniforms, military, signs, and organization. Additionally, both Mussolini and Hitler emphasized the heightened importance of "the state" – the need to put one's nation above the needs of the individual. Looking at some of the pictures we can see the importance of "the group".

## WHAT IS FASCISM? BENITO MUSSOLINI (1932)

*Benito Mussolini (1883-1945) over the course of his lifetime went from Socialism - he was editor of Avanti, a socialist newspaper - to the leadership of a new political movement called "fascism" [after "fasces," the symbol of bound sticks used a totem of power in ancient Rome]. Mussolini came to power after the "March on Rome" in 1922, and was appointed Prime Minister by King Victor Emmanuel. In 1932 Mussolini wrote (with the help of Giovanni Gentile) this entry for the Italian Encyclopedia on the definition of fascism.*

Fascism...believes neither in the possibility nor the utility of perpetual peace... War alone brings up to its highest tension all human energy and puts the stamp of nobility upon the peoples who have courage to meet it.

After Socialism, Fascism combats the whole complex system of democratic ideology, and repudiates it, whether in its theoretical premises or in its practical application. Fascism denies that the majority, by the simple fact that it is a majority, can direct human society; it denies that numbers alone can govern by means of a periodical consultation, and it affirms the immutable, beneficial, and fruitful inequality of mankind, which can never be permanently leveled through the mere operation of a mechanical process such as universal suffrage....

[T]his will be a century of authority...a century of Fascism. For if the nineteenth century was a century of individualism it may be expected that this will be the century of collectivism and hence the century of the State....

The foundation of Fascism is the conception of the State, its character, its duty, and its aim. Fascism conceives of the State as an absolute, in comparison with which all individuals or groups are relative, only to be conceived of in their relation to the State.

...The Fascist State organizes the nation, but leaves a sufficient margin of liberty to the individual; the latter is deprived of all useless and possibly harmful freedom, but retains what is essential; the deciding power in this question cannot be the individual, but the State alone....

...For Fascism, the growth of empire, that is to say the expansion of the nation, is an essential manifestation of vitality, and its opposite a sign of decadence. ... But empire demands discipline, the coordination of all forces and a deeply felt sense of duty and sacrifice: this fact explains many aspects of the practical working of the regime, the character of many forces in the State, and the necessarily severe measures which must be taken against those who would oppose this spontaneous and inevitable movement...; for never before has the nation stood more in need of authority, of direction and order. If every age has its own characteristic doctrine, there are a thousand signs which point to Fascism as the characteristic doctrine of our time. For if a doctrine must be a living thing, this is proved by the fact that Fascism has created a living faith; and that this faith is very powerful in the minds of men is demonstrated by those who have suffered and died for it.

## COMPARE AND CONTRAST

### THE FICTION OF BUZZ WINDRIP VS. FDR'S NEW DEAL, HUEY LONG'S SHARE OUR WEALTH PROGRAM, AND UPTON SINCLAIR'S EPIC

#### Background on *It Can't Happen Here*

In 1935 the famed American author, Sinclair Lewis, published *It Can't Happen Here*. In fact, Lewis' whole point was to show that IT (in this case Fascism) could happen here. To show this he wrote *It Can't Happen Here*, which detailed the fictitious story of Berzelius "Buzz" Windrip as he captivated and enthralled Americans who felt despair in the midst of the Great Depression. Windrip won the Republican nomination for President on his way to winning the Presidential election of 1936. Since Lewis' book is really historical fiction, we should compare it to what was really happening at the time – in the mid 1930s. In reality, the American leader was President Franklin Roosevelt, and he was attempting to solve the Great Depression with the "New Deal". Beginning in 1934, several critics began to appear. While there were many, for the purposes of this lesson, we will focus on three: Senator Huey Long, California Democratic candidate for governor (and famed author of *The Jungle*), Upton Sinclair, and the fictitious critic, Berzelius "Buzz" Windrip.

Read the platforms of the four characters, and be prepared to compare and contrast their stances and styles.

#### 1. President Franklin Roosevelt, from his inaugural address, March 4, 1933

"I am certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our Nation impels. This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself – nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

...Restoration calls, however, not for changes in ethics alone. This Nation asks for action, and action now. Our greatest primary task is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously. It can be accomplished in part by direct recruiting by the Government itself, treating the task as we would treat the emergency of a war, but at the same time, through this employment, accomplishing greatly needed projects to stimulate and reorganize the use of our natural resources.

...Finally, in our progress toward a resumption of work we require two safeguards against a return of the evils of the old order: there must be a strict supervision of all banking and credits: and

investments, so that there will be an end to speculation with other people's money; and there must be provision for an adequate but sound currency.

...I am prepared under my constitutional duty to recommend the measures that a stricken Nation in the midst of a stricken world may require. These measures, or such other measures as the Congress may build out of its experience or wisdom, I shall seek, within my constitutional authority, to bring to speedy adoption.

...But in the event that the Congress shall fail to take one of these two courses, and in the event that the national emergency is still critical, I shall not evade the clear course of duty that will then confront me. I shall ask the Congress for the one remaining instrument to meet the crisis – broad Executive power to wage a war against the emergency, as great as the power that would be given to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe.

We do not distrust the future of essential democracy. The people of the United States have not failed. In their need they have registered a mandate that they want direct, vigorous action. They have asked for discipline and direction under leadership. They have made me the present instrument of their wishes. In the spirit of the gift I take it.

In this dedication of a Nation we humbly ask the blessing of God. May He protect each and every one of us. May He guide me in the days to come.

## **2. Senator Huey Long, Louisiana, from his radio address "Every Man A King", February 23, 1934.**

It is not the difficulty of the problem which we have; it is the fact that the rich people of this country—and by rich people I mean the super-rich—will not allow us to solve the problems, or rather the one little problem that is afflicting this country, because in order to cure all of our woes it is necessary to scale down the big fortunes, that we may scatter the wealth to be shared by all of the people.

We have a marvelous love for this Government of ours; in fact, it is almost a religion, and it is well that it should be, because we have a splendid form of government and we have a splendid set of laws. We have everything here that we need, except that we have neglected the fundamentals upon which the American Government was principally predicated.

How many of you remember the first thing that the Declaration of Independence said? It said: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that there are certain inalienable rights for the people, and among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;" and it said further, "We hold the view that all men are created equal."

Now, what did they mean by that? Did they mean, my friends, to say that all men are created equal and that that meant that any one man was born to inherit \$10,000,000,000 and that another child was to be born to inherit nothing?

Did that mean, my friends, that someone would come into this world without having had an opportunity, of course, to have hit one lick of work, should be born with more than it and all of its children and children's children could ever dispose of, but that another one would have to be born into a life of starvation?

That was not the meaning of the Declaration of Independence when it said that all men are created equal or "That we hold that all men are created equal."

... It is necessary to save the government of the country, but is much more necessary to save the people of America. We love this country. We love this Government. It is a religion, I say. It is a kind of religion people have read of when women, in the name of religion, would take their infant babes and throw them into the burning flame, where they would be instantly devoured by the all-consuming fire, in days gone by; and there probably are some people of the world even today, who, in the name of religion, throw their own babes to destruction; but in the name of our good government, people today are seeing their own children hungry, tired, half-naked, lifting their tear-dimmed eyes into the sad faces of their fathers and mothers, who cannot give them food and clothing they both need, and which is necessary to sustain them, and that goes on day after day, and night after night, when day gets into darkness and blackness, knowing those children would arise in the morning without being fed, and probably go to bed at night without being fed.

Now, we have organized a society, and we call it "Share Our Wealth Society," a society with the motto "Every Man a King."

Every man a king, so there would be no such thing as a man or woman who did not have the necessities of life, who would not be dependent upon the whims...of the financial barons for a living. What do we propose by this society? We propose to limit the wealth of big men in the country.

... We do not propose a division of wealth, but we propose to limit poverty that we will allow to be inflicted upon any man's family. We will not say we are going to try to guarantee any equality, or \$15,000 to a family. No; but we do say that one third of the average is low enough for any one family to hold, that there should be a guarantee of a family wealth of around \$5,000; enough for a home, an automobile, a radio, and the ordinary conveniences, and the opportunity to educate their children; a fair share of the income of this land thereafter to that family so there will be no such thing as merely the select to have those things, and so there will be no such thing as a family living in poverty and distress.

We have to limit fortunes. Our present plan is that we will allow no one man to own more than \$50,000,000. We think that with that limit we will be able to carry out the balance of the program. It may be necessary that we limit it to less than \$50,000,000. It may be necessary, in working out of the plans that no man's fortune would be more than \$10,000,000 or \$15,000,000. But be that as it may, it will still be more than any one man, or any one man and his children and their children, will be able to spend in their lifetimes; and it is not necessary or reasonable to have wealth piled up beyond that point where we cannot prevent poverty among the masses.

Those are the things we propose to do. "Every Man a King." Every man to eat when there is something to eat; all to wear something when there is something to wear. That makes us all a sovereign.

You cannot solve these things through these various and sundry alphabetical codes. You can have the N. R. A. and P. W. A. and C. W. A. and the U. U. G. and G. I. N. and any other kind of dad-gummed lettered code. You can wait until doomsday and see 25 more alphabets, but that is not going to solve this proposition. Why hide? Why quibble? You know what the trouble is. The man that says he does not know what the trouble is is just hiding his face to keep from seeing the sunlight.

God told you what the trouble was. The philosophers told you what the trouble was; and when you have a country where one man owns more than 100,000 people, or a million people, and when you have a country where there are four men, as in America, that have got more control over things than all the 120,000,000 people together, you know what the trouble is.

### 3. Upton Sinclair, *EPIC (End Poverty in California) Platform*, printed in *Literary Digest*, October 13, 1934.

I am telling the people of America that we have ten million unemployed who will never work again while the present system endures. For the past year I have been telling the people of California that the burden of supporting their permanently unemployed million-and-a-quarter is driving cities, counties, and State directly into bankruptcy. I have told them that in some hundred and fifty mass meetings, attended by from one thousand to fifteen thousand persons. I have told them in some three hundred thousand pamphlets and some five million copies of weekly newspapers. And in August some four hundred and fifty thousand of them went to the polls and said that they agreed with me.

Just what is to be done? No more important question confronts the American people today. If we do not find an orderly solution, we are going straight into the course of horrors which we have witnessed in Germany. I have believed all my life in democracy, the right and ability of the people to govern themselves. I am now offering the people of my home State a plan and a technique of procedure which will remedy the depression by gradual stages in a peaceable and human fashion, without violence and the overthrow of our political, industrial, or social system.

The "EPIC" (End Poverty in California) movement proposes that our unemployed shall be put at productive labor, producing everything which they themselves consume and exchanging those goods among themselves by a method of barter, using warehouse receipts or labor certificates or whatever name you may choose to give to the paper employed. It asserts that the State must advance sufficient capital to give the unemployed access to good land and machinery, so that they may work and support themselves and thus take themselves off the backs of the taxpayers. The "EPIC" movement asserts that this will not hurt private industry, because the unemployed are no longer of any use to industry.

We plan a new cooperative system for the unemployed. Whether it will be permanent depends upon whether I am right in my belief about the permanent nature of the depression. If prosperity comes back the workers will drift back into private industry. No harm will have been done, because certainly the unemployed will produce something in the meantime, and the State will be that much to the good.

To meet the immediate emergency in our State and get the money to start our new cooperative system, we propose what we call an "EPIC" tax. That is an *ad valorem* tax on property assessed above \$100,000, which means about \$250,000 of actual value. This tax will fall almost entirely upon our great corporations and utilities, and to make it easier for them we shall make it payable at the option of the State, in goods and services. That will give us most of the raw materials and all of the utility services which the unemployed will need to get production started.

We have a great irrigation and power project known as the Central Valley Project. We propose to send fifty thousand unemployed into this work and ask the farmers of the Central Valleys to bring their surplus food crops, taking credits which will be good for water and power when the project is completed. The "EPIC" tax will give us the needed lumber, cement, rock and gravel, steel, etc., and light, heat, power, and transportation. The project will be carried out by our Public Works Department, and it will bring industry back to life in California.

#### 4. Berzelius "Buzz" Windrip's platform (fictitious) from Sinclair Lewis' *It Can't Happen Here*.

(1) All finance in the country, including banking, insurance, stocks and bonds and mortgages, shall be under the absolute control of a Federal Central Bank, owned by the government and conducted by a Board appointed by the President, which Board shall, without need of recourse to Congress for legislative authorization, be empowered to make all regulations governing finance. Thereafter, as soon as may be practicable this said Board shall consider the nationalization and government-ownership, for the Profit of the Whole People, of all mines, oilfields, water power, public utilities, transportation, and communication.

(2) The President shall appoint a commission, equally divided between manual workers, employers, and representatives of the Public, to determine which Labor Unions are qualified to represent the Workers; and report to the Executive, for legal action, all pretended labor organizations whether "Company Unions," or "Red Unions," controlled by Communists and the so-called "Third International." The duly recognized Unions shall be constituted Bureaus of the Government, with power of decision in all labor disputes. Later, the same investigation and official recognition shall be extended to farm organizations. In this elevation of the position of the Worker, it shall be emphasized that the League of Forgotten Men is the chief bulwark against the menace of destructive and un-American Radicalism.

...(4) Believing that only under God Almighty, to Whom we render all homage, do we Americans hold our vast Power, we shall guarantee to all persons absolute freedom of religious worship, provided, however, that no atheist, agnostic, believer in Black Magic, nor any Jew who shall refuse to swear allegiance to the New Testament, nor any person of any faith who refuses to take the Pledge to the

Flag, shall be permitted to hold any public office or to practice as a teacher, professor, lawyer, judge or as a physician, except in the category of Obstetrics.

(5) Annual net income per person shall be limited to \$500,000. No accumulated fortune may at any one time exceed \$3,000,000 per person. No one person shall, during his entire lifetime, be permitted to retain an inheritance or various inheritances in total exceeding \$2,000,000. All incomes or estates in excess of the sums named shall be seized by the Federal Government for us in Relief and in Administrative expenses.

...(7) Our armaments and the size of our military and naval establishments shall be consistently enlarged until they shall equal, but – since this country has no desire for foreign conquest of any kind – not surpass, in every branch of the forces of defense, the martial strength of any other single country or empire in the world. Upon inauguration, this League and Party shall make this its first obligation, together with the issuance of a firm proclamation to all nations of the world that our armed forces are to be maintained solely for the purpose of insuring world peace and amity.

(8) Congress shall have the sole right to issue money and immediately upon our inauguration it shall at least double the present supply of money, in order to facilitate the fluidity of credit.

(9) We cannot too strongly condemn the un-Christian attitude of certain otherwise progressive nations in the discriminations against the Jews, who have been among the strongest supporters of the League, and who will continue to prosper and to be recognized as fully Americanized, though only so long as they continue to support our ideals.

(10) All Negroes shall be prohibited from voting, holding public office, practicing law, medicine, or teaching in any class above the grade of grammar school, and they shall be taxed 100 per cent of all sums in excess of \$10,000 per family per year which they may earn or in any other manner receive. In order, however, to give the most sympathetic aid possible to all Negroes who comprehend their proper and valuable place in society, all such colored persons, male or female, as can prove that they have devoted not less than forty-five years to such suitable tasks as domestic service, agricultural labor, and common labor in industries, shall at the age of sixty-five be permitted to appear before a special Board, composed entirely of white persons, and upon proof that while employed they have never been idle except through sickness, they shall be recommended for pensions not to exceed the sum of \$500.00 per person per year, nor to exceed \$700.00 per family. Negroes shall, by definition, be person with at least one-sixteenth colored blood.

...(12) All women now employed shall, as rapidly as possible, except in such peculiarly feminine spheres of activity as nursing and beauty parlors, be assisted to return to their incomparably sacred duties as home-makers and as mothers of strong, honorable future Citizens of the Commonwealth.

(13) Any person advocating Communism, Socialism, or Anarchism, advocating refusal to enlist in case of war, or advocating alliance with Russia in any war whatsoever, shall be subject to trail for high treason, with a minimum penalty of twenty years at hard labor in prison, and a maximum of death on the gallows, or other forms of executive which the judges may find convenient.

...(15) Congress shall, immediately upon our inauguration, initiate amendments to the Constitution providing (a), that the President shall have the authority to institute and execute all necessary



measures for the conduct of the government during this critical epoch; (b), that Congress shall serve only in an advisory capacity, calling to the attention of the President and his aides and the Cabinet and needed legislation, but not acting upon same until authorized by the President so to act; and (c), that the Supreme Court shall immediately have removed from its jurisdiction the power to negate, by ruling them to be unconstitutional or by any other judicial action, any or all acts of the President, his duly appointed aides, or Congress.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Franklin Delano Roosevelt</b> <b>Inaugural Address</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Huey Long</b> <b>Every Man a King</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Upton Sinclair</b> <b>EPIC (End Poverty in California)</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fiction: Buzz Windrip, Election Platform</b> (from <i>It Can't Happen Here</i>)</p>

1. What are the similarities in content between the four platforms?
2. What are the differences in content between the four platforms?
3. Are their similarities and differences in the tone of the platforms? Explain.

## TEACHER KEY

1. Franklin Roosevelt believes the Depression was caused by:
  - a. Fear
  - b. "The evils of the old order." By this Roosevelt means the tactics of banks and stock brokers. He also mentions the need for a "sound currency."
2. Franklin Roosevelt believes the Depression could be solved by:
  - a. Putting people to work
  - b. Strict supervision of banking, credit and the stock market
  - c. Broad executive power may be necessary
3. Huey Long believes the Depression was caused by:
  - a. Poor distribution of wealth. The rich are too rich, and the poor too poor. "We hold the view that all men are created equal." Now, what did they mean by that? Did they mean, my friends, to say that all men are created equal and that that meant that any one man was born to inherit \$10,000,000,000 and that another child was to be born to inherit nothing?"
4. Huey Long believed the Depression could be solved by:
  - a. A massive redistribution of wealth. He referred to this as "Every Man A King" and created "Share Our Wealth" clubs to achieve this. He states that he wants to limit poverty by giving every American a basic living allowance.
5. Upton Sinclair believes the Depression was caused by:
  - a. Sinclair believes the Depression was caused by the current system. It cannot address the massive unemployment problem, that, in Sinclair's view, may be permanent.
6. Upton Sinclair believed the Depression could be solved by:
  - a. EPIC (End Poverty in California). This was a massive labor program where labor would produce the items they need and use barter to get other things they need. To pay for immediate problem, Sinclair called for a tax on property valued over \$100,000.
7. Buzz Windrip believes the Depression was caused by:
  - a. The reading doesn't directly blame anyone for the Depression. But one can infer that he believes everyone is to blame (in some respect): banks, stock market, labor, non-Christians, peace lovers, blacks, etc.
8. Buzz Windrip believed the Depression could be solved by:
  - a. He calls for a redistribution of the wealth (point #5). He also calls for a different kind of executive power which would essentially eliminate checks and balances (point #15).

## PROPAGANDA TECHNIQUES AND THEIR APPLICATIONS IN TODAY'S WORLD: EIGHT TECHNIQUES OF PROPAGANDA

Fair Use Source Adapted From: <http://www.propagandacritic.com/articles/about.html>

1. **Name Calling** - The name-calling technique links a person, or idea, to a negative word or symbol. This technique is used in the hope that the audience will reject the person or the idea on the basis of the negative symbol, instead of looking at the available evidence. A more subtle technique ties a person to a negative idea or symbol, such as “stingy”.

Examples: Commie, Terrorist, Liberal, Conservative, Socialist, Right-wing, Left-wing

2. **Glittering Generalities** - The “Glittering Generality” is, in short, Name Calling in reverse. While Name Calling seeks to make us form a negative judgment based on a single word or few words, the Glittering Generality device seeks to make us approve and accept the idea based on a single or few well chosen words that conjure only positive images.

Examples: Using words like civilization, Christianity, democracy, patriotism, freedom, in a general way during speeches or in writing.

3. **Euphemism** – this technique attempts to pacify the audience in order to make an unpleasant reality or idea more pleasant. This is accomplished by using words that are bland, or euphemistic.

Examples: Calling a nuclear missile a “peacekeeper”. Calling “shell shock” combat fatigue instead. Calling war bonds “Liberty Bonds”. Calling “American Imperialism,” expansionism.

4. **Transfer** - Transfer is a device used to carry over the authority, sanction, and prestige of something we respect to something the propagandist would have us accept.

Examples: Using the church or its authority to approve of an action, using the flag to represent an action, law or movement, closing a speech with a prayer, or referring to God. Using science or medicine in advertisements is another example of transfer.

5. **Testimonial** – this technique uses a famous person as its spokesman in an attempt to have us agree with the idea. Some testimonials may merely give greater emphasis to a legitimate and accurate idea, a fair use of the device; others may represent the sugar-coating of a distortion, as their attempt at gaining our trust and agreement is based simply on the word of someone we admire or trust.

Example: Tom Selleck as a spokesperson for the NRA, Barbara Streisand, Rob Reiner and Martin Sheen as spokesman for liberal ideas.

5. **Plain Folks** - By using the plain-folks technique, speakers attempt to convince their audience that they, and their ideas, are “of the people” – that is, regular, ordinary, *American* ideas.

Examples: Ronald Reagan having himself photographed chopping wood, George W. Bush holding news conferences at his ranch wearing jeans, Bill Clinton eating at McDonald's. Barack Obama playing basketball.

7. **Bandwagon** – this technique makes us want to follow the crowd. To do this, the propagandist directs his appeal to groups held together already by common ties, ties of nationality, religion, race, sex, vocation. The basic theme of the Band Wagon appeal is that "everyone else is in the group is doing it, and so should you."

Examples: Support for wars, or any propaganda that singles out people by nationality, race, etc. For example, if a black person felt pressure to vote for Obama simply because he is black.

8. **Fear** - when a propagandist warns members of his audience that disaster will result if they do not follow a particular course of action, he is using the fear appeal. This technique focuses on the negative repercussions if the desired course of action is not followed.

Examples: Hitler convincing Germans that Jews were the problem, insurance companies showing burned houses in an attempt to get you to buy insurance, or a pro-gun organization showing criminals using guns in an attempt to get you to support gun ownership for all citizens.

## ASSIGNMENT

Now that you know what the eight types of propaganda are, find THREE modern-day examples that fit into any of the categories above. You should use the documents and/or website from political campaigns, newspapers, magazines, and television. Attach all examples to this worksheet. Use the space below to explain why each example you chose is an excellent example of the propaganda technique.

1. Name Calling:

2. Glittering Generalities:

3. Euphemism:

4. Transfer:

5. Testimonial:

6. Plain Folks:

7. Bandwagon:

8. Fear:

## HOW CAN IT HAPPEN HERE

### HOW FASCISM COULD RISE IN THE UNITED STATES

Excerpts taken from Sinclair Lewis' *It Can't Happen Here*

For each excerpt state ONE propaganda technique you see being used. At the end of the assignment, write a short paragraph in which you discuss how all of the propaganda, shows the attempt to create a fascist government.

1. William Randolph Heart, the newspaper mogul, once said, "Whenever you hear a prominent American called a 'Fascist,' you can usually make up your mind that the man is simply a LOYAL CITIZEN WHO STANDS FOR AMERICANISM."

Propaganda Technique and Explanation of Choice:
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2. The Sunday before Election Day, Buzz Windrip held a final campaign rally at Madison Square Garden in New York City. Doremus Jessup wanted to see what all the fuss over Windrip was about. So he attended the rally. There, he heard Windrip speak in person:

"They say I want money – power! Say, I've turned down offers from law firms right here in New York of three times the money I'll get as President! And power – why, the President is the servant of every citizen in the country, and not just of the considerate folks, but also of every crank that comes pestering him by telegram and phone and letter. And yet, it's true, it's absolutely true I do want power, great, big, imperial – power – but not for myself – no – for *you!* – the power of your permission to smash the Jew financiers who've enslaved you, who're working you to death to pay the interest on their bonds; the grasping bankers – and not all of 'em Jews by a darn sight! – the crooked labor-leaders just as much as the crooked bosses, and, most of all, the sneaking spies of Moscow that want you to lick the boots of their self-appointed tyrants that rule not by love and loyalty, like I want to, but by the horrible power of the whip, the dark cell, the automatic pistol!"

Propaganda Technique and Explanation of Choice:
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3. Before he ran for President, Buzz Windrip wrote a book called *Zero Hour*. The book contained a lot of Windrip's political beliefs. Lewis started chapters 5-15 with small excerpts from Windrip's book. Here is one of the excerpts from *Zero Hour*:

"Those who have never been on the inside of the Councils of State can never realize that with really high-class Statesmen, their chief quality is not political canniness, but a big, rich, overflowing Love for all sorts and conditions of people and for the whole land. That Love and that Patriotism have been my sole guiding principles in Politics. My one ambition is to get all Americans to realize that they are,

and must continue to be the greatest Race on the face of this old Earth, and second to realize that whatever apparent Differences there may be among us, in wealth, knowledge, skill, ancestry or strength – though, of course, all this does not apply to people who are *racially* different from us – we are all brothers, bound together in the great and wonderful bond of National Unity, for which we should all be very glad. And I think We ought to for this be willing to sacrifice any individual gains at all.”

Propaganda Technique and Explanation of Choice:

4. Buzz Windrip, in his book, *Zero Hour*, also said,

“I don’t pretend to be a very educated man, except maybe educated in the heart, and in being able to feel for the sorrows and fears of every ornery fellow human being. Still and all, I’ve read the Bible through, from kiver to kiver, like my wife’s folks say down n Arkansas, some eleven times; I’ve read all the law books they’ve printed; and as to contemporaries, I don’t guess I’ve missed much of all the grand literature...”

Propaganda Technique and Explanation of Choice:

5. One of the early supporters of Buzz Windrip was General Herbert Edgeways. While in Beulah, Vermont, he gave a speech in which he said,

“No! What I’d really like us [United States] to do would be to come out and tell the whole world: ‘Now you boys never mind about the moral side of this. We have power, and power is its own excuse!’ I don’t altogether admire everything Germany and Italy have done, but you’ve got to hand it to ‘em, they’ve been honest enough and realistic enough to say to the other nations, ‘Just tend to your own business, will you? We’ve got strength and will, and for whomever has those divine qualities it’s not only a right, it’s a duty to use ‘em!’ Nobody in God’s world ever loved a weakling – including that weakling himself!”

Propaganda Technique and Explanation of Choice:

6. Which of the actual politicians (FDR, Senator Huey Long, Upton Sinclair) studied in Lesson 2 resembles Buzz Windrip the most? Explain your answer.

7. What is attractive about the message put forth by Buzz Windrip and his supporters?



# WHY “IT” COULD HAVE HAPPENED HERE (BUT DIDN'T)

Compare and Contrast Images of the  
U.S. and European Society Between  
the World Wars

# THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Unemployment in the USA



<https://isemodernworldhistorygrade9.wikispaces.com/The+Great+Depression>

Europe: Bread Line in Paris



[http://iws.punahou.edu/user/JSStevens/project/standard\\_of\\_living/](http://iws.punahou.edu/user/JSStevens/project/standard_of_living/)

# ANTI-COMMUNISM

San Francisco, 1934



<http://www.itwu19.com/>

Nazi Germany, 1933



Jarausch, Konrad, and Helga Welsh, eds. *One Germany in Europe, 1990 – the Present*, volume 10, *German History in Documents and Images*, German Historical Institute, Washington, DC ([www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org](http://www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org)).

# RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

USA



<http://www.cbc.ca/>  
Permission Pending

Nazi Germany



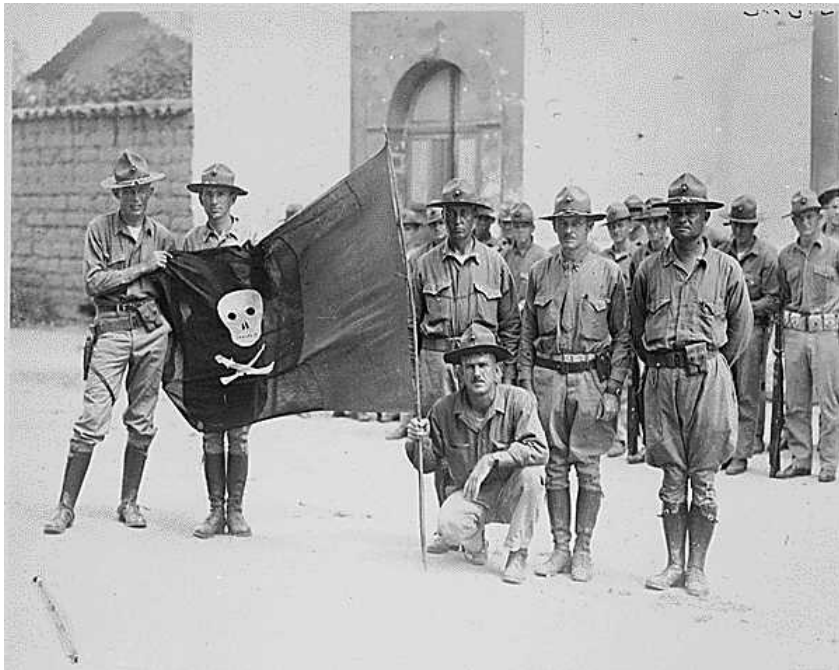
bpk bildarchiv preussischer  
kulturbesitz

Jaraus, Konrad, and Helga Welsh, eds. *One Germany in Europe, 1990 – the Present*, volume 10, *German History in Documents and Images*, German Historical Institute, Washington, DC ([www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org](http://www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org)).

# IMPERIALISM

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U.S. Marines in Nicaragua, 1932



<http://clydemcdonnell.blogspot.com/2011/02/smedley-darlington-butler.html>

Italian Troops Invade Ethiopia, 1936



Courtesy of the Leland Stanford Junior University Hoover Institution: <http://www.hoover.org/>

# INTOLERANCE AND REJECTION OF MODERN IDEAS

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USA, 1930



<http://sharpton.wordpress.com/2009/01/>

Nazi Book Burning, 1933



<http://ener.wikispaces.com/G33+Propaganda>

# CHRISTIAN IMAGERY: POLITICS AS SALVATION

Ku Klux Klan Poster, USA



<http://www.kkkklan.com>

Hitler as Savior



Courtesy of German Propaganda Archive: <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/>

# PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMS

New Deal, USA



Highway Construction in Nazi Germany



Jarausch, Konrad, and Helga Welsh, eds. *One Germany in Europe, 1990 – the Present*, volume 10, *German History in Documents and Images*, German Historical Institute, Washington, DC ([www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org](http://www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org)).

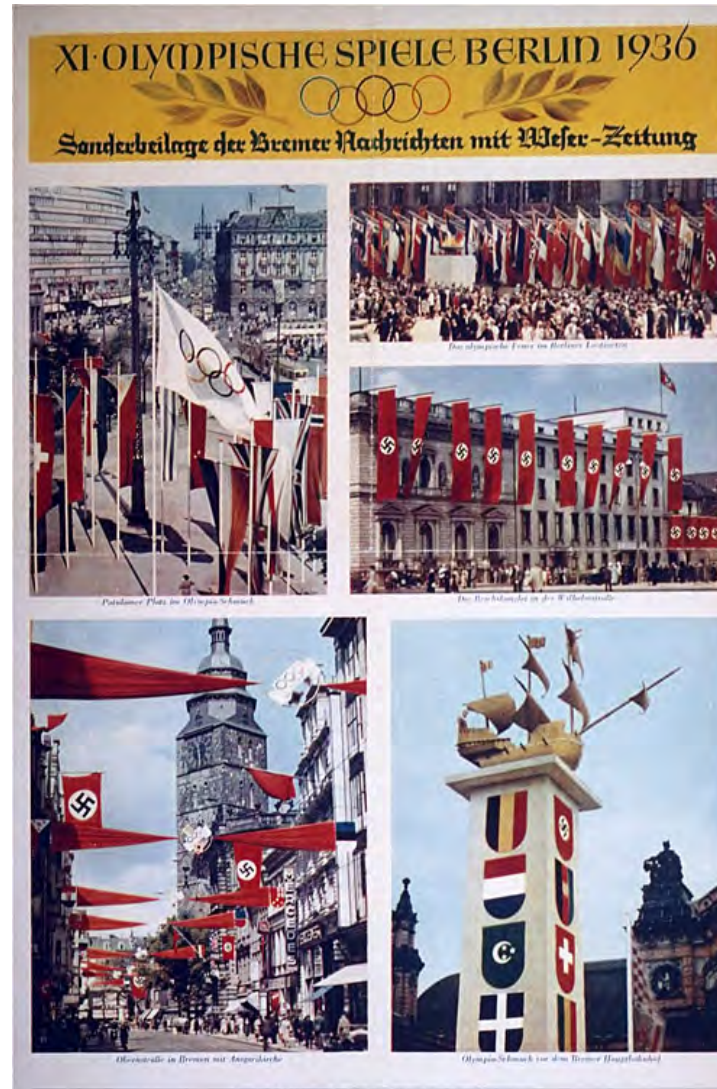
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# PROPAGANDA



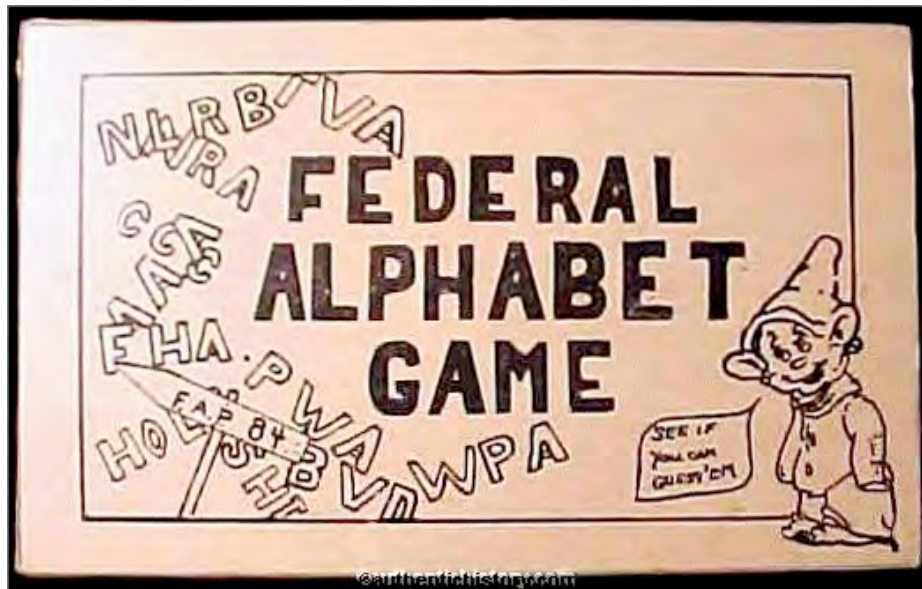
<http://reason.com/blog/2009/07/14/pic-of-the-day-mid-1930s-editi>;  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_Recovery\\_Administration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Recovery_Administration)



Courtesy of Unites States Holocaust Memorial Museum: <http://www.ushmm.org/>

# POLITICS IN EVERYDAY LIFE

## United States



Courtesy of The Authentic History Center: <http://www.authentichistory.com/>

## Nazi Germany



Courtesy of Unites States Holocaust Memorial Museum: <http://www.ushmm.org/>

# YOUTH

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FDR with Boy Scouts



Courtesy of Pine Tree Web: <http://pinetreeweb.com/1937-ni1-05.htm>

Hitler with Hitler Youth



Courtesy of the Anne Frank Guide: <http://www.annefrankguide.net>

# Souvenirs of Political Leaders

United States



<http://www.backintimetradingpost.com/products/president-fdr-cast-iron-bottle-opener.html>

Nazi Germany



Courtesy of Unites States Holocaust Memorial Museum: <http://www.ushmm.org/>

# TWO DIFFERENT CONCEPTS OF STATE LEADERSHIP: BENITO MUSSOLINI'S FASCISM AND FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT'S "FIRESIDE CHAT"



<http://vahsibhistory.wikispaces.com/Mussolini%27s+Rise+to+Power>



Courtesy of the Schenectady Museum Archives: [http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/nvh/88\\_2/storm.html](http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/nvh/88_2/storm.html)

## TEACHER SLIDESHOW NOTES

The slideshow compares and contrasts aspects of U.S. politics and society during the Great Depression with the fascist states of Italy and Nazi Germany. Many of the U.S. examples are directly or indirectly thematized and satirized in Lewis's novel. Students should find examples in the novel for the images given here. The points of comparison in detail:

1. **Unemployment** as a major factor during the Great Depression that destabilizes liberal, democratic politics both in the U.S. and in Europe.
2. **Anti-Communism**: The Great Depression led to increased fear of the influence of Communism in the U.S. and to partly harsh crackdowns of working class activism. The image on the left shows the arrest of a picketing worker during the long shore men's strike in San Francisco in 1934. One of the first acts of the Nazi Government in Germany in 1933 was the arrest of all Communists into concentration camps, where they were stripped of all civil rights and subject to abuse and torture.
3. **Racial Discrimination** was a reality in Nazi Germany and in many parts of the U.S. The images show segregated water fountains in the American South and a park bench reserved for "Aryan," the Nazi term for non-Jewish Germans. The Nazi persecution of Jews became gradually more systematized and ended in the genocide of almost 6 million people.
4. **Imperialism**: Lewis's novel ends with a fictional invasion by the Corpo state of its Mexican neighbor. Lewis might have thought of the history of military interventions of the U.S. in Central America, such as the one in Nicaragua in 1932. While these interventions were low-scale and limited, the imperialism of Mussolini's Italy in Ethiopia and of Hitler in Eastern Europe led to the outbreak of World War II.
5. **Intolerance**: In his novel Lewis targets the intolerance and bigotry of many American organizations during the 1930s. The hostility towards the theory of evolution exemplified the discomfort of many religious Americans with scientific and modern ideas. The Nazi state in Germany demonstrated its institutionalized intolerance with public burnings of books that contained any ideas that might even slightly support intellectual freedom.
6. **Christian Imagery** was a staple of Right-Wing politics that promised salvation for the downtrodden during the Great Depression. While the KuKlux Klan explicitly drew from Christian ideas but didn't become a national mass movement, Hitler's more vague portrayal of himself as savior figure in this poster helped him to take over the state.
7. **Public Works Programs**: Both Nazi Germany and the democratic United States after 1933 launched massive public works programs to get out of the Depression. In the German case, the construction of highways did not only provide employment but also served the preparation for war.

8. **Propaganda:** In the 1930s, both democratic and fascist regimes tried to advertise their political systems through symbols and propaganda that permeated people's everyday life. The Nazi's propaganda during the 1936 Berlin Olympics deceived many people in the U.S. about the true character of the Nazi state.
9. The intrusion of **Politics into Everyday Life** are driven home by these children's toys of the 1930s, propagating the democratic ideals of the New Deal in the U.S. on the left image and the militaristic values that the Nazi regime tried to instill in German youth on the right.
10. **Youth:** Appealing to and influencing the young was a major element of fascist governments. Both Mussolini and Hitler used the example of the Boy Scout organization and blended their image of outdoors activities and adventure with militaristic training and political indoctrination. The members of the Hitler Youth depicted on the right image were to serve as unquestioning and loyal soldiers in Hitler's imperialistic wars.
11. **Souvenirs of Political Leaders:** The playful and ironic representation of the U.S. president as a donkey contrasts markedly with the monumental "cult of personality"—exemplified by these Hitler busts—that aimed to make fascist leaders into almost superhuman beings.
12. The presentation closes with the contrast of a uniformed and belligerent Mussolini giving a speech and Roosevelt's Fireside chat. After the presentation, students should be able to discuss the common features in democratic and fascist countries during the Great Depression, but also their key differences. Students could be asked how the image of FDR's fireside chat might illustrate the political convictions of Lewis's hero, Doremus Jessup.

## WHY IT DIDN'T HAPPEN HERE

### WHY FASCISM DIDN'T TAKE ROOT IN THE UNITED STATES

Excerpts taken from Sinclair Lewis, *It Can't Happen Here* (New York: New American Library, A Division of Penguin Books, 1935).

1. After viewing the slides in the PowerPoint "Why It COULD Have Happened Here" discuss the factors of fascism that were and that were not present in Great Depression era United States.
2. Imagine that fascism did indeed begin to take hold in the United States during the Great Depression (as it had in other countries). What would *American* fascism have looked like? Make at least four specific predictions.
3. Now read the following excerpts from Sinclair Lewis' *It Can't Happen Here*. Remember, this work of fiction detailed what happened in the United States when a fascist leader (Buzz Windrip) gained hold of the U.S. Presidency. Which factors of fascism did you accurately predict? In the end, do you think fascism could take hold in the United States? Why or why not?



## What IT COULD Have Looked Like

Excerpts from Sinclair Lewis, *It Can't Happen Here* (New York: New American Library, A Division of Penguin Books, 1935).

### Example 1, pgs. 91-92

He [Doremus] most noticed a number of stray imitation soldiers, without side-arms or rifles, but a uniform like that of an American cavalry man 1870: slant-topped blue forage caps, dark blue tunics, light blue trousers, with yellow stripes at the seam, tucked into leggings of black rubberoid for what appeared to be the privates, and boots of sleek black leather for offices, Each of them had on the right side of his collar the letter "M.M." and on the left, a five-pointed star. There were so many of them; they swaggered so brazenly, shouldering civilians out of the way; and upon insignificance like Doremus they looked with frigid insolence.

He suddenly understood.

These young condottieri were the "Minute Men": the private troops of Berzelius Windrip, about which Doremus had been publishing uneasy news reports. He was thrilled and little dismayed to see them mow – the printed words made brutal flesh.

...By June, the enrollment of the Minute Men had increased to 562,000, and the force was not able to accept as new members only such trusty patriots and pugilists as it preferred....

...Most of the rank and file...were young farmers delighted by the chance to go to town and to drive automobiles as fast as they wanted to; young factory employees who preferred uniforms and the authority to kick elderly citizens above overalls and stooping over machines; and rather a large number of former criminals, ex-bootleggers, ex-burglars, ex-labor racketeers, who, for their skill with guns and leather life-preservers, and for their assurances that the majesty of the Five-Pointed Star had completely reformed them, were forgiven their earlier blunders in ethics and were warmly accepted in the M.M Storm Troops.

### Example 2, pg. 153

In mid-August, President Windrip announced that, since all its aims were being accomplished, the League of Forgotten Men [a non-governmental group which supported Windrip's candidacy] was now terminated. So were all the older, parties, Democratic, Republican, Farmer-Labor, or what not. There was to be only one: The American Corporate State and Patriotic Party – no! added the President, with something of his former good-humor: "there are two parties, the Corporate and those who don't belong to any party at all, and so, to use a common phrase, are just out of luck!"

The idea of the Corporate or Corporative State, Secretary Sarason had more or less taken from Italy. All occupations were divided into six classes: agriculture, industry, commerce, transportation and communication, banking and insurance and investment, and a grab-bag class including the arts, sciences, and teaching. The American Federation of Labor, The Railway Brotherhoods, and all other labor organizations, Syndicates composed of individual workers, above which were Province in each occupation were Syndicates and Confederations of employers. Finally, the six Confederations of workers and the six Confederations elected the twenty-four members of the National Council or Corporations, which initiated or supervised all legislation relating to labor or business.

**Example 3, pg. 155**

It could now be published to the world, and decidedly it was published, that unemployment had, under the benign reign of President Berzelius Windrip, almost disappeared. Almost all workless men were assembled in enormous labor camps, under M.M. officers. Their wives and children accompanied them and took care of the cooking, cleaning, and repair of clothes. The men did not merely work on state projects; they were also hired out at the reasonable rate of one dollar a day to private employers. Of course, so selfish is human nature even in Utopia, this did cause most employers to discharge the men to whom they had been paying more than a dollar a day, but that took care of itself, because these overpaid malcontents in their turn were forced into the labor camps.

**Example 4, pgs. 206-207**

The authorities abruptly closed some scores of the smaller, more independent colleges such as Williams, Bowdoin, Oberlin, Georgetown, Antioch, Carleton, Lewis Institute, Commonwealth, Princeton, Swarthmore, Kenyon, all vastly different one from another but alike in not yet having entirely become machines. Few of the state universities were closed; they were merely to be absorbed by the central Corpo universities, one in each of the eight provinces. But the government began with only two. In the Metropolitan District, Windrip University took over the Rockefeller Center and Empire State buildings...The second was Macgoblin University, in Chicago and vicinity, using the buildings of Chicago and Northwestern universities, and Jackson Park. President Hutchins of Chicago was rather unpleasant about the whole things and declined to stay on as an assistant professor, so the authorities had politely to exile him.

...this founding of entirely new universities showed the enormous cultural superiority of the Corpo state to the Nazis, Bolsheviks, and Fascists. Where these amateurs in re-civilization had merely kicked out all treacherous so-called "intellectual" teachers who mulishly declined to teach physics, cookery, and geography according to the principles and facts laid down by the political bureaus, and the Nazis had merely added the sounds measure of discharging Jews who dares attempt to teach medicine, the Americans were the first to start new and completely orthodox institutions, free from the very first of any taint of "intellectualism."

All Corpo universities were to have the same curriculum, entirely practical and modern, free of all snobbish tradition.

**Example 5, pg. 215**

His birthday in 1937 [Windrip] commemorated by the historical “Order of Regulation”, which stated that though the Corporate government had proved both its stability and its good-will, there were still certain stupid or vicious “elements” who, in their foul envy of Corpo success, wanted to destroy everything that was good. The kind-hearted-government was fed-up, and the country was informed that, from this day on, any person who by word or act sought to harm or discredit the State, would be executed or interned. Inasmuch as the prisons were already too full, both for their slanderous criminals and for the persons whom the kind-hearted State had to guard by “protective arrest,” there were immediately to be opened, all over the country, concentration camps.

Doremus guessed that the reason for the concentration camps was not only the provision of extra room for victims but, even more, the provision of places where the livelier young M.M.’s could amuse themselves without interference from old-time professional policemen and prison-keepers, most of whom regarded their charges no as enemies, to be tortured, but just as cattle, to be kept safe.

**Example 6, pg. 216**

In San Francisco, dock-workers tried to start an absolutely illegal strike, and their leaders, known to be Communists, were so treasonable in their speeches against the government that an M.M. commander had three of them tied up to bale of rattan, which was soaked with oil and set fire. The commander gave warning to all such malcontents by shooting off the criminals’ fingers and ears while they are burning, and so skilled a marksman was he, so much credit to the efficient M.M. training, that he did not kill one single man while thus trimming them up....

**Example 7, pg 308, 335**

*[Dr. Olmstead, a friend of Doremus, came to visit him at Trianon Concentration Camp. While there he spoke with Doremus].* Your grandson, David, looks fine—though I’m afraid he’ll grow up a Corpo, like all the youngsters.

*[Doremus’ son Philip, had become a Corpo. While Doremus was at Trianon Concentration Camp, Philip came to take Doremus’ wife and grandson, David to his home in Massachusetts].* He [Philip] was, Sissy [Doremus’ daughter] raged, so damned *kind* to everybody! She couldn’t even stir herself to insult him much. She earnestly desired to, when she found that he had brought David and M.M. uniform, and when David put it on and paraded about shouting, like most of the boys he played with, “Hail Windrip!”

## TEACHER KEY

This assignment asks students to evaluate propaganda in modern media. Therefore, there will be many different answers to the first part of the assignment. However, the second part of the assignments, the excerpts from *It Can't Happen Here*, may have some of the following answers:

1. Hearst quote can be seen most obviously as an example of *bandwagon*. It would have the effect of making people want to join a cause. One might also say *glittering generality* as the words loyal, citizen and Americanism all have positive connotations.
2. Buzz Windrip's quote can be seen as an example of *name calling*. He refers to the "Jew financiers" and it carries a negative connotation. He also refers to the "crooked" people as a name calling technique. One might also say that he is using the *plain folk* technique. He does refer to the people a lot and puts himself on par with them. Finally, he does use the *fear* technique to focus on what the "crooked leaders" will do.
3. The excerpt from Windrip's book, *Zero Hour*, suggests the use of *glittering generality*. Windrip uses love, patriotism, American, greatest to create positive reactions to his racist agenda. In this way, one might say that Windrip is using *euphemism*. His racist ideology is couched in terms that sound much better.
4. The excerpt, also from Windrip's book, *Zero Hour*, used *Plain folk*. Windrip ties himself to average Americans by saying he's not well educated. He is also using *transfer* by referring to his reading of the Bible.
5. Herbert Edgeway's speech is an example of *testimonial*. Edgeway is a general in the U.S. Army and thus can be considered an expert on military power whose advice people are automatically willing to follow. It might also be said that he is using *fear* – the word power can carry fear with it.

## California History-Social Science Project Author Biographies



Kevin Williams has taught social studies for 19 years at the high school level. He taught for two years at Seoul International School in South Korea and 17 years at Davis Senior High School in Davis, CA. Currently he teaches A.P. U.S. History and Race and Social Justice in U.S. History.



Andreas Agocs grew up in Germany, where he also studied and taught American history and culture. After moving to California, he received his Ph.D. in Modern European History from the University of California, Davis. His research focused on twentieth-century Germany and the history of the Cold War. Since 2007, Andreas has been teaching courses in European and World History at UC Davis and California State University, Sacramento, where he is currently a lecturer. He lives with his wife and two children in Davis, California.



Editor: Beth Slutsky

Beth earned her Ph.D. in U.S. history from the University of California, Davis, with a focus on the U.S. during the Cold War and women's history. She has teaching experience at both the secondary and post-secondary levels, and has worked extensively on the professional development of teachers. Beth served as the editor for the California Reads curriculum guides and recruited, organized, and guided the work of the scholar-teacher teams.

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## About Cal Humanities:

Cal Humanities is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting a greater understanding of the human condition. We produce, fund, and support cultural experiences in media, literature, discussion programs and more. Through engaging and inspiring work, we encourage our audiences to learn more, dig deeper, and start conversations that matter to create a State of Open Mind. To learn more about us, please visit [www.calhum.org](http://www.calhum.org)

## About California History-Social Science Project:

Headquartered in the Department of History at the University of California, Davis, the California History-Social Science Project (CHSSP) is a K-16 collaborative—informing classroom practice through scholarly research and directing that research to meet the real-life needs of California’s teachers and their students. A special focus of their work has been meeting the needs of English learners, native speakers with low literacy, and students from economically disadvantaged communities in order to reduce the achievement gap. For additional information, please visit <http://csmp.ucop.edu/chssp>

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