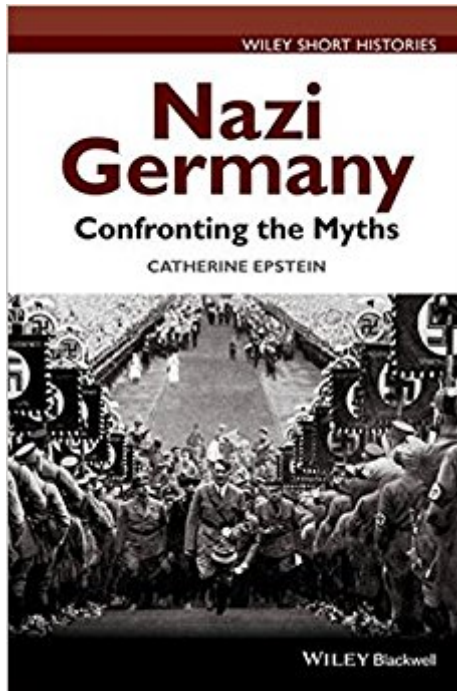




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Nazi Germany: Confronting The Myths (Wiley Short Histories)



Synopsis

Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths provides a concise and compelling introduction to the Third Reich. At the same time, it challenges and demystifies the many stereotypes surrounding Hitler and Nazi Germany. Creates a succinct, argument-driven overview for students by using common myths and stereotypes to encourage critical engagement with the subject Provides an up-to-date historical synthesis based on the latest research in the field Argues that in order to fully understand and explain this period of history, we need to address its seeming paradoxes – for example, questioning why most Germans viewed the Third Reich as a legitimate government, despite the Nazis' criminality Incorporates useful study features, including a timeline, glossary, maps, and illustrations

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Among the many textbooks on Nazi Germany Catherine Epstein's stands out both because of its persuasive combination of the most recent research on this subject interwoven with judicious discussions of continuing debates on unresolved historiographical questions and because of the skillful ways in which she draws the reader into this complex field. Students and teachers in advanced secondary as well as higher education will also find this book to be the best short guide to the history of the Nazi Holocaust." ?V.R. Berghahn, Columbia University "Drawing on the very latest scholarship, Catherine Epstein offers a lucidly written, accessible, engaging account of Hitler and the Third Reich. Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths is an ideal choice for the undergraduate

classroom and will likely be the text that introduces many, many students to this most troubling chapter of modern German history." ?Robert Moeller, University of California, Irvine

"Among the many textbooks on Nazi Germany Catherine Epstein's stands out both because of its persuasive combination of the most recent research on this subject interwoven with judicious discussions of continuing debates on unresolved historiographical questions and because of the skillful ways in which she draws the reader into this complex field. Students and teachers in advanced secondary as well as higher education will also find this book to be the best short guide to the history of the Nazi Holocaust." â "V.R. Berghahn, Columbia University "Drawing on the very latest scholarship, Catherine Epstein offers a lucidly written, accessible, engaging account of Hitler and the Third Reich. Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths is an ideal choice for the undergraduate classroom and will likely be the text that introduces many, many students to this most troubling chapter of modern German history." â "Robert Moeller, University of California, Irvine

This is a well-done overview of the history of Nazi Germany. The author provides a satisfyingly objective survey without apparent bias. For example, the author strives to understand, instead of demonize: //Nazi Germany was evil, no doubt about it. But we cannot just condemn the Third Reich. We need to explain it, along with its seeming paradoxes . Despite the Nazis' criminality, for example, most Germans viewed the Third Reich as a legitimate government. They supported Nazi policies. Millions of German soldiers even fought for the Nazis. In another seeming paradox, Hitler rarely made decisions. Yet, even though he had little interest in day-to-day governance, the Nazi regime carried out many of his wishes. Then, too, while many view Nazi Germany as a totalitarian regime, it is striking how much agency Germans had in the Third Reich. The Nazis, for example, were initially eager to have "Aryan" women stay at home to raise children. Yet, when they insisted that women work, many "Aryan" women simply evaded Nazi labor regulations. Not least, this was because Nazi Germany was under-policed, not over-policed. Epstein, Catherine A. (2014-12-23). Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths (Wiley Short Histories) (Kindle Locations 320-327). Wiley. Kindle Edition. The book follows the development of Germany from the period immediately prior to World War One through the fall of Nazi Germany in 1945. Based on my reading of other books, this book is very well informed and accurate. It is also written in a very accessible way such that readers at all levels of knowledge and education can glean the critical facts from the text. I was also impressed by the bibliography for each chapter, which demonstrated the extent of reading the author had done. I have a slight criticism with the author's footnoting, which is mostly absent. I

wondered about one item, namely, the author's claim that Hitler was in the hospital at the end of WWI because of PTSD, rather than battle injuries://As for Pasewalk in fall 1918, Hitler was not hospitalized for temporary blindness but rather for "war hysteria" in the psychiatric unit. Historians have rightly questioned his alleged Pasewalk epiphany .Epstein, Catherine A. (2014-12-23). Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths (Wiley Short Histories) (Kindle Locations 899-901). Wiley. Kindle Edition.I'm sure that she has a source for this claim, but I'm not sure if that claim has been accepted by the majority of historians. I will file this one away for future reference.The title of the book indicates that the book is structured around refuting myths. In fact, that is not how the book is actually structured. Periodically the author will mention a myth that people hold, but that almost seems incidental to the structure of the book. For example://Many myths surround Nazi Germany in World War II. There is a common presumption that the German army was modern through and through . There is a misperception that only the early Russian winter kept German forces from seizing Moscow in fall 1941. There is a myth that the Wehrmacht (army) was "clean"; that is, that the Schutzstaffel (SS) - and not the army - perpetrated the Holocaust and other wartime atrocities. There is a presumption that the Nazi race war was directed solely at Jews - and not at Slavs or other "undesirables ." Finally, there is a misperception that Britain and the United States - instead of the Soviet Union - were primarily responsible for Allied victory in Europe . Confronting these and other myths exposes important truths about Nazi Germany.Epstein, Catherine A. (2014-12-23). Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths (Wiley Short Histories) (Kindle Locations 3299-3305). Wiley. Kindle Edition.Some of these may be myths, and some may not be myths, but these are definitely useful things to review with the lay reader.I was looking for a more revisionist account, but I was pleased with what I found, including the following unusual or important factoids://nation. Still, while a low-grade antisemitism was ubiquitous, it was hardly the dominant or defining social value. Germans were much more exercised by the loss of national prestige, symbolized by the Treaty of Versailles.Epstein, Catherine A. (2014-12-23). Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths (Wiley Short Histories) (Kindle Locations 606-608). Wiley. Kindle Edition.//Who voted for the Nazis? While Hitler's party made the greatest inroads among voters in the Protestant towns and rural areas of northern Germany, the Nazis attracted German voters of all stripes: northern and southern, urban and rural, old and young, men and women, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, reputable and ignoble. Just two groups proved resistant to the Nazis. Catholics stuck to their Center Party, and most urban workers continued to support the SPD or the more militant KPD.Epstein, Catherine A. (2014-12-23). Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths (Wiley Short Histories) (Kindle Locations 1232-1236). Wiley. Kindle Edition.//The purge of the SA was a key moment in Hitler's assumption of total power.

Ironically, it brought a resurgence of Nazi popularity; many Germans welcomed the suppression of the SA and its violence. The storm troopers, although not disbanded, never again played an important role in the Nazi movement. The purge also proved to army leaders that Hitler supported the traditional military (even though Schleicher and another general were murdered). It also allowed Hitler to squash past and present inner-party opposition, a lesson to would-be opponents. Finally, it marked the ascendancy of the SS, Himmler's extralegal police organization. Epstein, Catherine A. (2014-12-23). *Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths* (Wiley Short Histories) (Kindle Locations 1644-1649). Wiley. Kindle Edition.//Before World War II - except for a brief period in 1938 - concentration-camp prisoners were rarely Jews. Instead, the inmate population consisted of leftists, clergymen, and those groups (not Jews) deemed racially inferior (see Chapter 4). In 1937, Himmler claimed that camp prisoners "are the dregs of criminality, of people who have taken the wrong path... There are people there with hydrocephalus, people who squint, people with deformities, half-Jews, a mass of racially inferior material." In 1939, there were six official concentration camps, including a camp for women, Ravensbrück; these camps housed some 21,400 inmates. Epstein, Catherine A. (2014-12-23). *Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths* (Wiley Short Histories) (Kindle Locations 1767-1772). Wiley. Kindle Edition.//Why didn't all German Jews leave Nazi Germany? Many countries were reluctant to accept Jewish refugees. The United States, for example, refused to change its immigration quotas. It was thus extremely difficult for Jews to secure entry visas and other documents necessary for immigration. At the same time, many Jews were wary of starting new lives in foreign surroundings. Some remained in Germany to care for elderly parents. Mostly, though, Jews stayed because they never imagined that the Nazis would outright murder them. Until it happened , the Holocaust was all but unthinkable. Epstein, Catherine A. (2014-12-23). *Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths* (Wiley Short Histories) (Kindle Locations 2398-2401). Wiley. Kindle Edition.//(Auschwitz was the only camp where prisoners were tattooed with numbers.) Nazi Epstein, Catherine A. (2014-12-23). *Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths* (Wiley Short Histories) (Kindle Location 4267). Wiley. Kindle Edition. On final thought, as a whole, the book does confront the "myths" of Nazi Germany by broadening the focus on the regime and considering it as an admittedly evil system which had its own logic.

I liked the somewhat balanced approach. Although a lot of known facts, there were also a lot of new ones and honest perspectives. Not all a total condemnation of the Germans.

Required as a textbook for a class of mine. Concise, to the point, gets the facts across quickly and

easily. Plus, it's just an interesting read in general. Definitely enjoy it!

It was okay. Not as enjoyable as I expected, but just okay.

Dean and Prof. Epstein as she sets forth in her introduction has written a "short" history of Nazi Germany in which she has sought to be thorough and also demolish a few presumed myths about the subject. This book, well written as all of her books are, accomplishes the task. In a bit over 250 pages she covers numerous matters concerning which detailed histories have been written dealing with them in much, much greater detail. I caught a few very minor errors inner book; as to the myths, there other historians who would dispute that a few of them are in fact myths. (Trivial example: she asserts it is a myth that Hitler had one testicle; books by the Soviet pathologists who examined the body assert otherwise, of course she asserts there was no body, only a jawbone. Who knows??) This is a fine book as thorough as a once-over-lightly treatment of such a momentous subject can be...I recommend it highly to those who want that kind of a history.

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