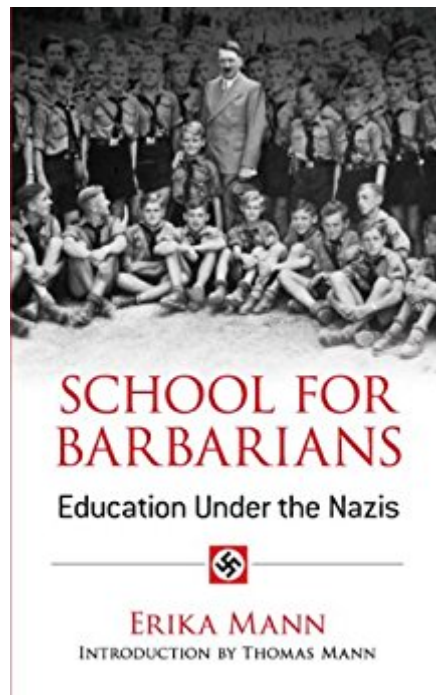


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School For Barbarians: Education Under The Nazis (Dover Books On History, Political And Social Science)



Synopsis

Published in 1938, when Nazi power was approaching its zenith, this well-documented indictment reveals the systematic brainwashing of Germany's youth. The Nazi program prepared for its future with a fanatical focus on national preeminence and warlike readiness that dominated every department and phase of education. Methods included alienating children from their parents, promoting notions of racial superiority instead of science, and developing a cult of personality centered on Hitler. Erika Mann, a member of the World War II generation of German youth, observed firsthand the Third Reich's perversion of a once-proud school system and the systematic poisoning of family life. This edition of her historic exposé features an Introduction by her father, famed author and Nobel laureate Thomas Mann.

Book Information

File Size: 1294 KB

Print Length: 160 pages

Publisher: Dover Publications; Reprint edition (January 28, 2014)

Publication Date: January 28, 2014

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00I5SKI0G

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #728,525 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #45

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Children's eBooks > History > Holocaust #93 in Books >

Teens > Education & Reference > History > Holocaust #176 in Books > Children's Books >

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Customer Reviews

Thomas Mann's daughter eviscerates the Nazi "educational" system, cutting it open lengthwise and displaying its criminal entrails. This study may be old and unfashionably sharp in tone but it ought to be required reading. The current generation of young people are on the verge of thinking of the Nazis as cartoonish oafs as depicted in Quentin Tarantino movies. But these men and women were

a real threat to the world and regime of which they were a part unleashed an ocean of blood. They not only represented the worst in the human character, they turned their children into monsters. This book shows how they did it.

"School for Barbarians" is a short but fascinating account of the overwhelming mind controls and intimidation exerted on children and their families by the Nazi Party in Germany. It was published in 1938, a year before Hitler unleashed his blitzkrieg on Poland. As such, there is an urgency and immediacy to the book. It is both an exposé and a warning cry to the world of the evil mindset and oppression that threatened all of Europe. Written by Erika Mann, daughter of famed German novelist Thomas Mann, the book is divided into three chapters: The Family; The School; The State Youth. The latter refers to the Nazi youth organizations whose goal was to raise a generation of the "master race" to rule the world. These chapters convey exactly how youth were brainwashed and regimented, with daily school lessons drenched in historical resentments, assertions of racial superiority and world conquest. Math problems, for instance, would ask pupils to quantify the population and territorial losses of Germany after World War I, or how many bombs of how much weight could be dropped by a certain plane. There was a constant, insane drumbeat of anti-Semitism: EVERY social and political problem was blamed on Jews. Intense peer pressure, neighborhood snitches and massive police surveillance ensured that dissenters were punished and forced to comply with Nazi ideology. The title "School for Barbarians" sounds a little over the top but it's not hyperbole. When I finished this book I had a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that turned a whole generation into conscienceless brutes who murdered millions and laid waste to Europe. We need to understand the signs so we can prevent it from ever happening again.

First published before the Second World War, this book by Erika Mann, the daughter of Thomas Mann, clearly describes the barbarism of the Nazis. As part of their totalitarian regime, the Nazis forced children into organizations like the Hitler Youth and the BDM that inculcated Nazi beliefs, and created a culture of widespread eavesdropping and tale bearing even within the family, in order to stifle dissent or opposition. They set out to disrupt family life and to coarsen the intellectual and moral development of children, and largely succeeded. While the Nazi regime disappeared 70 years ago, this book is worth reading as a document on the history of Nazi Germany and as a warning of the consequences of totalitarian ideologies.

A fascinating description of education during Third Reich from an author who lived during the period.

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