Spring 2023 Professor Steven Ross

Wednesday 2-4:40pm SOS 172 sjross@usc.edu

CAP 107 Office Hours: Wednesday 11-2 and by apptmt

**History 589: Fascism, Nazism, and Communism**

**Seminar Focus:** What has it meant to live in a democratic nation during the 20th and 21st centuries—and what challenges have been posed to democratic ideals by Fascism and Nazism? How did the focus on the fight against Communism distract from these challenges? This course will explore the rise of Fascism, Nazism, and Communism in the 20th and 21st century United States and the ways in which those ideologies clashed with ideals of democracy. Seminar readings focus on how various hate groups have contributed to the spread of anti-Semitism and racism in the United States during this time period—and how that history helps us understand how we got to the events of January 6, 2021. This course will help students understand why racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and hate have taken the forms they have in the 20th and 21st centuries, how citizens have fought back to resist hate, and how rightwing groups have used the continually used the “communist threat” to undermine democratic values.

**Seminar Organization**: Seminars will examine (1) the general issues and debates surrounding the week’s main themes; (2) how the common core readings fit into the overall scheme of things; (3) how we might move scholarship in the field a step further—i.e. what topics still need more critical examinations. It is strongly recommended that you read major reviews of the week’s main text. **PLEASE**, leave yourself time to **think about and synthesize** **the week's reading!** Coming prepared to a graduate seminar means more than just finishing the reading. You need to have a critical take on what **you think** about the week’s themes and issues and how the author handles them—or does not.

Seminar participants are responsible for **3 written reviews** and **2 oral presentations** (1 review will be of week's readings; the other two are drawn from seminar review list). The reviews (4-5 single spaced pages) should (a) discuss the general context/historiography the book falls within; (b) layout its arguments and theses; (c) critique the book; (d) offer your own reflections. I will distribute a handout describing how to write a seminar review. You can substitute a bibliographic essay for the last review.

Grading: Approximately 50% will be written work and 50% seminar participation. The latter means comes prepared each week to engage in a critical discussion.

**Required Readings:**

Jason Stanley, *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*

David Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan* (3rd edtn)

Alan Brinkley, *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, & the Great Depression*

Bradley W. Hart, *Hitler’s American Friends: The Third Reich's Supporters in the United States*

Scott Beekman, *William Dudley Pelley: A Life in Right Wing Extremism and the Occult*

Thomas Doherty, *Hollywood and Hitler, 1933-1939*

Steven J. Ross, *Hitler in Los Angeles: How Jews Foiled Nazi Plots Against Hollywood and America*

Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund, *The Inquisition in Hollywood: Politics in the Film Community, 1930-60*

Shana Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform: Interracial Civil Rights Activism in 20th Century LA*

Steven J. Ross, *The Secret War Against Hate: American Resistance to White Supremacy After*

*1945* (mss to be distributed)

Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crime: McCarthyism in America*

Alexandra Minna Stern, *Proud Boys and the White Ethnostate*

Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol*,* with intro

by David Remnick, Jamie Raskin, *The January 6th Report*

***SEMINAR MEETINGS***

***Jan. 11: Introduction: Fascism, Nazism, Communism and Democracy***

***Jan. 18: What is Fascism and How Does it Work?***

Jason Stanley, *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*

**Seminar Reviews:**

Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

Carl Boggs, *Fascism Old and New: American Politics at the Crossroads*

Walter Laqueur, *Fascism: Past, Present, Future*

Cass Sunstein, *Can it Happen Here?*

Madeleine Albright, *Fascism: A Warning*

Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*

Zev Sternhell, *The Birth of Fascist Ideology*

***Jan. 25: The Beginnings of Native Fascism: The Ku Klux Klan***

David Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan* (3rd edtn)

Michael J. Pfeifer, “At the Hands of Parties Unknown? The State of the Field of Lynching Scholarship,” *Journal of American History,* vol. 101 (Dec. 2014), 832-46 & other short piece on Lynchings

**Seminar Reviews:**

Stetson Kennedy, *The Klan Unmasked* (his undercover experience post WWII)

Elaine Frantz Parsons, *Ku-Klux: The Birth of the Klan during Reconstruction*

Kathleen M. Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s*

Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan*

Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition*

Shawn Lay, ed., *The Invisible Empire in the West: Toward a New Historical Appraisal of the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s*

James H. Madison, *The Ku Klux Klan in the Heartland*

Michael Newton, *White Robes and Burning Crosses: A History of the Ku Klux Klan From 1866*

Rory McVeigh*, The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan: Right-Wing Movements and National Politics*

***Feb. 1: America Right & Left: Politics Between Two Wars***

Alan Brinkley, *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin and the Great Depression*

Kim Phillips-Fein, “Conservatism: A State of the Field,” *Journal of American History*, Vol 98 (Dec 2011), 723-43; Wilfred M. McClay, “Less Boilerplate, More Symmetry,” 744-47; Alan Brinkley, “Conservatism as a Growing Field of Scholarship,” 748-51; Donald T. Critchlow, “Rethinking American Conservatism: Toward a New Narrative,” 752-55; Martin Durham, “On American Conservatism and Kim Phillips-Fein's Survey of the Field,” 756-59; Matthew D. Lassiter, “Political History beyond the Red-Blue Divide,” 760-64; Lisa McGirr, Now That Historians Know So Much about the Right, How Should We Best Approach the Study of Conservatism?” 765-70; Kim Phillips-Fein,” A response,” 771-73; Dec. 2011

**Seminar Reviews:**

Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front*

Bill Mullen, *Popular Fronts: Chicago & African-American Cultural Politics 1935-46*

Donald Warren, *Radio Priest: Charles Coughlin, the Father of Hate Radio*

Alan Brinkley, *Liberalism and Its Discontents*

Richard Pells, *Radical Visions & American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years*

Warren Susman, *Culture As History: The Transformation of Am Society in the 20e*

***Feb. 8: American Nazis: Origins and Rise***

Bradley W. Hart, *Hitler’s American Friends: The Third Reich's Supporters in the United States*

Johnpeter Horst Grill and Robert L. Jenkins, “The Nazis and the American South in the 1930s: A Mirror Image?” *Journal of Southern History*, 58 (Nov. 1922), 667-94

Robert Singerman, “The American Career of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*,” *Journal of American History*, 71 (Sept. 1981), 48-78

**Seminar Reviews:**

James Q. Whitman*, Hitler's American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law*

Sander A. Diamond, *The Nazi Movement in the United States 1924-1941*

Arnie Bernstein, *Swastika Nation: Fritz Kuhn and the Rise and Fall of the German-American Bund*

Sarah Churchwell, *Behold, America: A History of America First and the American Dream*

Charles R. Gallagher, *Nazis of Copley Square: The Forgotten Story of the Christian Front*

Donald Strong, *Organized Anti-Semitism in America: The Rise of Group Prejudice During the Decade, 1930-1940*

Charles Higham, *American Swastika*

William Breuer, *Hitler’s Undercover War: The Nazi Espionage Invasion of the USA*

Leland V. Bell, *In Hitler's Shadow: The Anatomy of American Nazism*

Andrew Nagorski, *Hitlerland: American Eyewitnesses to the Nazi Rise to Power*

Warren Grover, *Nazis in Newark*

Susan Canedy *America’s Nazis*: *A Democratic Dilemma: A History of the German American Bund.*

***Feb. 15: The Rise of American Fascism (“Nationalism”)***

Scott Beekman, *William Dudley Pelley: A Life in Right Wing Extremism and the Occult*

**Seminar Reviews:**

Francis MacDonnell, *Insidious Foes: The Axis Fifth Column and the American Home Front*

Max Wallace, *The American Axis: Henry Ford, Charles Lindbergh, & the Rise of the Third Reich*

William Dudley Pelley, *No More Hunger: The Compact Plan of the Christian Commonwealth* (1933)

Carey McWilliams, *It Can Happen Here: Active Anti-Semitism in LA (1935)*

Raymond Gram Swing, *Forerunners of American Fascism (1935)*

Richard Rollins, *I Find Treason: The Story of an Am Anti-Nazi Agent* (1941)

John Roy Carlson, *Undercover: My Four Years in the Nazi Underworld in America (1943)*

Sally Denton, *The Plot Against the President: FDR, A Nation in Crisis, and the Rise of the American Right* (a fascist coup to overthrow FDR)

Glen Jeansonne, *Women of the Far Right: Mothers' Movement and World War II*

Glen Jeansonne, *Gerald L K. Smith: Minister of Hate*

Leo P. Ribuffo, *The Old Christian Right: The Protestant Far Right from the Great Depression to the Cold War.*

Stephen H. Norwood, *The Third Reich In the Ivory Tower: Complicity and Conflict on American Campuses*

***Feb. 22: Hollywood, Nazis, and Visual Politics 1930s-40s***

Thomas Doherty, *Hollywood and Hitler, 1933-1939*

Steven J. Ross, “When Russia Invaded America: Hollywood, War and the Movies,” *in Working-Class Hollywood, 115-42*

**Seminar Reviews:**

Ben Urwand, *The Collaboration: Hollywood’s Pact with Hitler*

Michael E. Birdwell, *Celluloid Soldiers: Warner Bros.’s Campaign Against Nazism*

David Welky, *The Moguls and the Dictators: Hollywood and the Coming of World War II*

Harry Waldman, *Nazi Films in America, 1933-1942*

Chris Yogerst, *Hollywood Hates Hitler” Jew-Baiting, Anti-Nazism, and the Senate Investigation into Warmongering in Motion Pictures*

Clayton Koppes and Gregory D. Black, *Hollywood Goes to War: How Politics, Profits and Propaganda Shaped World War II Movies*

Martin Kaplan and Johanna Blakley, eds., *Warners’ War: Politics, Pop Culture & Propaganda in Wartime Hollywood* (handout for entire class)

Otto Friedrich, *City of Nets: A Portrait of Hollywood in the 1940’s*

Lary May, *The Big Tomorrow: Hollywood and the Politics of the American Way*

Saverio Giovacchini, *Hollywood Modernism: Film and Politics in the Age of the New Deal*

***March 1: Resistance to Nazism in America***

Steven J. Ross, *Hitler in Los Angeles: How Jews Foiled Nazi Plots Against Hollywood and America*

**Seminar Reviews:**

Laura Rosenzweig, *Hollywood Spies: The Undercover Surveillance of Nazis in Los Angeles*

Leon G. Turrou, *Nazi Spies in America* (1939)

Richard Wilmer Rowan, *Secret Agents Against America* (1939)

John L. Spivak, *Honorable Spy: Exposing Japanese Military Intrigue in the United States* (1939)

Curt Riess, *Total Espionage* (1941). Nazi spies in US

Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn, *Sabotage! The Secret War Against America* (1942)

Curt Reiss, *The Nazis Go Underground* (1944)

Michael Benson, *Gangsters vs. Nazis: How Jewish Mobsters Battled Nazis in WW2 Era America*

Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *The Nazi Spy Ring in America: Hitler's Agents, the FBI, and the Case That Stirred the Nation*

Moshe R. Gottlieb, *American Anti-Nazi Resistance, 1933-1941*

William B. Breuer, *Hitler's Undercover War: Nazi Espionage Invasion of U.S.A.*

Leon Turrou and Paul Rich, *Spying on America: Leon G. Turrou's The Nazi Spy Conspiracy in America*

Eugene Rachlis, *They Came to Kill: The Story of Eight Nazi Saboteurs in America*

***March 8: How the Fight Against Communism Blinded Americans to Nazism & Fascism***

Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund, *The Inquisition in Hollywood: Politics in the Film Community, 1930-60*

Les K. Adler; Thomas G. Paterson, “Red Fascism: The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism, 1930's-1950's,” *AHR,* 75, (Apr 1970), 1046-1064.

**Seminar Reviews:**

Gerald Horne, *Class Struggles in Hollywood 1930-1950*

Mike Nielsen and Gene Mailes, *Hollywood’s Other Blacklist: Union Struggles in the Studio System*

Kenneth Billingsley, *Hollywood Party: How Communism Seduced the American Film Industry in the 1930s and 1940s*

Stephen Gundle*, Between Hollywood and Moscow: The Italian Communists and the Challenge of Mass Culture, 1943-1991*

Paul Buhle, Dave Wagner, *Hide In Plain Sight: The Hollywood Blacklistees in Film and Television, 1950-2002*

Joel Kovel, *Red Hunting in the Promised Land: Anti-Communism and the Making of America*

***March 15: SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS***

***March 22: Public History and America’s Fascist (Nationalist) Past***

Podcast series: *Rachel Maddow Presents Ultra* (8 episodes)

<https://www.msnbc.com/rachel-maddow-presents-ultra>

Lydia Polgreen, “How Will History Remember Jan. 6?” *New York Times*, Op-Ed, Dec. 19, 2022

https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/19/opinion/january-6-report-history.html?

Joanne Meyerowitz, “180 Op–Eds: Or How to Make the Present Historical,” *Journal of American History*, Vol 107 (Sept. 2020), 323-35

***March 29: Fighting Hate in Postwar America: Beating Back Anti-Semites, Racists, Fascists***

Shana Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform: Interracial Civil Rights Activism in 20th Century LA*

Britt P Tevis, “Jews Not Admitted”: Anti-Semitism, Civil Rights, and Public Accommodation Law,” *Journal of American History*, Vol 107 (March 2021), 847-70

**Seminar Reviews:**

Shana Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform: Interracial Civil Rights Activism in 20th Century LA*

Ellen M. Eisenberg, *The First to Cry Down Injustice? Western Jews and Japanese Removal during WWII*

Carey McWilliams, *Southern California Country: An Island on the Land (1946)*

Michelle M. Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right* (So Cal)

George Sanchez, *Boyle Heights: How a Los Angeles Neighborhood Became the Future of American Democracy*

Eric Avila, *Pop Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*

George Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight: Class & Culture in Cold War America*

***April 5: Resistance to White Supremacy After WWII***

Steven J. Ross, *The Secret War Against Hate: American Resistance to White Supremacy After 1945* (mss to be distributed)

Joseph Fronczak, “The Fascist Game: Transnational Political Transmission and the Genesis of the U.S. Modern Right,” *Journal of American History,* vol. 105 (Dec. 2018), 563-88

David Austin Walsh, “The Right-Wing Popular Front: The Far Right and American Conservatism in the 1950s,” *Journal of American History,* vol. 107 (Sept. 2020), 411-32

**Seminar Reviews:**

Roy Carlson [Arthur Derounian], *The Plotters* (1946)

George Mintzer and Newman Levy, *The International Anti-Semitic Conspiracy* (1946)

https://ajcarchives.org/ajcarchive/DigitalArchive.aspx

Carey McWilliams, *A Mask for Privilege: Anti-Semitism in America* (1948)

Kevin Coogan, *Dreamer of the Day: Francis Parker Yockey & the Postwar Fascist International*

Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism and the Politics of Identity*

George Michael, *Willis Carto and the American Far Right*

Melissa Fay Greene, *The Temple Bombings* (bombing Atlanta temple 1958; swastika epidemic)

William H. Schmaltz, *Hate: George Lincoln Rockwell and the American Nazi Party*

Frederick J. Simonelli, *American Fuehrer: George Lincoln Rockwell & the American Nazi Party*

Clive Webb, *Rabble Rouser: The American Far Right in the Civil Rights Era*

Clive Webb, *Fight Against Fear: Southern Jews and Black Civil Rights*

Martin Durham, *White Rage: The Extreme Right in American Politics*

Jeffrey Kaplan and Leonard Weinberg, *The Emergence of a Euro-American Radical Right*

Gavriel Rosenfeld, *The Fourth Reich: The Specter of Nazism From World War II to the Present*

Susan Neiman, *Learning from the Germans: Race and the Memory of Evil*

Henry L. Feingold, *Bearing Witness: How America and Its Jews Responded to the Holocaust*

***April 12: Postwar Anti-Communism and the Cauldron of Hate***

Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crime: McCarthyism in America*

**Seminar Reviews:**

David Caute, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower*

Walter Goodman, *The Committee: The Extraordinary Career of the House Committee on Un-American Activities*

Thomas Doherty, *Show Trial: Hollywood, HUAC, and the Birth of the Blacklist*

John George & Laird Wilcox, *Nazis, Communists, Klansmen, and Others on the Fringe*

Christopher Vials, *Haunted by Hitler: Liberals, the Left, and the Fight against Fascism in the United States*

Ben Rhodes*, After the Fall: The Rise of Authoritarianism in the World We've Made*

***April 19: “Patriots” and the Continuing Threat to Democracy***

Alexandra Minna Stern, *Proud Boys and the White Ethnostate*

Ronald Bayor, “Klans, Coughlinites and Aryan Nations: Patterns of Anti-Semitism in the Twentieth Century,” *American Jewish History,* 76 (Dec. 1986), 181-96

Alexandra M Stern, “From “Race Suicide” to ‘White Extinction’: White Nationalism, Nativism and Eugenics over the Past Century, *Journal of American History*, vol. 109 (Sept. 2022), 348-61

**Seminar Reviews**

Sam Jackson, *Oath Keepers: Patriotism and the Edge of Violence in a Right-Wing…*

Stephen E Atkins, *Encyclopedia of right-wing extremism in modern American history*

Damon T. Berry, *Blood and Faith: Christianity in American White Nationalism*

Theo Horesh, *The Fascism this Time: and the Global Future of Democracy*

John S. Huntington, *Far-Right Vanguard: The Radical Roots of Modern Conservatism*

Peter Levenda, *The Hitler Legacy: the Nazi cult in diaspora : how it was organized, how it was funded, and why it remains a threat to global security in the age of terrorism*

Maggie Haberman, *Confidence Man: The Making of Donald Trump and the Breaking of America*

Roland Martin, *White Fear: How the Browning of America Is Making White Folks Lose Their Minds*

Michael Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement*

Leonard Ziskind, *The Christian Identity Movement*

Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah*

Marcia Pally, *White Evangelicals and Right-Wing Populism: How Did We Get Here?*

Arie Perliger, *American Zealots: Inside Right-Wing Domestic Terrorism*

***April 26: The American Insurrection and Threat to Democracy: January 6, 2021***

Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol*,* with intro by David Remnick, Jamie Raskin, *The January 6th Report*

Paul Nicholas Jackson, “Debate: Donald Trump and Fascism Studies,” *Fascism,* vol. 10 (June 2021), 1-15

**Seminar Reviews:**

David Corn, *American Psychosis: A Historical Investigation of How the Republican Party Went Crazy*

Adam Schiff, *Midnight in Washington: How We Almost Lost Our Democracy and Still Could*

Jonathan Lemire, *The Big Lie: Election Chaos, Political Opportunism, and the State of American Politics After 2020*

Maggie Haberman, *Confidence Man: The Making of Donald Trump and the Breaking of America*

Malcom Nance, *They Want to Kill Americans: The Militias, Terrorists, and Deranged Ideology of the Trump Insurgency*

Bob Woodward, *Peril*

Tim Miller, *Why We Did It: A Travelogue from the Republican Road to Hell*

Peter Baker, *The Divider: Trump in the White House, 2017-2021*