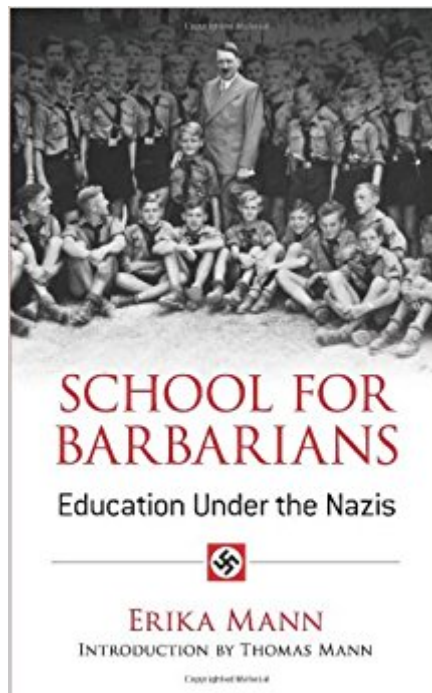




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School For Barbarians: Education Under The Nazis (Dover Books On History, Political And Social Science)



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

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Grade Level: 6 and up

Customer Reviews

The eldest daughter of author Thomas Mann, German actress and writer Erika Mann (1905–1969) ran a Munich cabaret where she wrote and performed anti-Fascist material. Forced to flee her native country with the rise in Nazism during the 1930s, she turned to journalism and reported on the Spanish Civil War as well as World War II and the Nuremberg Trials.

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.

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

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 evesdropping 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.

"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.

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