

*REEL NAZIS*  
*a propaganda history*

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This thesis film is an overview of Nazi Germany, primarily told through the use of their own propaganda images, and structured in such a way as to make the viewer question what they think they know about the past, present, and future. This paper is a discussion of the process that went into making the film and some of the ideas connected to it that could not be brought out in the documentary.

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by

James K. Lambert

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## INTRODUCTION

...the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting.

Milan Kundera  
*The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*

Almost everyone knows the name Adolf Hitler, has heard of the Nazis, and recognizes the swastika. But are these symbols of ultimate injustice actually meaningful? In my experience, most people have very little understanding of the context from which these signifiers draw their power; therefore these same people have little ability to apply the lessons of the past to the problems of the present.

Ever since I was a child in elementary school, and first learned that my father was a World War II veteran, I have been fascinated by Hitler's regime and seen it as an object lesson in the nature and practice of evil. More recently, with my enrollment in college and then graduate school for the study of documentary films, I have begun focusing that fascination on Hitler's use of the media, particularly film.

*REEL NAZIS a propaganda history* is a dense encapsulation of many overlooked and misremembered facts that I believe will prompt viewers to reassess both the past and the present, as well as their perceptions of media manipulation in general. I want the audience to be somewhat overwhelmed and challenged by the information the film presents so they will feel compelled to re-watch it and discuss it rather than simply accepting it or rejecting it out of hand.

*REEL NAZIS* is informed by my own neoconservative journey, from Marxist-reading teen to Ayn Rand-influenced libertarian and, finally, post-9/11 Republican, as well as a myriad of connection points in between. *REEL NAZIS* is the type of film I wish I had seen at the beginning of that journey, to aid in my own intellectual development, and I believe that it will be an aid to many others.

Stylistically, *REEL NAZIS* was primarily influenced by the feature length documentaries, *Ungångens arkitektur* [*The Architecture of Doom*] (1989), from Sweden, and, *Hitler: eine Karriere* [*Hitler: A Career*] (1977), from Germany. Both of these films use a single narrator, no interviews or reenactments, and a great deal of archival material to walk viewers through a series of events in the development and downfall of Hitler's regime. In this respect, *The Architecture of Doom* and *Hitler: A Career* are similar to the short French documentary, *Nuit et brouillard* [*Night and Fog*] (1955), which laid the groundwork for a number of subsequent Holocaust-related films. *Night and Fog*, however, has a more poetic aesthetic than the mater-of-fact format of these later productions, which *REEL NAZIS* emulates.

*REEL NAZIS* is dedicated to the memory of Frank Capra, the man behind the U.S. Army's World War II film series, *Why We Fight* (1943-1945), and the director of such beloved fiction film classics as *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939) and *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946). Capra was an Italian immigrant who lived the American dream, in a truly Hollywood sense of the phrase, and gladly gave of his time to aid his adopted homeland in its hour of greatest need. It is Capra's profound belief in the United States and the justness of its ideals that I

wished to call forth by invoking his name. I decided not to explain anything about who Capra was to the viewers, nor to engage in an overly intellectual discussion about how much his work qualifies as propaganda, because I believe those who are truly interested in the subject matter will explore these things for themselves. More importantly, I wanted to say, “This is where I am coming from; this is the type of man I admire,” and I do not feel that such a statement requires justification within the confines of a film any more than the dedication at the beginning of a book is normally explained.

As the name suggests, most of the footage in *REEL NAZIS* was taken from Nazi propaganda films, primarily those made by Leni Riefenstahl. These include Riefenstahl’s Party Rally films, *Sieg des Glaubens* [*Victory of Faith*] (1933), *Triumph des Willens* [*Triumph of the Will*] (1934) and *Tag der Freiheit – Unsere Wehrmacht* (1935) [*Day of Freedom – Our Armed Forces*], as well as her two part Olympic series, *Olympia I: Teil – Fest der Völker* (1938) [*Olympia I: Festival of the Nations*] and *Olympia II: Teil – Fest der Schönheit* (1938) [*Olympia II: Festival of Beauty*]. The one Nazi film used that was not made by Riefenstahl is *Der Ewige Jude* [*The Eternal Jew*] (1940), produced by Joseph Goebbels. This footage is supplemented by clips from the United States Government produced film series, *Why We Fight* and similar material from the Second World War. *REEL NAZIS* also uses many still images, primarily produced by the Nazis and one song, *The Atlantic Wall*, performed by a Nazi swing band, for the purpose of demoralizing Allied troops over the radio with entertainment that

extolled the superiority of German's power. All of these items are presumed to be clearly in the public domain.

The National Socialist German Workers Party is no longer a legally recognized entity. Ever since hostilities first began between the United States and National Socialist Germany, the claim that anyone owns this often-used property has become less and less credible. The *Why We Fight* series was mostly a re-composition of Hitler's propaganda and numerous privately funded films since they have also freely used this material.

The American Government does not hold copyrights over taxpayer-produced material created by government employees. This was true prior to the last major Congressional revision to the copyright laws in 1978 and it remains true to this day. When Frank Capra directed his films for the U.S. Army he did so as a paid military officer at the rank of Major.



## HISTORY AND ITS INTERPRETATION

Who should interpret history? I do not have the professional qualifications to formally do the work of a historian, but I feel compelled to sift through the past and find order in the chaos. Before undertaking this documentary I wrote an academic article entitled, “Her Propaganda Marches On – Remembering Leni Riefenstahl’s *Faith and Will*.” It was a comparison of the first two Nazi Party Rally films made by Leni Riefenstahl, *Victory of Faith* and *Triumph of the Will*. The subject fascinated me not only because of my preexisting interest in the Nazis but also because I was receiving wildly different versions of the truth concerning these films.

In an undergraduate class on the history of non-fiction films, I was told that *Victory of Faith* no longer existed. This was a “fact” confirmed by most of the history books I found that mentioned the subject. But I also found a seemingly credible man through the Internet who claimed he had seen it. The German documentary, *Die Macht der Bilder: Leni Riefenstahl [The Wonderful Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl]* (1993) confirmed this by actually showing brief clips from *Victory of Faith*.

In time I was able to find a slightly incomplete copy of the film at the Library of Congress. I was allowed to view it but they could not tell me who had given it to them, nor could they allow me to copy it, given their previous agreement with the unnamed party. I also learned that there was a complete copy at the Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv in Berlin, but it was only viewable by

academics at the archive's main building. I found this situation very troubling because the sharp contrasts between *Victory of Faith* and *Triumph of the Will* were a valuable tool for a better understanding of the past. The lack of access that most people, even most experts, have to half of the equation could only leave us all with an incomplete answer to numerous questions.

There were two crucially important relationships between *Victory of Faith* and *Triumph of the Will* that interested me most: 1) The films show Riefenstahl's development as a filmmaker and propagandist, and 2) The films give us a look at the Nazi Party before and after Hitler took complete control of the movement and the state by murdering his friend Ernst Röhm and proclaiming himself to be nothing short of divine.

The historian Bryan Mark Rigg, who wrote *Hitler's Jewish Soldiers: The Untold Story of Nazi Racial Laws and Men of Jewish Descent in the German Military*, was kind enough to look over the article I wrote and make a few minor corrections for me but the only film publication I submitted the piece to left me with a bitter taste. The reactions I received from the two readers were very negative and seemed to be based largely on the fact that my ideological perspective differed from theirs. Rather than pursue this outlet I decided to post the piece to my web site [1971films.com] and flesh out the idea as a documentary.

By the time I wrote the original proposal for REEL NAZIS, I had become thoroughly disgusted by the continued comparisons between President Bush and Adolf Hitler, as well as the more general attacks on America and Israel as Nazi-

like states. I was also frustrated with the continued desire of many academics and Hollywood figures to whitewash Communism and portray American Communists as helpless victims of conservatism during the Cold War. I felt people needed to know what Hitler really stood for, namely Jew-hating and an extremely brutal form of collectivism, and why this thinking was not reasonably comparable to the United States or Israel. I felt people needed to know that the Soviet Union was allied with the Nazis before they were forced to switch sides, and that their own history, before and after the Second World War, was horribly cruel and barbaric. I felt there were so many things that needed to be explained and I wanted to impress upon my thesis committee my determination to explain these things as I saw fit. I subsequently become bogged down in a debate over the meaning of collectivism and the merits of comparing National Socialist Germany with Soviet Socialist Russia. After moving beyond that point of contention a more protracted and extensive debate began over the structure of *REEL NAZIS* and the extent to which it should conform to a formalistic pattern. My initial feeling was that the purpose of my work was one of agitation rather than exhaustive explanation and I did not have a problem if some of the elements and arguments in *REEL NAZIS* went over the heads of most viewers. In the end, however, the final version of the film was trimmed down to a much more easily digested plate of facts than originally envisioned.

*REEL NAZIS* is the second production I have done under the name 1971 Films, and may become part of an ongoing series of documentaries that deal with the past. I want to offer points of view that I do not see being offered,

particularly in documentaries, where most artisans describe themselves as being on the political “left.” And I want to demonstrate that the answer to the question, “Who should interpret history?” is: anyone and everyone who can actually demonstrate that they have an informed interpretation, and not just an opinion, to offer.

## DOCUMENTARY VS. PROPAGANDA

My academic experience has been marked by a number of conflicts over the need to make meaningful distinctions between concepts and to not see everything as relative, equal or part of a continuum. In defending my own stance, that judgments must be made, I have often turned to the neoconservative economist Thomas Sowell. In his book, *Race and Culture*, Sowell states:

Plain and obvious as cultural differences in effectiveness in different fields should be, there has developed in recent times a reluctance or a squeamishness about discussing it, and some use the concept of “cultural relativism” to deny it. After archaeology and anthropology have revealed that cultural achievements of some groups once dismissed as “primitive,” and especially after the ravages of racism shocked the world when the Nazi death camps were exposed at the end of World War II, there has been an understandable revulsion at the idea of labeling any people or cultures “superior” or “inferior.” Yet Arabic numerals are not merely *different* from Roman numerals; they are *superior* to Roman numerals. Their superiority is evidenced by their worldwide acceptance, even in civilizations that derive from Rome. (5)

*REEL NAZIS* does not make a direct argument about the inherent superiority of documentary filmmaking to propaganda but this is suggested by the closing dedication to Frank Capra and that requires some explanation here as to why I believe this to be the case.

The argument I am making is similar to the one made by the historian John Lukacs in his book, *The Duel: The Eighty-Day Struggle Between Churchill and Hitler*. Hitler, argues Lukacs, was a great nationalist, while Churchill was a

great patriot. Cynics will undoubtedly offer an endless series of questions as to where these lines should be drawn, in an attempt to prove that the boundaries between them are fluid, but this does not disprove the substance of the argument. Like the old line, “I can’t define pornography but I know it when I see it,” most people, if they are being intellectually honest, can see a clear distinction between competing concepts at some point, and no amount of fluidity between them can stop this. The heartless aggression of Hitler’s worldview, in which the Germans could do no wrong, is not fundamentally equitable to the defensive pride that Churchill felt for a democratic society under siege.

When it comes to the endlessly debated question, “What is propaganda?” we will never be able to come to a consensus about each and every movie, song, book, poster, speech, etc., but we can at least agree that the category is a meaningful one. There is value in attempting to distinguish the propagating of a faith from the documenting of facts.

The first formal use of the word propaganda goes back to the Congregatio de propaganda fide [the Congregation for Propagating the Faith], founded by Pope Gregory XV in 1622. The goal of propaganda, in the original sense of the word, is not to educate, intellectually stimulate, inform, or document facts; it is to propagate faith. Many states in the twentieth century had propaganda offices, but for empires like the Soviet Union and the Third Reich, the choice of this term seems particularly fitting. Both of these societies used propaganda ministers as a means of extolling the leader’s alleged god-like qualities and as a means of keeping the public abreast of the latest changes to the faith (e.g. the “fact” that

these two movements were ideological opposites one day and comrades the next).

When Frank Capra argues in the *Why We Fight* series that the Second World War is a battle between the mindset of the slave world and the mindset of the free world there are several objections that could be raised; most notably, how does one define a “free” society? Capra was admittedly somewhat disingenuous with his own definition, allowing the pragmatic politics of the moment to count the USSR in with the free, democratic and “peace-loving” nations (i.e. the nations free of responsibility for starting the war). Nevertheless, the fundamental facts that Capra presented did actually document the reality that Americans then faced; in as much as the enemy’s goals were different from the goals of the United States and completely incompatible. Hitler, Mussolini and Emperor Hirohito were men who demanded god-like worship and they were determined to dominate, in the most brutal manner imaginable, as much of the world as they could get their hands on. One need not call this the “slave mindset” or agree that the United States represents the “free mindset” to admit that the two parties at odds were substantively different and the definitive victory of one side or the other was necessary for the situation to be resolved. That is why I insist on linking my own work to Capra’s; because I see it as the product of a documentarian rather than a propagandist. His primary objective was not to propagate the faith but to point out the harsh reality in which he and his fellow Americans were living.

By contrast, adherence to fundamental facts or a reasonable semblance of truth was not what Riefenstahl and her cohorts were attempting to do. The essence of her message is spoken through the personage of Rudolf Hess in *Triumph of the Will*, when he declares that Hitler “is the Party” and “is Germany.” The only thing Riefenstahl was documenting with such mystical incantations as this one is the general willingness of human beings to accept absurdity. This is even more evident and dramatic in *The Eternal Jew*, where the only way to accept the constant stream of made up “facts” within the film is to adopt an Orwellian approach to reasoning and to abandon reality.



## PRODUCTION ISSUES

The primary challenges facing this production where:

- 1) Finding archival materials.
- 2) Organizing the material into an argument.
- 3) Justifying the legal rights to use these materials.

This section will deal with points one and three; number two will be discussed in the next section [Structural Overview].

The archival material for *REEL NAZIS* has been compiled over several years from a multitude of sources. Every time I would come across an interesting photo, song, video, quote, etc., related to the subject of Hitler or Nazism I would save it, knowing that I would be making something from these bits and pieces of history at a future date. The exponential expansion of the Internet since the early 1990s has been of great aid in compiling these items. There are now copies of all the films used in *REEL NAZIS* floating around in the ether of cyberspace, including the once nearly impossible to see *Victory of Faith*. A complete copy of *Victory of Faith* was also recently discovered in England and put on DVD for retail sale.

The one film I have been unable to obtain a complete copy of is *Day of Freedom*, Riefenstahl's shortest Party Rally film. The section missing from every version on the market or distributed through file sharing is missing the second of three reels, in which Hitler gives what some have called his best speech captured

on film. This absence was not acknowledged in *REEL NAZIS* because I did not feel I could speak knowledgably about it without seeing it.

The visual and sound quality of several films, stills and other materials used in *REEL NAZIS* is not the best possible. This is owing to three concerns: 1) time, 2) money, and 3) legal issues. I have not had the time to search out multiple versions of everything nor the money to pay for them, which would have allowed me to compare quality between them. In the cases were I have seen a good quality print, like the Criterion laser disc of Riefenstahl's Olympic films, I am unable to accurately assess how much work Criterion put into restoring these films and therefore how much they can claim legal ownership over that version. For now, my priority has been to simply get a version of everything I want in *REEL NAZIS* and hopefully make a technically improved, but basically similar, cut in the future.

The reference source I have used to refresh and complement my classroom education on copyright issues is Michael C. Donaldson's *Clearance & Copyright: Everything the Independent Filmmaker Needs to Know*. For some items, like the *Why We Fight* series, there is no question about the legality of using it. It was made with taxpayer money by government employees and belongs to everyone and no one. As Mr. Donaldson unequivocally explains:

Any document created by a government employee while working for the government is in the public domain because the employer is the government, which means that the public owns the document. (55)

Other items, like Riefenstahl's films, have been claimed by Riefenstahl and her estate as well as the present German government, but the U.S.

Government freely used clips from *Triumph of the Will* in the *Why We Fight* series, as well as any other Nazi footage they could get their hands on.

Furthermore, as recently as this year, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that the family of Hitler's photographer did not own several paintings by Hitler and numerous photographs taken for him, which the U.S. Army confiscated at the end of the war. All such items are presumed to have been legitimately seized in the furtherance of ending the Nazi regime and they are no longer the private property of anyone.

*Triumph of the Will*, because it is so widely available and well known, has been freely used by more documentarians and fiction filmmakers than I could possibly catalogue, and it, like all of Riefenstahl's films, was funded by a state whose leaders were later convicted of "crimes against humanity." The reason that General Eisenhower ordered footage to be taken of the Nazi concentration camps was to ensure that the world would never forget or doubt the reality of what had happened there. To argue that the footage created by the Nazis is somehow exempt from public use is nonsensical, because it is every bit as essential to our understanding of this nightmare as the horrific images that followed from it. As Alan Rosenthal, an Israeli documentarian who visited the University of North Texas in 2004, pointedly told the audience after screening his film, *Adolf Eichmann: The Secret Memoirs* (2001), he has never paid to use Nazi material and he never would because no one has a right to claim ownership over it.

Various people and organizations have claimed ownership over their versions of particular Nazi films, but even these claims often give away the tenuous nature of their assertions. In England, where Nazi copyrights have not been respected since Hitler's invasion of Poland, the people who put *Victory of Faith* on DVD put a copyright symbol on the box but then explain in the fine print that only the subtitles they added over the film and the packaging in which it comes are covered by this copyright. For every piece of footage I used, I added my own subtitles and took out any English speaking voiceovers that had been added by a third party.

As Michael Donaldson explains, the laws about what constitutes "fair use" are not clear-cut because they are not the product of legislative bodies; they are taken from the accumulation of case law. Nevertheless, he does outline some general principles, including educational value and the potential harm to the market for the original product. On educational grounds, I am confident that the material I have used will prove to be enlightening and that this communication of the facts could not have been effectively made without this material. Furthermore, I am not harming any market potential for these items since they are being sold by multiple parties, each with no more or less claim to these films than I have.

## STRUCTURAL OVERVIEW

*REEL NAZIS* is primarily told in chronological order, from 1933 to 1945, with the most notable deviation coming at the opening, when *Triumph of the Will* footage shot in 1934 is used. The overarching theme of my work is suggested by the sentence at the beginning of the film, which also appears in my first documentary and on my web site: “Our perceptions of the past cloud our vision of the present and therefore the future.” But the more focused objective of this film is to give an overview of the major Nazi propaganda films and the context of the times in which they were made. As the opening narration suggests, this film will “read between the frames” to get at the things not quite captured on celluloid but suggested by, and better understood through, the viewing of these images.

*REEL NAZIS* begins with a brief discussion of *Triumph of the Will* and Leni Riefenstahl because: 1) The opening sequence from *Triumph of the Will* being used here is visually interesting and demonstrative of the way in which Hitler wished to be seen (i.e. as a god-like figure). 2) This is the most famous Nazi film, which many viewers will know something about, and which the rest of the narration in *REEL NAZIS* will reference at various points. 3) This grand opening is particularly fitting in relation to the closing “epilogue,” when Hitler’s final appearance in a short newsreel demonstrates the contrasting low point to which he drove his followers.

*REEL NAZIS* is designed to leave viewers questioning the things they thought they knew or understood. The film should raise doubts and make people

think, “If I did not know X then perhaps it is wrong to conclude Y.” After the opening set up and credit sequence, the next section continues to provide background information about Hitler, how he presented himself and how he came to power. This time, however, the discussion is centered around *Victory of Faith*, which is Riefenstahl’s least remembered propaganda film. The goal here is to show that Hitler’s seizure of power, like Riefenstahl’s development as an effective propagandist, was a progression. This also leads into a discussion of Hitler’s first mass-murder spree, known as the Night of the Long Knives, in which he ordered the execution of several hundred people, including his friend Ernst Röhm. Without directly saying it, *REEL NAZIS* is suggesting that Hitler’s true nature was evident very early on.

After contrasting the presentation of reality offered in *Triumph of the Will* and *Victory of Faith*, as they relate to Hitler’s internal consolidation of power, *REEL NAZIS* looks at what these two films have to tell us about the perception that National Socialism was a “fascist” movement. This requires a bit of exposition about who Benito Mussolini was and some of the many things that the Nazis did to present themselves as progressive activists. Without directly saying it, *REEL NAZIS* is suggesting that Hitler was attempting to do internationally what he had done domestically: use others for support until such time as he could overshadow them.

The discussion of *Triumph of the Will* and *Victory of Faith* in *REEL NAZIS* is followed by the next two projects Riefenstahl worked on for Hitler; in chronological order *Day of Freedom* and the *Olympia* films. *Day of Freedom*

makes it clear that Hitler was fairly open about his desire to militarize Germany and conquer other nations, while the *Olympia* films presented a positive, internationalist and peaceful view of the National Socialist state for world consumption. This discussion carries *REEL NAZIS* through the end of the 1930s and the outbreak of war by using Riefenstahl's life as a catalyst.

The final section of *REEL NAZIS*, before the "epilogue," deals with the harshest piece of propaganda ever created by Hitler's regime, *The Eternal Jew*. This is meant to leave no room for doubt about the fact that the Holocaust was a central goal of Nazism. It is also meant to demonstrate some of the ways in which the Jews have long been demonized, since such thinking is still popular in many parts of the world today.

The epilogue wraps up the story by telling the audience how the lives of Hitler, Mussolini and Joseph Goebbels came to an end. This is meant to reinforce the fact that these men had nothing to offer the world but destruction, as well as giving a sense of closure to the narration by touching upon these key figures introduced earlier in the film.

*REEL NAZIS* closes with two quotes, one from Hitler at the end of his life and one from Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, to a conference of fifty seven Islamic nations in 2003. I chose this as a closing to the film because it leaves viewers with something contemporary to think about. At the very least, it suggests that history is not simply a story from the past but a means by which we can better understand the world in which we presently live. Some people will undoubtedly be inclined to dismiss the film as anti-Arab, anti-

Muslim because of this ending, but I believe that this is a fact that needs to be pointed out. The Islamic world is the present center of Jew hating, just as Europe once was. To ignore this would be tantamount to ignoring the driving principle behind my work, the idea that, “Our perceptions of the past cloud our vision of the present and therefore the future.”



## SPECIFIC CONCERNS

The following is a summation of the primary concerns raised by one or more committee members during the process of making this film. By “primary concerns,” I mean those that have caused the greatest contention between my vision of what *REEL NAZIS* should be and the perceptions of my committee. Each concern is rebutted with a reiteration of why I feel the choices I initially made were correct for this documentary and how those choices have been modified to fit what the committee believed to be a more coherent film.

1. Concern: The structure lacks a clear, well-defined thesis or focus. If the rules of formal coherence are going to be broken, a very strong formal strategy must be employed as an alternative.

Rebuttal: The objective of the film is to prompt people to rethink their perceptions and conclusions and this can more effectively be accomplished if the structure of the film maintains an element of unpredictability. These are true stories and history does not have a clear narrative arc. Characters drop out of the story at inconvenient times and relate to one another in unpredictable ways. That being said, the final version of this film has been pared down to follow a very simple and straightforward pattern, moving chronologically from one Nazi propaganda film to the next and providing interesting insights about these works and the larger context in which they were created. Other than the closing

quote, no contemporary material remains and the scope of the project has been greatly narrowed.

2. Concern: The National Socialist German Workers Party was not a socialist party and should not be compared to the Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics because socialism is based on a Marxist, economically based view of history, not a biological/racist view.

Rebuttal: My own belief is that these two ideological systems were fundamentally the same. This is most readily apparent in their common results, namely, the enslavement and slaughter of millions of human beings. Furthermore, the term socialism predates Marx and it was not a word he particularly liked, so our understanding of the concept cannot be limited to only those socialists who directly look to Marx as their mentor. This perspective is in line with many prominent and learned thinkers, particularly economists like Ludwig von Mises and Nobel Prize winners, Milton Freedman and F. H. Hayek. That being said, the film in its present form does not draw a direct connection between the National Socialists and the Soviet Socialists.

3. Concern: Not everyone believes that reality is based on binaries, like good and evil or freedom and slavery. If this argument is going to be made it needs to be backed up with some academic references.

Rebuttal: As Aristotle so long ago asserted, "A is A." To assess the world in which we live we must be able to make distinctions, not just of type but of kind. Reality is more than just gradations (or "types") of the same thing;

it is a collection of substantively and definitively different kinds of things. This does not mean that everything boils down to a simple “binary,” but it does mean that some differences are fundamental or insurmountable. A chimpanzee may have 98% of the same DNA as a human being but a chimpanzee is not a human being and it can never be a human being; there is no fluidity on this point. A free man may not feel that his freedom is meaningful and may argue that he is nothing more than a different type of slave, but this is only because he has lived with the luxury of never being stripped, beaten, or sold by a master (let alone killed with impunity). Even with things that are true continuums, like the color spectrum, where it is difficult to see where one shade becomes another, there is still a need to make meaningful distinctions. Red is not blue anymore than green is orange. These things not only look different, they are measurably different in the length of their waves. Not all facets of life are so easy to divide up and categorize but this should not stop us from trying. My work, while not necessarily drawing all the right conclusions, is an embrace of the long tradition of rationalism in Western Civilization and a rejection of the currently more fashionable “everything is relative” line of thinking. That being said, *REEL NAZIS* in its final thesis form only suggests the sharp contrast between what Capra called the “free world” and the “slave world;” it does not make any direct claims.

4. Concern: The naked men from *Olympia Part II* who are used as stand-ins for homosexual SA men need to be identified as coming from

Riefenstahl's film.

Rebuttal: I believed this would have only caused confusion in the general audience, since neither the *Olympia* films nor the Nazi Olympics had been mentioned in the narration at this point. That being said, this sequence has been removed.

## MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTION

No marketing decisions have been made in regards to the final thesis version of this film. The initial target audience for *REEL NAZIS* was a decidedly more conservative or right-leaning one, but the removal of most contemporary references to the War on Terror and present day Jew-hating have made the film more suitable to an academic market.

I have chosen to appeal to a more conservative clientele with my work because, 1) It is the direction that my own thinking has moved into, and 2) It is a vastly underserved market. As of yet, however, there are not many established venues for documentaries with a right-wing bias, and most of the films that have been made are noticeably lacking in artistic merit and intellectual depth. I originally envisioned *REEL NAZIS* as being a natural for both the Dallas-based conservative film festival, The American Film Renaissance, and the LA-based conservative film festival, Liberty Fest, each of which will host its second annual event in 2005. After that I hoped to market the film with an equally right-leaning book entitled *The ABC's of Nazism*. Paring down the film to a more educational focus has caused me to rethink this strategy. If the final thesis version of the film is marketed, it will be through outlets that target school and library sales.

## SCRIPT

The following script is written in a two column format, with visuals on the left hand side and audio on the right.

<p>Spinning Eisenhower coin intro:</p> <p>A 1971 Film</p> <p>Pyramid's eye logo with tag line.</p> <p><i>Triumph of the Will</i> opening – shortened – the clouds over Nuremberg, Hitler's plane flying over the masses below and landing, the motorcade to the hotel amid the cheering crowd – the original music running uncut in the background – multiple images on the screen.</p> <p>Plane shadow over marchers – plane.</p> <p>Plane lands – Hitler with cheers</p> <p>car ride with cheers – under bridge and go cut to black</p> <p>Fireworks move in reverse and then explode as the main title appears:</p> <p>REEL NAZIS</p>	<p>NARRATION</p> <p>"<i>Triumph of the Will</i> is propaganda in the truest sense of the word. More than just a political message; it is a religious artifact, meant to propagate the Nazi faith. The film was created by Leni Riefenstahl, a beautiful and talented dancer turned actress, turned director and one of the few women who Hitler admired. Until her death in 2003, at the age of 101, she always insisted that her work merely documented the times in which she lived. In a way this was true but only if you read between the frames."</p> <p>"<i>Triumph</i> begins among the clouds, with Hitler descending upon his followers, like a god."</p> <p>"The people are enraptured at the sight of the Führer, the leader. Even the animals are drawn to him."</p> <p>"This is the way Hitler wished to be seen, not just in 1934 but for all time."</p>
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<p>Band music begins to play. Hitler's hotel window at night.</p> <p>Text:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">a propaganda history</p> <p>A band conductor leads the band outside Hitler's window. A giant lighted swastika is seen over the area – fade out.</p> <p>Dissolve in text:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">by James K. Lambert</p> <p>Fade in on Hitler's outstretched arm in <i>Victory of Faith</i></p> <p>End of marching sequence fade out on Hitler's arm</p>	<p>NARRATION</p> <p>"The most effective weapon in the propaganda arsenal of the Nazis was not their films but their festivals. Hitler was a failed painter who dreamed of being an architect or a set designer at the opera. He was intimately involved in the detailed planning of his rallies, and personally designed many of the banners and costumes. He understood the power of ritual and pageantry in shaping the human mind. As he once put it, 'A mass rally is designed to switch off the thinking process.' The replication of the event through the magic of celluloid was only a secondary benefit."</p> <p>"These images are not from <i>Triumph of the Will</i>, this is Riefenstahl's first effort at the documentary form, <i>Victory of Faith</i>. It was shot during the 1933 rally and premiered that December in Berlin. The film was pulled from circulation after six months and so successfully buried that to this day most history books claim it does not exist."</p>
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<p>Hitler and Hindenburg</p> <p>Background footage from <i>Why We Fight</i></p> <p><i>Victory</i></p> <p><i>Victory</i> – welcome to Nuremberg – Hitler speaks and walks</p> <p>Goring and Hitler – Goring salutes camera</p>	<p>NARRATION:</p> <p>“1933 was the year the aged President Paul von Hindenburg relented to the popularity of the National Socialist German Worker’s Party and appointed Hitler to the position of Chancellor. One month later the Reichstag, the German Parliament, was set on fire – a crime the new Chancellor blamed on the communists. Marshall Law was declared, the first concentration camps were opened, books were burned and the purification of German society began.”</p> <p>“This was the victory that the Nazis were celebrating when they gathered that fall in Nuremberg.”</p> <p>“From a technical standpoint, <i>Victory of Faith</i> has clear deficiencies compared to <i>Triumph of the Will</i>. This is evident in the frequent number of shots of Hitler fixing his hair and looking far too human for the role of superhuman leader.”</p> <p>“In one especially awkward scene, Hitler and Party Secretary Rudolf Hess are greeted by a pair of blond-haired children who present the Führer with a bouquet of flowers. Unsure what to do, he hands them off to Hess, who comes off looking like a jilted lover.”</p> <p>“In another odd sequence, Herman Goring, the President of the Reichstag, nervously begins to run away while Hitler is trying to shake his hand.”</p>
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<p><i>Victory</i></p> <p>Röhm photos and footage</p> <p>Things related to the Night of the Long Knives</p> <p>Hindenburg dead</p> <p><i>Triumph</i> – Hess opens Congress dissolve  <i>Triumph</i> – ceremony to honor the dead</p>	<p>NARRATION</p> <p>“The SA had a great deal of independence from the Party and more men in its ranks than the German Army, which Röhm intended to takeover and fold into the SA under his leadership.”</p> <p>“Röhm’s prominence in <i>Victory of Faith</i> is a strong indication of his importance at the time. He is, Hitler’s co-star. No one else in either film is invited into Hitler’s convertible to watch the parade of Party units or given as much screen time with the Führer.”</p> <p>“Röhm was an intimidating figure. He was also a homosexual. Hitler repeatedly maintained that he did not care what Party member did on their own time, so long as they followed orders. At some point, however, the German Military made a secret deal with Hitler that caused him to change his position.”</p> <p>“One summer weekend in 1934, several hundred individuals, most of them Party members, were rounded up and shot without trial in what came to be known as The Night of the Long Knives.</p> <p>“The military waited for President Hindenburg to pass away before they began to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler by name. This was an honor never bestowed upon any previous President of the Republic, let alone an unelected one.”</p>
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	<p>NARRATION</p> <p>“One of the most famous sequences in <i>Triumph of the Will</i> was the ceremony to honor the dead. Like most elements of the film, it is a vast improvement on the previous year’s effort but it is also a less than subtle message to anyone who might be thinking of challenging the Führer’s authority.”</p>
<p><i>Victory</i> – ceremony to honor the dead</p>	<p>“In <i>Victory of Faith</i>, Röhm, as head of the SA and the SS, accompanies Hitler to honor the fallen martyrs. In <i>Triumph of the Will</i> it takes two men, one as head of the SA and one as had head of the SS, to equal the stature that Röhm once held.”</p>
<p><i>Triumph</i> – ceremony to honor the dead – three men walking away</p>	<p>“The official name of the 1934 rally was the Party Day of Unity but some whispered that it was really the Rally of the Empty Seats because many of the people killed in The Night of the Long Knives had assigned seats still reserved for them at the various functions. Riefenstahl betrays none of this reality because the capturing of reality was not her objective.”</p>
<p>painting – Nazi flag</p>	<p>“Hitler chose the swastika as the symbol of his movement because it was an ancient sign of good luck and good fortune.”</p>
<p>paintings – Nazi flag, Women want National Socialism and Germany is Free!</p>	<p>“Today it is not uncommon to use the words ‘Nazis’ and ‘Fascists’ interchangeably, but Hitler and his comrades never used either of these terms to describe themselves. They were National Socialists and like all socialists, they felt that they were the highest and truest from or socialism. Like all progressive activist they had many achievements to brag about.</p>

	<p>NARRATION:          “Hitler’s Regime was the first to warn against the dangers of smoking, a practice they later banned in many public places. They passed laws on animal rights and put inmates at Dachau to work making organic honey. They put a radio in every home and had plans to put a car in every family’s garage. Hitler personally helped design the Volkswagen, the People’s wagon, although it was originally known as the Strength through Joy wagon.”</p>
<p>Mussolini and Italian Fascist related footage</p>	<p>“Fascism was a term invented by Benito Mussolini; a well educated former Marxist who spoke several languages and wrote more books on communism than Vladimir Lenin before the outbreak of the First World War. But the failure of the working class to unit throughout the world and defeat the capitalist system convinced Mussolini that nationalism was a more important factor in history than class identification. Mussolini calling himself, Il Duce, the leader, and his thugs wore black shirts instead of brown ones but the fascist ideology he claimed to create was basically a national socialist state modeled on previous theoreticians that the Nazis also looked to. By the time Hitler became Chancellor of Germany, Mussolini had already ruled Italy for nearly a decade and Il Duce was not very impressed with the poorly educated Führer. Nevertheless, Mussolini sent a representative to welcome these new upstarts into his revolution.”</p>
<p>Il Duce’s rep speaks in <i>Victory</i></p>	
<p>Hitler with Mussolini photo superimposed</p>	<p>“Hitler would never again take a back seat to Mussolini and by the time they joined forces with Imperial Japan to form the Axis powers, it was clearly Il Duce who had joined the Führer’s revolution.”</p>
<p>Hess’ closing and the Horst Weasel Song</p>	

<p>Opening of <i>Day of Freedom</i></p> <p><i>Why We Fight</i> footage of phony elections in Germany</p> <p><i>Day of Freedom</i></p> <p>national athletes marching past Hitler in the Olympic stadium – Hitler opens the games</p>	<p>NARRATION</p> <p>“In 1935 Riefenstahl made her last Rally film; a short called, <i>Day of Freedom: Our Armed Forces</i>. Like <i>Victory of Faith</i> and <i>Triumph of the Will</i>, the title gives valuable insight into Hitler’s mind. The people did not require or deserve the right to vote in meaningful elections or speak for themselves in any way. What the people needed was a strong military and a leader, willing to use it in the conquest of other. That was the way the Führer measured freedom.”</p> <p>“Riefenstahl did her best to make the German military appear far more formidable than it actually was at the time. According to the Versailles Peace Treaty that ended the First World War, Germany was forbidden from expanding its army and navy or building an air force but Hitler gambled that no one would take action against him if he defied the world and he was proved right, time and time again. Throughout the 1930s Germany underwent an unprecedented military build up the put the state into a huge financial hole but few had the nerve to ask how Hitler planned to balance the books or what he was preparing for.”</p> <p>“In 1936 the Nazis put on a show designed to impress the entire world and fuel the delusion that National Socialism was a peaceful movement at heart. The event was the 11<sup>th</sup> modern Olympiad, which had been awarded to Germany before Hitler became Chancellor.</p>
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<p>Riefenstahl filming – footage and photos</p> <p>Riefenstahl – naked in opening</p> <p>Olympic flame</p> <p>final men’s diving sequence</p> <p>more <i>Olympia</i> footage</p>	<p>NARRATION</p> <p>“This was the perfect opportunity for freedom-loving countries to voice their opposition to the Führer’s regime but they chose to go along with the charade instead. As <i>The New York Times</i> put it, the event put Germany, “back in the fold of nations.””</p> <p>“The filming of the games was a monumental undertaking and there was no real doubt about who would receive the commission. Besides directing the team of cameramen and coordinating the coverage of every contest, Riefenstahl also used herself as one of models featured in the opening sequence. This was going to be her masterpiece and it often feels more like an abstract work of art than a simple documenting of a sporting tournament.”</p> <p>“Riefenstahl knew that anyone interested in the outcome of the games or a particular event would already know that information so she made it her priority to capture the indefinable qualities of what it had been like to actually be there and live in the thrill of the moment.”</p> <p>“The Nazis left an impression in the minds of their visitors that would help quell negative press coverage for years to come. Berlin was stripped of all Jew-hating signs during the games, local authorities were given orders to ignore ‘criminal’ behavior, like homosexuality, and German journalists were instructed to treat all athletes with respect, even negroes. The Olympic village was an island of tolerance in an otherwise hostile sea.”</p>
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<p>Riefenstahl editing</p>	<p>NARRATION</p>
<p>Posters for the films</p>	<p>“It took Riefenstahl two years to go through all the footage and edit it down into two feature length documentaries, <i>Olympia, Festival of Nations</i> and <i>Olympia, Festival of Beauty</i>.”</p>
<p>Kristallnacht images</p>	<p>“Following their premiere at Hitler’s birthday party in 1938, Riefenstahl took her show on the road but as she was on her way to America world events overtook her. A Jewish man living in Paris shot a German official in France to protest the mistreatment of Jews in Germany. This incident was used as an excuse to send the SA through the streets of Germany, beating and murdering innocent Jews, destroy their businesses, homes, and Synagogues. As a final insult, German Jews were forced to pay for the damages that they had presumably caused.”</p>
<p>Riefenstahl war footage</p>	<p>“When Riefenstahl heard about ‘Kristallnacht’ – the night of broken glass – she denied that such things could be happening in Germany but the American press wasn’t buying it and no one wanted screen her films so she returned home to face the truth.”</p>
<p>Photos of Poles digging their own graves and being shot</p>	<p>“Following Hitler’s invasion of Poland in 1939, Riefenstahl was sent to the occupied territory with a film crew. No one knows exactly what she saw there. Perhaps men digging their own graves before being shot in the back of the head or the mass execution of women and children. There was no shortage of atrocities in this conflict. Whatever it was that Riefenstahl witnessed, it was enough to keep her away from the war for good.”</p>
<p>Riefenstahl – horrified picture</p>	<p>“Following Hitler’s invasion of Poland in 1939, Riefenstahl was sent to the occupied territory with a film crew. No one knows exactly what she saw there. Perhaps men digging their own graves before being shot in the back of the head or the mass execution of women and children. There was no shortage of atrocities in this conflict. Whatever it was that Riefenstahl witnessed, it was enough to keep her away from the war for good.”</p>

<p>dissolve Riefenstahl on trial</p> <p><i>The Eternal Jew</i> – opening</p> <p>Some narration from <i>The Eternal Jew</i></p>	<p>NARRATION</p> <p>“She was later accused of using gypsies, borrowed from concentration camps, as extras in a fiction film but like so many Germans who actively supported the Führer and profited from him, she was never convicted of anything.”</p> <p>“No one can say what kind of film Riefenstahl might have made from her Poland footage but we do know what kind of film Goebbels produced in her absence.”</p> <p>“<i>The Eternal Jew</i> was a bookend to the Nazi gospel. <i>Triumph of the Will</i> had given the Germans their savior but <i>The Eternal Jew</i> made sure they knew who they were being saved from. No people in history have been so consistently made the scapegoat for the world’s problems as the Israelites. From the Black Death in Europe to the September 11 attack on America – when bad things happen to good people, there are always rumors about how the Jews did it. But <i>The Eternal Jew</i> is a relentless assault on the truth unparalleled in the annals of anti-Semitism. It depicts the Jews as filthy, greedy parasites who feed off the collective ‘body’ of healthy nations; living only to cause misery and suffering for others and profit from the misfortune.”</p>
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<p>text          “It is untrue that I or anybody else in Germany wanted war in 1939. It was desired and instigated exclusively by those international statesmen who were either of Jewish origin or working for Jewish interests.”</p> <p>text          “From Hitler’s Last Will and Political Testament. Dictated, April 29, 1945.”</p> <p>text          “...the Jews rule this world by proxy. They get others to fight and die for them.”</p> <p>text          “From a speech by Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, to a conference of fifty seven Islamic nations. October 16, 2003.”</p> <p>text          “Dr. Mohamad was given a standing ovation.”</p> <p>text – rolling credits</p> <p style="text-align: center;">REEL NAZIS          a propaganda history          by          James K. Lambert</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[other credits]</p> <p>dedication &amp; closing explosion with copyright</p>	<p>Nazi Swing music</p>
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## BUDGET

	RATES	TIME / AMOUNT REQUIRED	TOTAL COST	MATCHING CASH	IN-KIND DONATIONS
<b>Production Personnel</b>					
Producer	Flat \$10,000	throughout	\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000
Writer/Director	Flat \$10,000	throughout	\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000
Editor	Flat \$5,000	throughout	\$ 5,000		\$ 5,000
Researcher	Flat \$2,000	throughout	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000
<b>Professional Services</b>					
Narrator	Flat \$500	2 days	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000
<b>Facilities Rental</b>					
Sound Studio	\$125 per hr	4 hours	\$ 500		\$ 500
<b>Post Production</b>					
Tape Logging & Transcribing	\$16 per hr	20 hours	\$ 320		\$ 320
Real-time Transfer	\$20 per hr	10 hours	\$ 200		\$ 200
Tape Stock	\$3.50 per hr	10 tapes	\$ 35	\$ 35	
Avid editing system with mini DV deck and monitor	\$4,500	throughout	\$4,500		\$ 4,500
<b>Publicity (if promoted)</b>					
DVD Recording	\$0.75 each	100 copies	\$ 75	\$ 75	
DVD-RWs with jewel case	\$2.39 each	100 discs	\$ 239	\$ 239	
Postage	\$3.85 per priority pkg	75 promo copies	\$ 289	\$ 289	
Packaging Services (finding address, packing DVD and shipping)	\$8 per hr	15 hours	\$ 120		\$ 120
<b>Other</b>					
Register film with Library of Congress	Flat \$30	one time	\$ 30	\$ 30	
			<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>MATCHING CASH</b>	<b>IN-KIND DONATIONS</b>
<b>FINAL TOTALS:</b>			<b>\$34,308</b>	<b>\$ 668</b>	<b>\$ (33,640)</b>

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