

Igniting Barriers

The Book Burnings of 1933 Nazi Germany

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Individual Website

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Throughout history, there have been countless tragedies that have occurred. Against people, places, ideas, whatever it may be, those that are opposed are oft slated to be destroyed. Some of the freshest instances of all of these targets are the World Wars. Right in the power struggle taking place in the crevice of time between them, countless enemies were made because it was easier to blame others. The most tragic criminal acts against humanity as a whole are those that target what makes humanity what it is—namely, a collection of ideas and cultures. I chose the mass book burnings of 1933 Nazi Germany to focus on in my project as the act not only because it was of itself a horrendous act, but it also was a stepping stone to further heinous crimes against humanity. I choose this topic to subvert the perpetrators' intentions; that is, to spread the stories and souls of the marginalized. To speak about the topic to truly extinguish the barrier of hate.

The process I followed in my research consisted of background, secondary, then primary sources. I began with general background information, more for my own benefit than anyone

else's. I gained a base knowledge that, if I were to have skipped it, I would not have been able to make the inferences and connections I did. Then came the secondary sources, the conversations of experts and observers after the book burnings occurred. These made up the bulk of the direct synthesis I added, where my own words only enhance the ideas portrayed. Many times, especially looking at the legacy of the burnings, these sources provided a perspective that could have been lost without the hindsight. Without the secondary sources, the ramifications of the rise of Hitler would not have been included in my paper. Finally, I delved into primary sources. These made up the majority of the website itself, with numerous pictures, speeches, and quotes enhancing the base knowledge I already had. These were what, in my opinion, made this project worthwhile. The primary sources allowed for the story I wanted to tell to grow, into a visible representation of what humanity lost in the symbolic book burnings held by Nazi students.

I chose to showcase my findings in a website format, as I thought it was the most long-lasting, impactful, flexible option. I've found in my own experience that I much prefer an interactive option with pictures and videos, over a paper or an otherwise static physical format. As I enjoy web design, I was able to include the maximum amount of research and narrative with minimal clutter and distractions.

The mass book burnings that took place in 1933 Nazi Germany made up one of the pivotal acts in escalating World War II faster and more explosive. Retelling the story circumvents what the students of the German Student Union tried to accomplish. Giving a platform to those wronged smoothes the barrier that held them for decades.