

Björklunden Zoom Seminars

MAY 9 - JUNE 6, 2024



The Birth of Fascism

Course Description

**Class held online every Thursday, 2-3:30pm*

There has been a lot of talk about fascism recently. Is Hungary's Victor Orban a fascist wannabe? Is Donald Trump? But there is little clarity about what fascism actually means and where it came from historically. Is it the same as authoritarianism or totalitarianism?

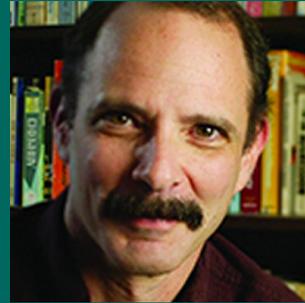
This seminar will address those questions by exploring fascism's historical origins in Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany. We will also discuss the powerful Louisiana populist of the 1930s, Huey Long, whom some have branded an American fascist in the making.

Professor Jerald Podair, an emeritus professor of American history at Lawrence University, will join us to discuss Governor Long.

Course works: Mussolini's 1931 essay, "Fascism", selections from Hitler's Mein Kampf, Leni Riefenstahl's 1934 Nazi propaganda film, "The Triumph of the Will," and a small selection from Robert Paxton's The Anatomy of Fascism (2004).

[Register Here>>](#)

Instructor



Paul Cohen

Cohen is a professor emeritus in history and Patricia Hamar Boldt professor of liberal studies at Lawrence University, where he taught for 37 years. He specializes in Modern European history but has also taught courses on film and history. Between 1996 and 1998, he was Director of Lawrence's Freshman Studies Program (currently 'First Year Studies'), which introduces students to the liberal arts. He helped oversee that program's transition from its great-works-of-the-West origins in 1945 to its current multi-civilizational and multidisciplinary orientation. While he is the author of two books on the intellectual history of modern France, Professor Cohen considers himself first and foremost a teacher. In 1999, Lawrence awarded him with the Lawrence University Freshman Studies Award, and in 2008 with the Lawrence University Excellence in Teaching Award. "Teaching," he writes, "has amounted to a calling more than an occupation for me. Being a spur to student growth has been the greatest joy of my career. That, I like to think, more so than the mastery of a field of study or the preparation for a career, is what characterizes a Lawrence education at its best."