

“Decent” vs. “Degenerate” Art

The National Socialist Case

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When artistic censorship is discussed, the case of National Socialist (Nazi) Germany frequently comes to mind. Nazi Germany’s art policies of the 1930s and early 1940s and their consequences provide a historical perspective on what may happen when government determines what art is decent or indecent, uplifting or “degenerate.”

Precedents for artistic censorship in Nazi Germany can be found during the Weimar Republic, as the following incidents indicate. In Berlin in 1928, a local court filed charges of blasphemy against George Grosz for several drawings published in an album titled *Hintergrund* (backdrop). Although originally found guilty, Grosz was ultimately acquitted on appeal. The most provocative of these drawings was one of Christ wearing a gas mask and boots, captioned, “Keep your mouth shut and do your duty” (*fig. 1*).¹ Grosz’s drawing is echoed in a recent photographic image with a female nude (*fig. 2*) by the American artist Barbara Kruger, one of many U.S. artists who risk censorship because of their engagement in similar moral confrontations. In other attacks on modern art during the Weimar period, the Munich chapter of the Reichsverband bildender Künstler (federal association of artists) protested the Berlin Nationalgalerie’s purchase of

several van Gogh paintings in 1929, and in 1930 the director of the Städtischesmuseum in Zwickau was dismissed because of his support for modern art.²

Even before Hitler became chancellor of the German Reich on January 30, 1933, local National Socialist leaders were censoring modern art. In 1930 Wilhelm Frick, National Socialist minister of the interior and minister of popular education in the province of Thuringia, ordered the removal of the works of Ernst Barlach, Paul Klee, and Lyonel Feininger from the collection of the Schlossmuseum in Weimar, as well as the destruction of Oskar Schlemmer’s murals and reliefs in the former Bauhaus.³

Although these attacks on modern art were not new in Germany, under Hitler they became more systematic and continuous. One of Hitler’s priorities was to organize and centralize the institutions necessary to carry out Nazi art policies. In order to do anything connected with the creation, buying, or selling of art, one had to belong to the *Kunstkammer* (chamber of art). By the late 1930s there were around forty-two thousand members, excluding Jews, Communists, or other “enemies” of the state.⁴ “Acceptable” artists did not suddenly appear after the National Socialists assumed power, nor were they necessarily schooled in National Socialist art theories. Rather, they were already creating art that corresponded in content and style to—or at least did not conflict with—the National Socialists’ ideals and goals. Provisions were even made to educate the public in matters of art, under the auspices of the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* (German labor front) and an organization called *Kraft durch Freude* (strength through joy).⁵

Firmly believing that culture is the cornerstone of any enduring society, Hitler recognized that art must play a major role in the building of his ideal German nation. He articulated the goals of what he considered true German art: it must develop from the collective soul of the people and express its identity; it must be national, not international; it must be comprehensible to the people; it must not be a passing fad, but strive to be eternal; it must be positive, not critical of society; it must be elevating, and represent the good, the beautiful, and the healthy.⁶

Art that was encouraged and supported had to reflect

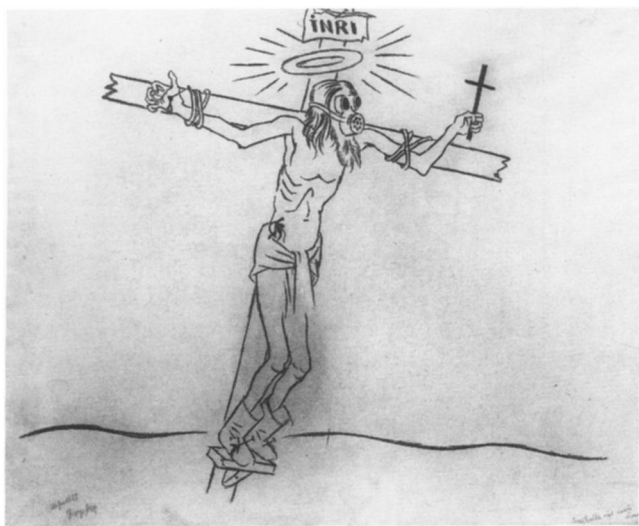


FIG. 1 George Grosz, *Christ with Gas Mask*, 1928, crayon on paper, 17 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 22 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. © Estate of George Grosz/VAGA, New York, 1991.



FIG. 2 Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (It's our pleasure to disgust you)*, 1990, photographic screenprint on paper, 192 × 276 inches. Courtesy Mary Boone Gallery, New York.

the spirit and ideals of the German people as the National Socialists envisioned them. Peasants and artisans engaged in their labors were popular subjects. Women as mothers (*fig. 3*) were especially important because they represented the future of the “Aryan race.” Landscapes symbolized the “fatherland.” Female nudes often illustrated the beauty of healthy bodies (*fig. 4*). Not to be forgotten were the “heroic” subjects, which included not only soldiers, but also workers (*fig. 5*) and images of Hitler. In sculpture, the works of Arno Breker and Josef Thorak conveyed heroism on a monumental scale. Many works that were endowed with significant or profound titles, however, were simple subjects with no ulterior meaning intended by their creators.⁷

The names of most of the artists who produced these works are forgotten. At the time, even Hitler seemed to acknowledge the lack of greatness in the art exhibited at the first “Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung” (great German art exhibition) in 1937, when he said, “I HAVE NO DOUBT, THE ALMIGHTY WILL ELEVATE A FEW FROM THIS MULTITUDE OF DECENT CREATORS OF ART INTO THE STARRY REALM OF THE IMMORTAL, DIVINELY INSPIRED ARTISTS OF THE GREAT PAST.”⁸ The National Socialists promoted art that was “beautiful,” “decent,” and “good,” but their enforcement of these standards and

their silencing of nonconforming artists had a devastating effect on modern art and artists in Germany.

In the National Socialists’ anti-modern-art campaign, artists who are now recognized as the great names in modern German art were characterized as enemies of the German people; their work was labeled “degenerate” because they did not meet the artistic criteria outlined by Hitler and other National Socialist leaders. At the end of the nineteenth century, in his book *Degeneration*, Max Nordau had applied the term “degeneration” to art.⁹ Later, in *Kunst und Rasse* (art and race), 1928, Paul Schultze-Naumburg developed his theories of the aesthetic connection between artistic styles and the supposed racial characteristics of the artists.¹⁰ Such works provided Hitler with the theoretical precedents on which he formulated his own ideas about the role of race in art and the role of art in society; more importantly, he pursued programs to implement those ideas.

Hitler and the National Socialists recognized that there was an almost unbridgeable chasm of incomprehension between the public and modern art, which they exploited early on in order to consolidate their power over the people.¹¹ They manipulated the public by focusing its accumulated political and economic dissatisfactions and frustrations on scapegoats, including artists, as well as the dealers, critics, and



FIG. 3 Adolf Wissel, *Kalenberg Farm Family*, 1939, oil. Courtesy the Archiv für Kunst und Geschichte, Berlin.

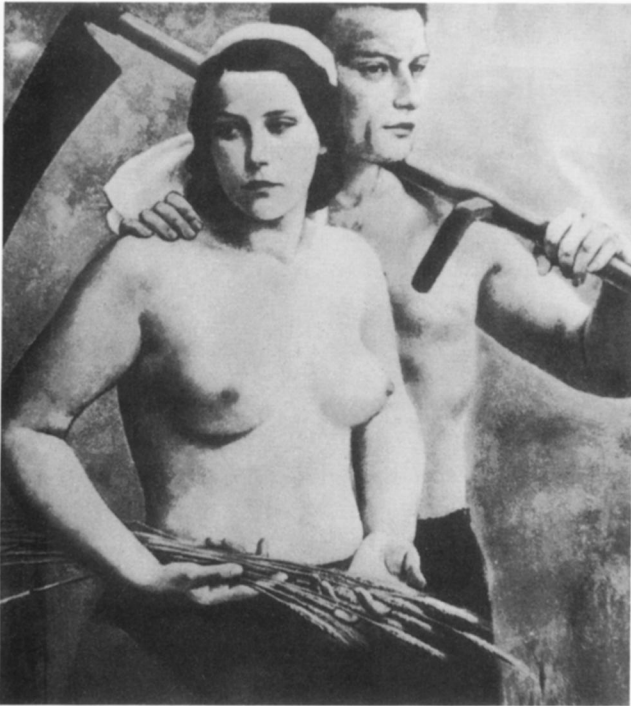


FIG. 4 Johannes Beutner, *Time of Ripeness*. Photograph reproduced from *Art in the Third Reich* (New York: Pantheon, 1979, 134), with permission.

museum directors who supported them. The National Socialists made modern art a symbol of corruption and degeneracy. Supposedly of “Semitic inspiration,” modern art was also portrayed as representing *Kulturbolschewismus* or “cultural Bolshevism.”¹² The purge of modern art was not, however, limited to the art produced by Jewish, foreign, or Communist artists. Whatever the Nazis claimed undermined “desirable” aesthetic, social, cultural, or political values, or physical or racial ideals, was to be eliminated from German society; this included all the modern movements, such as Expressionism, Cubism, Futurism, Constructivism, and Dada.¹³

The National Socialists claimed that, because modern artists considered *everything* suitable as a subject for art, “the beautiful, the heroic and the pure” were relegated to the same level as “the ugly, the base and the erotic,” resulting in an amoral art.¹⁴ Modern art was thus perceived as a threat to German morality. The Nazis characterized many modern images, Expressionist ones in particular, as “pornographic,” appealing to the basest instincts of humanity.¹⁵ This moralizing was not only misleading, but also hypocritical, since many of the countless images of nude women with perfect bodies that were officially sanctioned and exhibited during those years depict them in passive or submissive roles, implicitly, if not explicitly, as sex objects available for the pleasure of men (*fig. 6*).¹⁶

The National Socialist ideas on art were based on abstract theories whose catchwords were “soul,” “genius,” “tragedy,” “race.”¹⁷ They considered “race and homeland” or *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil) the basis of a Germanic art that would express the true spiritual values of the Aryan race, purified of all Bolshevist and Semitic influences. The practical application of these vague notions to a coherent art policy was difficult, however, and led to many contradictions and inconsistencies. Although the National Socialists claimed to encourage an art that was a product of the Germanic spirit, they rejected the art of German artists such as Emil Nolde (*fig. 7*) and Barlach, who were at the center of a debate within the party over the Germanic and Nordic character of German Expressionism. In fact, this debate over art policy reflected a broader struggle for power within the party.¹⁸ Alfred Rosenberg, party “philosopher” and competitor with the minister of propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, for control of art policy, noted that even National Socialists could have differences of opinion in matters of art, citing the debate over Nolde and Barlach. Rosenberg acknowledged that both artists were talented, but asserted that they did not seek the Nordic ideal of *physical* beauty necessary to the development of a National Socialist aesthetic.¹⁹ This Nordic ideal was based not only on presumed Aryan features, but also on the Greek ideal of the perfect, healthy, athletic body, to which neither Nolde’s nor Barlach’s figures corresponded.

In contrast, some intellectuals and younger members of the party defended Expressionist art as a *spiritual* force that expressed the Germanic character, while others believed that



FIG. 5 Arthur Kampf, *Rolling Mill*, 1939, oil. Courtesy the Archiv für Kunst und Geschichte, Berlin.



FIG. 6 Johann Schult, *Expectation*. Photograph reproduced from *Art in the Third Reich* (New York: Pantheon, 1979, 134), with permission.



**„Offenbarungen
deutscher
Religiosität“**
hat die den jüdischen
Kunsthändlern feile
Presse einmal solchen
Hexenspuk genannt.

**Die
Titel lauten:**

„Christus und die
Sünderin“, „Tod der
Maria aus Ägypten“,
„Kreuzabnahme“ und
„Christus“.
Die „Künstler“
heißen: Nolde,
Morgner und
Kurth.



FIG. 7 Page 9 of *Entartete „Kunst“ Ausstellungsführer*, guide to the exhibition “Degenerate Art,” showing, top and middle, Emil Nolde, *Christ and the Sinner* and *Death of Mary of Egypt*, and bottom, works by Wilhelm Morgner and Fritz Kurth. Courtesy the Archiv für Kunst und Geschichte, Berlin.

the revolutionary character of Expressionism could be linked to the National Socialist revolution.²⁰ Even Goebbels appreciated the works of some Expressionists, particularly Barlach and Nolde. However, when Hitler expressed his disapproval of some Nolde watercolors that the architect Albert Speer had installed in his remodeling of Goebbels's residence, Goebbels ordered them removed.²¹ In the end, the Expressionists, including Nolde, who was himself a member of the Nazi party, lost the battle to have their art accepted as "Germanic."

The German authorities recognized the propaganda value of art, both as a tool in their negative campaign to denigrate modern art and in their promotion of a "new and true German art." In his speech of July 18, 1937, dedicating the Haus der Deutschen Kunst and the Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung in Munich, Hitler contrasted the "degenerate" modern-art movements (see fig. 7) with the art that "will impress you as being beautiful, and, above all, as decent, and which you will sense to be good" (see figs. 3–6).²²

The propaganda campaign against modern art was dramatized with the infamous exhibition "Entartete Kunst" (degenerate art), which opened in Munich on July 19, 1937, and was shown in the larger cities in all regions of Germany.

In his speech the previous day Hitler had called on the German people to be the judges of German art, and issued a warning to the "pitiful misfortunates," "incompetents," and "art criminals" whose works were hung haphazardly on the walls of the "Degenerate Art" show (fig. 8) that he was going to "clean house": "National-Socialism has made it its primary task to rid the German Reich, and thus, the German people and its life of all those influences which are fatal and ruinous to its existence."²³ Those influences included the dealers and critics, as well as the artists, whom Hitler referred to as "cliques of babblers, dilettantes and art crooks," and "pre-historic stone-age culture-vultures and art stammerers."²⁴

On orders from Hitler, the "Degenerate Art" exhibition had been organized by Adolf Ziegler, president of the Reichskammer der bildenden Künste (reich chamber of visual arts), although this was not the first exhibition of its kind.²⁵ The purposes of this exhibition were to show the public what constituted "degenerate" art, to indoctrinate the public about its dangers, and to demonstrate that this "corruption" of art was not just an aberration or experiment, but an organized

FIG. 8 Joseph Goebbels visiting the "Degenerate Art" exhibition in Berlin, February 27, 1938. Courtesy the Archiv für Kunst und Geschichte, Berlin.



attempt by Bolsheviks and Jews to create cultural and political anarchy by undermining traditional values.²⁶ Visitors to the exhibition were also reminded how much public money—in inflated Deutschmarks—had been paid for this “degenerate” art.

Works in the exhibition of “degenerate” art had been confiscated from German public collections.²⁷ They were described in a guide and on wall labels in a derogatory and inflammatory manner. The exhibition was divided into nine categories, each representing some “negative” aspect of modern art.²⁸ Works in one group supposedly encouraged political anarchy through artistic anarchy by depicting the struggling working class and capitalists who “mockingly make light of the misery of the workers.” Another group was characterized as Bolshevik propaganda against military conscription for portraying soldiers as murderers or victims, for example, contrary to the National Socialist ideal of a heroic art; one such “undesirable” work was Otto Dix’s *War Cripples* (1920, destroyed), which depicts a grotesque procession of mutilated soldiers.

The exhibition also denigrated the religious works of such artists as Nolde (see fig. 7), referring to them in the guide as a kind of “hocus-pocus” that makes an “insolent mockery” of religion. The works in another group were supposed to represent the immoral side of “Bolshevist” art, in which the “whole world is one big whorehouse” (fig. 9). Some of the works were called “nigger art” (fig. 10), with the African and South Sea islander supposedly exemplifying the undesirable racial ideals of modern art.²⁹ Finally, there was a group of works characterized as “total insanity” that included examples of abstract art.

The Nazis suppressed art whose *content* they perceived as a threat to traditional values and institutions. Images of prostitutes by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (see fig. 9) or Grosz, for example, were criticized for glorifying their subjects, thereby contributing to society’s moral decay and eroding traditional family values. The Germans also considered *style* a determinant of the “degenerate” character of art. The figural distortions of Expressionism were directly linked to the inferior racial traits of the artists or to a “gruesome malfunctioning of the eyes” caused by their inferior genetic background; or the distortions were characterized as a hoax perpetrated on the unsuspecting public.³⁰

National Socialist art doctrine and the resultant art policies were carried to extremes. Not only did the Nazis denigrate modern art and denounce artists, they also confiscated modern art from museums and other collections. In addition, they expelled artists from their teaching posts; Klee was one of those to lose his position in 1933. Many artists



FIG. 9 Page 17 of *Entartete "Kunst" Ausstellungsführer*, guide to the exhibition “Degenerate Art,” showing, lower right, a painting by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and works by Karl Schmidt-Rottluff and Paul Kleinschmidt. Courtesy the Archiv für Kunst und Geschichte, Berlin.

were also forbidden to exhibit and sometimes even to work in their own studios. Artists whose work was labeled “degenerate” had to turn to other ways to earn a living, preferably anonymously; Willi Baumeister worked as a typographic designer and Schlemmer, among other things, decorated ceilings and camouflaged barracks.³¹ Many, like Klee, Grosz, Wassily Kandinsky, Josef Albers, Feininger, Max Beckmann, and Kurt Schwitters, left the country. Others continued to work and sometimes even to sell in secret, but they lived in fear of being discovered by the authorities. Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Käthe Kollwitz, Gerhard Marcks, Barlach, Nolde, Baumeister, and Schlemmer were among those who stayed in Germany, despite pressures, threats, and ostracism. They had to endure seeing their work not only denigrated, but sometimes destroyed.³² Barlach was one of the artists who endured an “inner exile.” He wrote, “A pimp or murderer has it much better; he enjoys the benefit of an orderly trial and even has a chance to clear himself. We were simply repudiated and if possible destroyed. In this respect, my condition is more disastrous than that of an actual exile.”³³ Artists throughout Germany received the message loud and clear: “degenerate” art would not be tolerated, even in the artist’s own atelier.

Although there are profound differences in the histori-



FIG. 10 Page 7 of *Entartete "Kunst" Ausstellungsführer*, guide to the exhibition "Degenerate Art." The works pictured are (clockwise, from top left) by Emil Nolde, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff (painting and sculpture), Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Otto Dix, and Wilhelm Morgner. Courtesy the Archiv für Kunst und Geschichte, Berlin.

cal circumstances and the respective political institutions of Nazi Germany and the United States today, leaders in both societies have utilized rhetoric to politicize art and to exploit deep-rooted concerns shared by large segments of their populations, namely, that an erosion of traditional values threatens a familiar way of life. This rhetoric appeals to the passions and prejudices of a significant number of people who view offensive or "degenerate" art as a factor contributing to society's moral decline. In 1989 Senator Slade Gorton (R-Wash.), for example, referred to "'art'—I put that word in quotation marks—which attacks the faith, morals, or firmly held beliefs of large numbers."³⁴

Like many examples of modern German art that hung in the Nazis' "Degenerate Art" exhibit, Scott Tyler's *What Is the Proper Way to Display a U.S. Flag* (1989), in which an American flag was displayed on the floor, was attacked as unpatriotic; Andres Serrano's 1987 *Piss Christ*, a photograph of a plastic crucifix immersed in a container of the artist's urine (fig. 11), has been described as blasphemous;³⁵ and some of Robert Mapplethorpe's homoerotic and sado-masochistic photographs have been labeled obscene and indecent. When the Mapplethorpe and Serrano photographs were called "garbage" and "trash" by United States senators on the floor of the Senate in 1989,³⁶ they were no less denigrated than works in the Nazis' "Degenerate Art" exhibition; in the wake of the recent war in the Persian Gulf, one can imagine that the Tyler work would now arouse even greater "patriotic" passions than it did in 1989.

The political right in the United States today employs rhetoric not only to denigrate art it disapproves of, but also to discredit artists and other members of the arts community.³⁷ On the Senate floor, Senator Helms disparagingly referred to "so-called art experts," and said of Serrano, "He is not an artist, he is a jerk."³⁸ When such derogatory rhetoric is employed, it escalates controversy and inflames prejudice. It legitimizes personal attacks and opens up avenues for persecution of individuals, as well as groups.

The National Socialist case exemplifies the extremes to which a government can go to control the arts or to exploit art for propaganda purposes, and puts in sharp relief the perils for the United States of adopting policies by which politicians have the power to enforce cultural standards and determine whether art is decent or indecent, uplifting or "degenerate." It reminds us that we must remain vigilant and not assume that our democratic processes and institutions will necessarily check excesses in government control of the arts. It also reminds us of the power of art to inflame prejudice or touch our deepest concerns.

Notes

This article is a revised version of a paper presented at the College Art Association annual conference in New York, February 1990. It also draws upon a paper, "Art and Politics: Jesse Helms and the National Endowment for the Arts," that I presented at the Southwestern Social Science Association meeting in Fort Worth, March 1990, as well as my doctoral dissertation, "Picasso and His Art during the German Occupation of Paris, 1940–1944" (Stanford University, 1985). I would like to thank Robert Storr, Lenore Malen, and Barbara Hoffman for their comments on earlier versions of this



FIG. 11 Andres Serrano, *Piss Christ*, 1987, Cibachrome, 60 × 40 inches. Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York.

paper. This research was supported in part by a Limited Grant-in-Aid from the University of Houston.

1. Grosz's drawings were issued in connection with Erwin Piscator's stage production of *The Good Soldier Schweik*, from which the German caption, "Maul halten und weiter dienen," was taken. In his first trial, the local court in Moabit rejected Grosz's claim that he had not "intended to defame the church or to be blasphemous in these drawings." In his first appeal Grosz was acquitted; the Second Criminal Chamber of Regional Court III, Berlin-Moabit, interpreted Grosz's drawing of the crucified Christ as a legitimate protest "against the idea of war . . . and any actions on the part of the church that lend support to the idea of war." The case subsequently went through more trials and appeals, into 1932, when the Reichsgericht (national court) decided that the printing plates and all copies of the drawing "in the possession of the author, the printer, the editor, the publisher, or any booksellers" were to be destroyed. The publisher, however, had already destroyed the plates and sold impounded copies of the portfolio of drawings. An ironic footnote: after the Nazis came to power in 1933, Goebbels's ministry requested a copy of Grosz's drawing *Christ with Gas Mask* from the prosecutor of the Generalstaatsanwaltschaft (superior regional court) for a brochure on cultural Bolshevism. Uwe M. Schneede, *George Grosz: The Artist in His Society*, trans. Robert and Rita Kimber (Woodbury, N.Y.: Barron's, 1985), 170–75.
2. Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *Art under a Dictatorship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), 66–67.
3. Hildegard Brenner, "Art in the Political Power Struggle, 1933–34," in *Republic to Reich: The Making of the Nazi Revolution*, ed. Hajo Holborn, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Pantheon, 1972), 396; Lehmann-Haupt, *Art under a Dictatorship*, 67. Frick acted on the advice of Professor Paul Schultze-Naumburg, an architect whose theories on art were racially motivated. See also Oskar Schlemmer, *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, ed. Tut Schlemmer (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1990), 272–75.
4. Lehmann-Haupt, *Art under a Dictatorship*, 68.
5. *Ibid.*, 69, 181.
6. Adolf Hitler, speech inaugurating the Haus der Deutschen Kunst and the "Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung," in Herschel B. Chipp, ed., *Theories of Modern Art*, trans. Ilse Falk (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 476–82. For the German text see Hitler: *Reden und Proklamationen, 1932–1945*, ed. Max Domarus (Würzburg: Verlagsdruckerei Schmidt, Neustadt a.d. Aisch, 1962), I:705–10. See also Hitler's speech of November 11, 1935, in Nuremberg, in *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler: April 1922–August 1939*, ed. and trans. Norman H. Baynes (New York: Howard Fertig, 1969), I:569–84.
7. Berthold Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*, trans. Robert and Rita Kimber (New York: Pantheon, 1979), 77–83, 102–3.
8. Hitler, in Chipp, ed., *Theories*, 482; and Hitler: *Reden und Proklamationen*, I: 709.
9. Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*, 46. Max Nordau, *Degeneration*, with introduction by George L. Mosse (New York: Howard Fertig, 1968). For Nordau (born Südfeld), one of the characteristics of degeneracy is reliance upon the imagination, rather than nature. Therefore, any art that does not reproduce nature is degenerate. Nordau excuses the Impressionists, however, for sincerely recording optical perceptions, whether they be a result of the visual sensation of "a mass of colour composed of spots of different greens, on which the sun flashes here and there points and rays of light," or the result of "nystagmus, or trembling of the eyeball." In either case, however, the artist will have produced an aesthetically and intellectually inferior product. Nordau, *Degeneration*, 483, 27. It is ironic that Nordau was a Jew and a Zionist, given the anti-Semitic context in which the concept of degeneration was used by the Nazis.
10. Lehmann-Haupt, *Art under a Dictatorship*, 39–41.
11. Jacques Sabile, "Introduction," in *Le Pillage par les Allemands des oeuvres d'art et des bibliothèques appartenant à des Juifs en France: Recueil des documents*, ed. Jean Cassou (Paris: Editions du Centre, 1947), 33; Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*, 45–46.
12. Because modern, "degenerate" artists often created within an international context, they were accused of being Bolshevik. Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*, 11.
13. Carl Einstein's *Die Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 16 (Berlin: Propyläen-Kunstgeschichte, 1931), which deals exclusively with art and artists considered "modern" by its author, was used by the National Socialists as a reference to identify their opponents in the visual arts. Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*, 24–25, 228, n. 22.
14. See Sabile, "Introduction," in *Le Pillage par les Allemands*, 25.
15. See *Entartete "Kunst" Ausstellungsführer*, published by Fritz Kaiser (Berlin: Verlag für Kultur- und Wirtschaftswerbung, 1937), 14. This was not a catalogue *per se*, but rather a guide to the traveling exhibition that presented the National Socialist propaganda about "degenerate" art, including excerpts from Hitler's speech inaugurating the Haus der Deutschen Kunst, illustrated with examples of "degenerate" art that may have been in the exhibition. Note the use of quotation marks around the word *Kunst* (art) in the title. The guide is reproduced in Franz Roh, *"Entartete" Kunst: Kunstbarberei im Dritten Reich* (Hanover: Fackelträger-Verlag, 1962) and in Stephanie Barron, ed., *"Degenerate Art": The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany*, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1991), 356–90, with translation by David Britt.
16. The iconography of woman in National Socialist painting is discussed in Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*, 149–55, and Christian Gross and Uwe Grossman, "Die

- Darstellung der Frau," in *Kunst im 3. Reich: Dokumente der Unterwerfung*, exh. cat. (Frankfurt am Main: Frankfurter Kunstverein, 1975), 182–92.
17. See Sabile, "Introduction," in *Le Pillage par les Allemands*, 20–22.
18. Brenner, "Art in the Political Power Struggle," 398.
19. Alfred Rosenberg, "Revolution in the Fine Arts?" *Selected Writings*, ed., with introduction, by Robert Pois (London: Jonathon Cape, 1970), 159–60. Originally published in *Blut und Ehre, ein Kampf für deutsche Wiedergeburt, Reden und Aufsätze von 1919–1933* (Munich: Thilo von Trotha, 1935).
20. Lehmann-Haupt, *Art under a Dictatorship*, 72–73; Brenner, "Art in the Political Power Struggle," 400–401, 407.
21. Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 32–33.
22. Hitler, in Chipp, ed., *Theories*, 482.
23. *Ibid.*, 480. For personal accounts of the exhibition see Paul O. Rave, *Kunstdikatur im Dritten Reich* (Hamburg: Verlag Gebr. Mann, 1949), 56–57; and Peter Guenther, "Three Days in Munich, July 1937," in Barron, ed., *Fate of the Avant-Garde*, 33–43. See also Mario-Andreas von Lüttichau, "Entartete Kunst, Munich 1937: A Reconstruction," in Barron, ed., *Fate of the Avant-Garde*, 45–81.
24. This and the previous quotation are from Hitler, in Chipp, ed., *Theories*, 482.
25. Wilhelm Treue, *Art Plunder*, trans. Basil Creighton (New York: John Day, 1961), 233. Ziegler was also a painter of realistic nudes, who was dubbed "master of German pubic hair." Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*, 38. The first exhibitions in Hitler's Germany to denigrate modern art were installed in 1933. One in Nuremberg was called "Chamber of Horrors." See a list of these exhibitions in Christoph Zuschlag, "An 'Educational Exhibition': The Precursors of *Entartete Kunst* and Its Individual Venues," in Barron, ed., *Fate of the Avant-Garde*, 98–101.
26. See *Entartete "Kunst" Ausstellungsführer*, 2, 4.
27. For works in the "Degenerate Art" exhibition see Rave, *Kunstdikatur*, 79–81, and Mario-Andreas von Lüttichau, "Entartete Kunst, Munich 1937: A Reconstruction," in Barron, ed., *Fate of the Avant-Garde*, 49–80. For works confiscated from German museums see Roh, "Entartete" Kunst, 123–248, and several reproductions following.
28. See *Entartete "Kunst" Ausstellungsführer*, 6–22.
29. In *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1933), Alfred Rosenberg wrote that Paul Gauguin was "inwardly rotten and confused," seeking ideal beauty in the South Seas, until this search resulted in chaos. Cited in Joseph Wulf, *Die bildenden Künste im Dritten Reich* (Gütersloh: S. Mohn, 1963), 269, my translation.
30. Hitler, in Chipp, ed., *Theories*, 480; and Hitler: *Reden und Proklamationen*, I: 709; cf. n. 9 (Nordau, *Degeneration*, 483, 27). See also *Entartete "Kunst" Ausstellungsführer*, 18.
31. See Lehmann-Haupt, *Art under a Dictatorship*, 84–87, including Baumeister's personal account; Schlemmer, *Letters and Diaries*, 371–78; and Roh, "Entartete" Kunst, 61–65 and 115–19.
32. Schlemmer, *Letters and Diaries*, 272–75; Carl Dietrich Carls, *Ernst Barlach* (New York: Praeger, 1969), 172, 197–98, 201–2; and Werner Haftmann, *Emil Nolde: Unpainted Pictures* (New York: Praeger, 1971), 12–13, 17.
33. Barlach, quoted in Roh, "Entartete" Kunst, 65, my translation.
34. Senator Slade Gorton, *Congressional Record*, October 7, 1989, S 12970.
35. Serrano has said that his photograph was "absolutely not calculated to offend." It represents "first and foremost . . . my Catholic upbringing, and my ambivalence to that upbringing, being drawn to Christ yet resisting organized religion." He explained that he used urine because it is one of "life's vital fluids," like blood and milk, which he has also used in his work, and that it produced "a quite vivid and vibrant color." Quoted in William H. Honan, "Andres Serrano: Contradictions in Life and Work," *New York Times* (national edition), August 16, 1989, 22.
36. Senator Jesse Helms, *Congressional Record*, October 7, 1989, S 12969, S 12973; Senator Trent Lott, *Congressional Record*, October 7, 1989, S 12975.
37. In the United States the conservatives, especially those on the Christian right, also campaign against offensive content in the print media, television, movies, and music videos. See, for example, Richard Bolton, "The Cultural Contradictions of Conservatism," *New Art Examiner* 17 (June 1990), 24–29, 72. For a discussion of the broader aims of the political right and how art issues fit in, see Goggin, "Art and Politics: Jesse Helms and the National Endowment for the Arts." The anti-"degenerate" cultural campaign in Nazi Germany was aimed at books, music, and film as well as art. See Michael Meyer, "A Musical Facade for the Third Reich," and William Moritz, "Film Censorship During the Nazi Era," in Barron, ed., *Fate of the Avant-Garde*.
38. Helms, *Congressional Record*, October 7, 1989, S 12968; and Helms, *Congressional Record*, May 18, 1989, S 5595, cited in Carole S. Vance, "The War on Culture," *Art in America* 77 (September 1989): 39.

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