



Stalin and Hitler: Power and Evil in History

Presented by: Al Lindemann

Five Mondays
 October 26, & November 2, 9, 16, 23, 2015

9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Valle Verde Social Room

900 Calle De Las Amigos, Santa Barbara

This Vistas course has been given the title, “*Stalin and Hitler: Power and Evil in History*,” in part because these two dictators have been widely regarded as the personification of evil and the abuse of power in modern times. A key question to be addressed in the course is how much the corrupting influence of absolute power was responsible for the horrors committed under the rule of these two men. A related question is whether Stalin and Hitler were in some sense born evil or was it experiences during their lives that turned them to evil?

The course deals with much more than these two dictators. The first meetings will be devoted to defining evil, as it appears in the Bible and as it evolves in modern times (the Church Fathers, the Talmud, Luther, Voltaire). A related concern will be the concept of power: Does it corrupt, as Lord Acton famously observed (“power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely”)? In contrast, does the lack of power tend to ennoble? The theme of the ennobling experience of powerlessness and suffering is central to both Judaism and Christianity, although the ancient Greeks, too, spoke of “wisdom through suffering.” Over the ages, the powerlessness of Jews has been a defining experience for them. And of course Christ’s suffering on the cross is believed by Christians to have been redeeming for all of humanity, in a mystical sense.

The last sessions of the course will deal with the dilemmas and responsibilities associated with opposing evil, most notably in the Nuremberg Trials and the trial of Adolf Eichmann (and thus Hannah Arendt’s concept of the banality of evil).



Enrollment Form: *Power & Evil* – Oct 26, & Nov 2, 9, 16, 23, 2015

VISTAS Members \$60, Non-members \$90

Note: At-The-Door Registration is an Additional \$5.00

Amount Enclosed \$ _____ Check# _____

Name(s): _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Mail registration form to:

VISTAS Lifelong Learning, Inc., P.O. Box 23228, Santa Barbara, CA 93121-3228

Please check here if you would like to volunteer to help with refreshments _____

BIOGRAPHY: *Al Lindemann* Professor Emeritus at UCSB. He received his PhD from Harvard University in 1968. He has published numerous books and articles on modern Europe, especially on the topics of Communism and Nazism. He has received a number of teaching awards at UCSB, among them the Academic Senate's Outstanding Professor of the Year. He has taught at Stanford University, was Visiting Professor at Cambridge University in the United Kingdom, and Distinguished Senior Visiting Professor at the University of Wisconsin.



VISTAS Calendar			
Seminar/Event	Inclusive Dates	Time	Venue
Annual Picnic	Sunday, September 27	12:30 pm	Tuckers Grove
Documentary Film Club	3rd Thurs Monthly	2:00 pm	Maravilla Theater
Harvest Moon	Friday, Sept 25	9:30 am	Goleta Library
The Aztecs	Mon, 9/28, 10/5, 12,19	1:30 pm	Maravilla Club Room
Legal Issues for Seniors	Sept 29, Oct 6,13,20	9:30 am	Goleta Library
Forgiveness	Thurs, Oct 22, 29	1:30 pm	Valle Verde
Power & Evil/Stalin & Hitler	Mon, Oct 26, Nov 2,9,16,23	9:30 am	Valle Verde
Crises in Higher Education	Tues, Nov 10, 17, 24	1:30 pm	Valle Verde
SB Hermitage Tour	TBD	TBD	SB Hermitage



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