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978-0-521-70599-8 - Strength Through Joy: Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich

Shelley Baranowski

Frontmatter

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## STRENGTH THROUGH JOY

Based on extensive archival research, this is the first major book on the Nazi leisure and tourism agency, Strength through Joy (KdF). The Third Reich aimed to unify Germans in preparation for war and the acquisition of “living space.” Yet it was also sensitive to German consumers, whose wish for higher living standards threatened national cohesion and rearmament. The leisure organization Strength through Joy became the Nazi regime’s most determined attempt to ease the tension between collective goals and individual desires, as well as between “guns and butter.” Its factory beautification, organized sports, cultural events, and mass tourism sought to raise the status of workers and integrate them in the nation, while keeping its costs low so that its clientele could afford its programs without wage increases that compromised rearmament. Nevertheless, if KdF did attract workers, it also drew the middle classes, which sought adventure, personal comfort, and pleasure – especially through its tourism. Although the motivations of Strength through Joy’s constituencies often diverged from the Nazi ideal of a united, politicized “racial community” (*Volksgemeinschaft*), KdF’s accommodation to consumer expectations made it the regime’s most popular institution. KdF mitigated present sacrifices while presenting visions of a prosperous future once “living space” was acquired. As a privilege extended to racially acceptable Germans, it segregated the Nazi regime’s victims from the German “racial community.”

Shelley Baranowski is Professor of History at the University of Akron. Her previous books include *The Confessing Church: Conservative Elites and the Nazi State* (1986) and *The Sanctity of Rural Life: Nobility, Protestantism, and Nazism in Weimar Prussia* (1995). She has also co-edited *Being Elsewhere: Tourism, Consumer Culture, and Identity in Modern Europe and North America* (2001) with Ellen Furlough.

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The führer on vacation

Source: Kraft durch Freude Gau Sachsen, *Urlaubsfahrten* 1936, frontispiece.

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# STRENGTH THROUGH JOY

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IN THE THIRD REICH

SHELLEY BARANOWSKI

*University of Akron*



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*For Mary and Ed Baranowski*

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AA/PA	Auswärtiges Amt Politisches Archiv (Foreign Ministry Political Archive, Bonn)
AOG	Gesetz zur Ordnung der nationalen Arbeit (National Labor Law)
APK	Akten der Partei-Kanzlei der NSDAP (Files of the NSDAP Chancellery, Munich)
AWI	Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut (Institute for the Science of Labor)
BdA	Bank der deutschen Arbeit (Bank of German Labor)
BAB	Bergbau-Archiv Bochum (Mining Archive, Bochum)
BAL	Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde (Federal Archive, Berlin-Lichterfelde)
BA-MA	Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv (Federal Military Archive, Freiburg)
BHA	Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv München (Bavarian State Archive, Munich)
DAF	Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front)
Dinta	Deutsches Institut für technische Arbeitsschulung (German Institute for Technical Labor Training)
DNVP	Deutschnationale Volkspartei (German National People's Party)
HA Krupp	Historisches Archiv Krupp (Historical Archive Krupp, Essen)
IfT	Institut für Tourismus (Institute for Tourism at the Free University, Berlin)
IfZ	Institut für Zeitgeschichte (Institute for Contemporary History, Munich)
ILO	International Labour Office, Geneva
KdF	Kraft durch Freude (Strength through Joy)

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KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (German Communist Party)
LHAM	Landeshauptarchiv Magdeburg (central archive of the state of Saxony-Anhalt, Magdeburg)
LK	Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz (central archive, state of the Rhineland-Palatinate, Koblenz)
NHH	Niedersächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Hannover (central regional archive of the state of Lower Saxony, Hanover)
NSBO	Nationalsozialistische Betriebszellenorganisation (National Socialist Factory Cell Organization)
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National Socialist German Workers' Party)
OSC	Olympic Studies Center, Lausanne
RSA	<i>Reden, Schriften, Anordnungen</i> (Hitler's writings, speeches, and directives)
SA	Siemens-Archiv (Siemens Archive, Munich)
SdA	Schönheit der Arbeit (Beauty of Labor)
SD	Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service)
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (German Social Democratic Party)
<i>Sopade</i>	Deutschland-Berichte der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands (Situation reports of the SPD executive in exile)
SWA	Sächsisches Wirtschaftsarchiv (Business Archive of Saxony, Leipzig)
WABW	Wirtschaftsarchiv Baden-Württemberg (Business Archive of Baden-Württemberg, Stuttgart)
WWA	Stiftung Westfälisches Wirtschaftsarchiv (Business Archive of Westphalia, Dortmund)

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I have translated *Volksgemeinschaft* as “racial community” rather than the more commonly used “national” or “people’s community” to underscore the Nazi regime’s ethnic and racial understanding of the “nation.” The inclination of individuals to sacrifice themselves for the common good was, especially in Hitler’s view, constitutive of racial superiority. On the other hand, I have left *Volk* and *völkisch* untranslated because without the noun “community,” the logical English renderings, “race” and “racial,” have a more specific application than the admixture of blood, ethnicity, and culture that the Nazi terms conveyed.

Due to the reorganization of the German Federal Archives, one of the collections that I consulted in the archive at Potsdam (formerly the Zentralstaatsarchiv of the German Democratic Republic and now dissolved), the Reich Main Security Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, or RSHA), has been moved to the archive in Berlin–Lichterfelde. Having confirmed that the RSHA documents are in their new location, I have named Berlin–Lichterfelde rather than Potsdam in the relevant citations. My format for archival citations is as follows: a description of the document followed by the date, the name of the archive, the specific holding, file number, and (if available) document number.