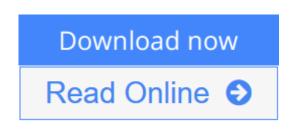


# The Business of Genocide: The SS, Slave Labor, and the Concentration Camps

By Michael Thad Allen



## **The Business of Genocide: The SS, Slave Labor, and the Concentration Camps** By Michael Thad Allen

During World War II, hundreds of thousands of prisoners were worked to death by the Nazis under a brutal system of slave labor in the concentration camps. By 1942, this vast network of slavery extended across all of German-occupied Europe, but the whole operation was run by a surprisingly small staff of bureaucrats--no more than 200 engineers and managers who worked in the Business Administration Main Office of the SS. Their projects included designing and constructing the concentration camps and gas chambers, building secret underground weapons factories, and brokering slave laborers to private companies such as Volkswagen and IG Farben.

*The Business of Genocide* powerfully contradicts the assumption that the SS forced slavery upon the German economy, demonstrating that instead industrialists actively sought out the Business Administration Main Office as a valued partner in the war economy. Moreover, while the bureaucrats who oversaw Holocaust operations have often been seen as technocrats or simple "cogs in the machinery," the book reveals their ideological dedication, even fanatical devotion, to slavery and genocide in the name of National Socialism.

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### The Business of Genocide: The SS, Slave Labor, and the Concentration Camps By Michael Thad Allen Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

#### Review

[Allen] convincingly exposes as entirely false the alleged dichotomy between apolitical, naive, task-absorbed technocrats and ideologically driven, highly politicized Nazi fanatics. (Christopher Browning, UNC Chapel Hill)

Opens up a new realm for anyone interested in how professional expertise helps implement political policies. ("Choice")

Well-researched. . . . Should contribute to better understanding of Nazi Germany and its crimes. ("Los Angeles Times Book Review")

Well-researched and convincing. . . . Present Ys<sup>"</sup> a new picture which is emerging of the history of the Third Reich and its crimes. ("Times Literary Supplement")

"Allen's study, presenting crucial aspects of the history of the WVHA, proves to be a major contribution. . . . Well-researched and well-written . . . Adds significantly to the ongoing discussion about the motives of those men who actually ran the numerous bureaucracies in Nazi Germany. ("American Historical Review")"

Well-researched and convincing. . . . Present[s] a new picture which is emerging of the history of the Third Reich and its crimes. ("Times Literary Supplement")

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The WVHA has been a huge gap in existing scholarship on important institutions in the Third Reich, and engineers have hitherto escaped the scrutiny that has fallen on many other professions in Nazi Germany. In one book Allen has filled both of these gaps admirably. He convincingly exposes as entirely false the alleged dichotomy between apolitical, naive, task-absorbed technocrats and ideologically driven, highly politicized Nazi fanatics.--Christopher Browning, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Allen's admirably researched book provides a provocative theoretical contribution to hotly contested debates on the motivations, abilities, and actions of Nazi desk-job perpetrators . . . in particular and the broad nature of the National Socialist state in general. . . . Allen skillfully blends archival evidence with secondary accounts and displays both technological insight and human understanding in laying bare the evil machinations of [the WVHA].--*Journal of Modern History* 

Opens up a new realm for anyone interested in how professional expertise helps implement political policies.--*Choice* 

This impassioned, iconoclastic, and deeply researched book imparts new insight into the relative roles of ideological conviction and careerism in motivating the most vicious perpetrators of the Holocaust, the SS men who managed the concentration camps and the exploitation of inmate labor. Allen's study is a major contribution to the histories of Nazi criminality and the German economy in wartime and deserves a wide and attentive readership.--Peter Hayes, Northwestern University

Through his examination of the hundreds of bureaucrats employed by the WVHA, Allen concludes that [Hannah Arendt's] banality of evil thesis does not square with the historical evidence. Far from being Max Weber's bureaucrats locked in an 'iron cage' . . . Allen finds that the 'ordinary' men in Nazi organizational institutions were ever cognizant of Nazi ideals and outdid each other to implement them.--*Jewish Book World* 

Creatively mixing biographies, books, and pamphlets written by the perpetrators with engineering assessments, statistical reports, and archival WHVA records, Allen offers arguments that significantly advance our understanding of the Third Reich.--*Business History Review* 

Well-researched and convincing. . . . Present[s] a new picture which is emerging of the history of the Third Reich and its crimes.--*Times Literary Supplement* 

Well-researched. . . . Should contribute to better understanding Nazi Germany and its crimes.--Los Angeles Times Book Review

#### From the Inside Flap

Allen examines the SS executives and engineers who built up the vast slave-labor system in Nazi concentration camps. While the bureaucrats who oversaw Holocaust operations are often portrayed as simply "cogs in the machinery," he reveals their ideological dedication to National Socialism.

### **Users Review**

#### From reader reviews:

#### Loretta Faria:

This The Business of Genocide: The SS, Slave Labor, and the Concentration Camps are reliable for you who want to become a successful person, why. The explanation of this The Business of Genocide: The SS, Slave Labor, and the Concentration Camps can be on the list of great books you must have is definitely giving you

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