

NCGS

NORTH CAROLINA GERMAN STUDIES

seminar & workshop series

Co-Conveners: Duke University, Department of History; UNC-Chapel Hill Department of History

Friday, 18 November 2022

2:00 – 4:00 pm | Zoom Seminar

TILL KNOBLOCH

PhD Candidate at the University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill, Department of History



The ‘Manufactured Crisis’: The Outbreak of World War II in Europe

Claus von Stauffenberg once described the inner circle of Nazi leaders as consisting solely of “opportunists and psychopaths” and indeed rarely had a war been instigated by a more peculiar lot of people. Fanatics, amateurs, yes-men and the inevitable “*alte Kämpfer*” – they all gathered around their leader at the Berghof where Hitler’s endless monologues and absurd mannerisms created a conspiracy-prone bubble that reason could not penetrate. Drawing from my dissertation research, the presentation will demonstrate how those personal factors shaped the Third Reich’s foreign policy and ultimately the outbreak of World War II. It will thus become clear that Hitler’s perceptions and ideas, his decisions and actions, were not the result of calculated diplomacy but the product of a system designed to appeal to the personal habits of one man.

TILL KNOBLOCH is a PhD candidate in modern European history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, spending the academic year 2022/23 in Berlin as a fellow of the Berlin Program for Advanced German and European Studies. His research interests focus on International History, Modern German and European History, Hitler, the Third Reich, and the Second World War, as well as Causes and Outbreaks of Wars. His dissertation, “The ‘Manufactured Crisis’: The Outbreak of World War II in Europe,” examines the diplomatic crisis at the eve of the Second World War from an international perspective with a particular emphasis on Polish sources.

Moderator: MADELINE JAMES | PhD Candidate | UNC Chapel Hill, Department of History

Comment: CHAD BRYANT | Associate Professor | UNC Chapel Hill, Department of History

More information on the NCGS website: <https://ncgsws.web.unc.edu/>

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