

EE Check-in Form

Directions: Fill out this form and share with Mr. Savage and your EE advisor by **Oct. 31st.**

Name

Joe Example

EE Subject & Advisor

History, Mr. Savage

EE Topic

The Reichstag Fire

Current version of your Research Question

Does historical evidence support the theory that the Nazis were responsible for the Reichstag Fire?

At this point in your research, what is your preliminary answer to your research question (i.e., your thesis or your conclusion?) (25 words max.)

There is little direct evidence that the Nazis set the Reichstag Fire, but much of the evidence used by some historians to argue Van Der Lubbe acted alone is weak or questionable.

How many sources have you read and taken notes from so far?

8 (9 if you count wikipedia!)

What are your 3-4 most valuable sources so far? (Title & author is fine, not full bib entry)

Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, William Shirer

"The Reichstag Fire Was Not a Conspiracy", John Simkin

Burning the Reichstag: An investigation into the Third Reich's Enduring Mystery, Benjamin Carter Hett

"The True Story of the Reichstag Fire and the Nazi Rise to Power", Lorraine Boissoneault

What have you learned about your topic since your first reflection meeting with your supervisor? (summarize main points - 100 words max.)

Simkin's evidence (based on the work of Fritz Tobias) is not nearly as solid as Simkin thinks. According to Hett, Tobias was a Nazi-sympathizer and fraud who intentionally buried evidence that contradicted his claims. Primary source newspaper accounts from England immediately after the fire blame the Nazis. Shirer's account in his book asserts many details as facts that may not be true (such as the SS using underground tunnels to enter the Reichstag). Hitler appeared genuinely surprised and angry to witnesses, suggesting he did not know in advance. Modern fire experts doubt the conclusions of the official report from 1933.

What do you still need to find to be able to answer your research question? (Sources? Types of information?)

I need to locate and read Tobias' original book on the Reichstag Fire.
I need to locate and read the transcripts from Van der Lubbe's trial (primary source)
I need to locate and read the transcripts from the Nuremburg Trials that relate to the Reichstag Fire.
I'd like to find a source about Shirer later in his life (interview? autobiography?) to see if he still believed his fire theory after most historians doubted it.
I need to read more reviews and other historians' reactions to Hett's book.

What are some subtopics or subheadings you might use in your EE?

Undisputed facts
Van Der Lubbe's Testimony
Statements from Nazi officers
Shirer's Theory
Tobias' Theory
Hett's Theory
Maybe the *Brown Book* theory (though probably not since it's pretty widely agreed to be propaganda)