

Alternatives to Appeasement: Neville Chamberlain and Hitler's Germany | 9780857736284 | Andrew David Stedman | 320 pages | 2014 | I.B.Tauris, 2014

Hitler's Enabler: Neville Chamberlain and the Origins of the Second World War. John Ruggiero. 5.0 out of 5 stars 1. "Andrew David Stedman's book on appeasement and British foreign policy in the interwar period represents a major new and important contribution to historical understanding of the subject. It is the first significant synthesis of competing historiographical approaches in recent years, and a clear presentation of the way in which contemporary discussions transformed themselves throughout the course of the 1930s. One of the central strengths of this work is its methodological and historical focus on the evolving discourse of appeasement. Stedman shows clearly the trajectory of the Andrew David Stedman, *Alternatives to Appeasement: Neville Chamberlain and Hitler's Germany*. March 2013. *The Journal of Modern History* 85(1):180-182. British historian Andrew Stedman contributes yet another study defending Chamberlain's prewar policies toward Nazi Germany. It is hard work, but the author does his best, drawing upon an impressive variety of English-language archival sources listed in a regrettably unilingual bibliography. His book is highly Anglocentric, as the reader will at once notice when Stedman writes, in the preface to *Alternatives to Appeasement*, that Winston Churchill, was "the man who defeated Hitler." Stedman's declaration that appeasement's popularity and rational aspects forgotten, the whole mess of the 1930s could be pinned on the winged collar of a dead man—Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, who died in 1940—and safely anathematized. However, the contention that appeasement led to, or caused, World War II is built on military and moral sand. In the meantime, the military in Britain backed Chamberlain and appeasement to the hilt as the only sound approach to weathering the storm until British diplomacy could be backed by muscle. The diplomatic dance that we now call appeasement failed, but it was a damned sight better than the alternatives available at the time—capitulation or war. World War II happened because Hitler was wedded to an irrational course of unlimited expansion.