

Hitler's Mein Kampf as satire

The German comedian Serdar Somuncu recites extracts from Mein Kampf to highlight the absurdity of Hitler's propaganda, writes Sebastian Huempfer.



In his show *The Legacy of a Mass Murderer*, the German comedian [Serdar Somuncu](#) recites excerpts from Adolf Hitler's book *Mein Kampf* to highlight the absurdity of Hitler's propaganda. From 1991 until 2001, Somuncu's show toured through Germany, Austria and Switzerland, where the sale and purchase of *Mein Kampf* is prohibited. In more than [1,428 readings](#), Somuncu claims to have reached a total audience of 250,000 people, many of them pupils at German schools, and calls himself "the only person who is allowed to read from this book". He was repeatedly forced to wear a bullet-proof vest and request police protection because of threats from neo-Nazi groups opposed to his show. In German cities such as Schwerin and Ingolstadt, local government officials from various political parties tried to prevent Somuncu from performing, arguing that reading from *Mein Kampf* violated common decency.

The finance ministry of the state of Bavaria is the official owner of *Mein Kampf* until the copyright on the book [expires](#) on 1 Jan 2016. Until then, the sale and purchase of the book is prohibited in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. However, it is not illegal to own the book. Online versions of *Mein Kampf* are available for free in many languages. There has been some [debate](#) over whether

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Mein Kampf should be available to buy from 2016 onwards. Some – including Somuncu – argue that banning the book would create an aura of mystery around it, whereas anyone who tried to read it would immediately discover that it was “rubbish” and contained one of the “most confused and pointless theories in history”. Others argue that the book should be banned to protect the memory of the victims of the Third Reich and/or because it remains dangerous propaganda and a symbol of Nazism. The president of the Bavarian Teachers Association even argues that Mein Kampf should not be discussed in high school history classes at all, to avoid getting pupils interested in the book.

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