

The Holocaust

“All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for enough good men to do nothing”

Learning Targets

- How did persecution in Nazi Germany begin?
- What was the Kristallnacht?
- Describe the process that led to the deaths of so many. (Identify, isolate, exterminate.)

**They came first for the Communists,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist.
Then they came for the Jews,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew.
Then they came for the trade unionists,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist.
Then they came for the Catholics,
and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant.
Then they came for me,
and by that time no one was left to speak up.**

A brief History of Judaism

- Moses leads Jewish people from slavery in Egypt about 600 BCE.
- Settle in Judea (the promised land)
- Romans come in, call it Palestine, and most Jews leave.
- By the beginning of the 20th Century, a Zionist Movement emerges in Europe.

A Brief History of Anti-semitism

- Many Christians blamed the Jews for the death of Jesus.
- Jews tended to be wealthier and more educated than most Europeans. Why?
- Jews were blamed for the Black Plague and pretty much everything else.
- By the 20th Century, Jews weren't well liked in Europe or the U.S.
- Social Darwinism and Eugenics

Eugenics

- **Eugenics:** “Good genes,” a theory of controlling hereditary factors to create a “healthier society.” It is based on the idea that races should keep their blood pure by getting rid of problems.
- In the early **1900s**, scientists and doctors in over **30 nations** including the United States, England, Russia, Brazil, Mexico and Germany were studying **eugenics**.
- **Eugenicists** believed that genetic diseases, feeble mindedness, crime and violence could be eliminated from society.
- **Eugenicists** believed in using artificial selection especially through mandatory sterilization, euthanasia, and genocide to create their “healthier society.”

Eugenics in America

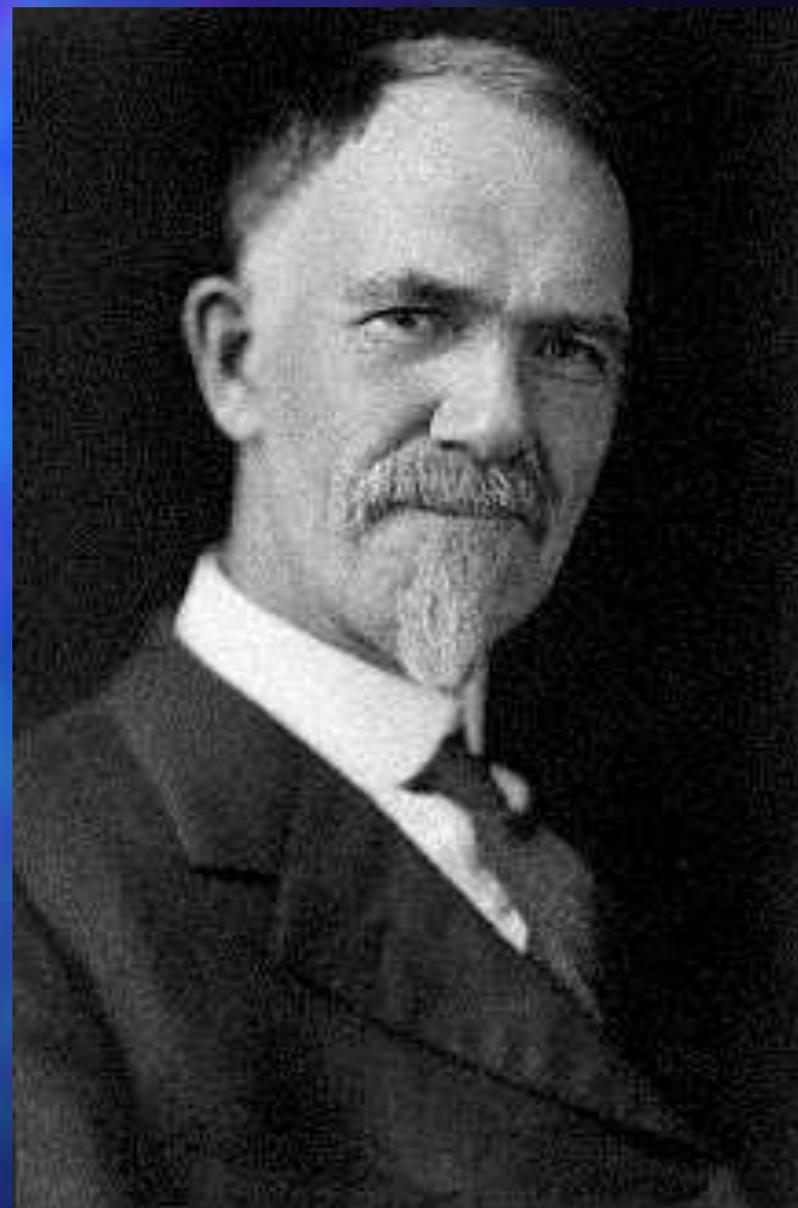
- The **United States** was the first nation to legalize mandatory sterilization. In fact, the Nazis used a Virginia sterilization law as a model for their own laws regarding sterilization.
- **Middle class notions** that the government could reduce the cost of spending on social welfare and medicine, by creating eugenic health policies, drove the American interest in eugenics. (i.e. plan a healthier society.)
- An American scientist **Charles Davenport** received funding for his research from the **Carnegie Foundation**. He later became the head of the World Eugenics Society.
- The **Rockefeller Foundation** granted financial support to German Eugenicians at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute
- Other Americans supported **eugenics** because they believed that it would rid the nation of problems caused by urbanization and immigration. (KKK)



**ONLY HEALTHY SEED
MUST BE SOWN!**



**CHECK THE SEEDS OF
HEREDITARY DISEASE AND
UNFITNESS BY EUGENICS**



Hindenburg and the Weimar Republic

- Begins when the Kaiser is overthrown to end WWI
- Attempt at American style democracy, sort of. (Reichstag, Reichscounselor, Chancellor)
- The 20's in Germany were full of corruption and decadence
- Tons of economic problems (Treaty of Versailles) lead to severe inflation and depression.

Adolf Hitler

- Partly Jewish kid from Austria, was a war hero for Germany during WWI
- **VERY** bitter about losing, blames Hindenburg.
- Grouchy and disillusioned, tries to make a living as a greeting card illustrator after the war.
- Starts to complain about the conditions in Germany in bars around Munich.

Pavel Von Hindenburg



Adolf Hitler



Hitler's rise to power

- Becomes very popular in Munich beerhalls, and gathers a following
- Along with others, forms the National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP), or Nazi Party
- Sentenced to 5 years in prison for the "Beerhall Putsch" (attempt to overthrow the government). Serves 9 months.
- Writes Mein Kampf in prison-outlines his "plan" for Germany's future

Mein Kampf argues that...

- The German people should be pure (no “untermensch” (lesser people, or undesirables))
- Germany needs Lebensraum (more room to grow)
- All Germans must show complete obedience to the will of a strong leader, or Fuhrer.
- Germany will be the 3rd Reich

The Nazi rise to Power

- As Germany's problems grow, 2 things become more popular: Communism and Mein Kampf.
- Nazis argue that communism will destroy Germany, and campaign based on Mein Kampf.
- By 1930, the Nazis get 6.5 million votes, and 107 seats in the Reichstag.
- They encourage hostility toward the "November Criminals" and claim that Jews are behind the problems of the Weimar Republic.

Nazi rise to power, cont'd

- Nazi Party, some generals, industrialists, financiers, and aristocrats form a "United Front Against Communism," and spread the fear that without strong leadership, commies will take over.
- In 1932, the Nazis get 230 seats (30%).
- In January of '33, Hitler is appointed Chancellor of Germany
- Terrorists set fire to the Reichstag, and people start to fear violent revolution.

Hitler's takeover

- As people come to believe that only strong leadership can protect them, they start to give Hitler more and more power.
- March '33: The **Enabling Acts** give Hitler the power to make laws without the Reichstag.
- July 33: Nazi party is the only political party allowed, and the takeover is complete.

The Big Nazis

Josef Goebbels

*took care of all of the
propaganda*



Heinrich Himmler

*In charge of "purifying"
Europe*



More big Nazis

Martin Bormann

Hitler's 2nd in command



Hermann Goering

*Hitler's successor, founder
of the Gestapo, and
head of the Air Force*



More big Nazis

Rudolph Hess
Hitler's Secretary



Reinhard Heydrich
Organized the Holocaust



The Nazis begin to control society

- All media (radio, TV, etc.) is nationalized, and controlled by Goebbels.
- The Gestapo (secret police) remove “problems.”
- All kids are required to join Hitler Youth.
- Gangs of “brownshirts” roam the streets to intimidate all non-nazis.
- Germans need someone to blame and unite against, and the Nazi’s give them the Jews. (among others)



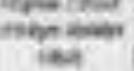
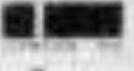
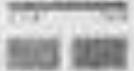
**“None are more hopelessly enslaved than
Those who falsely believe they are free.”
-Goethe**

Nazi Germany's eugenics

- It began with the hospitalization of the “unfit”.
- The next step was forced sterilization of the “unfit”.
- Finally, euthanasia (mercy killing) was used on the “unfit”. Children were allowed to die by starvation, and the elderly were killed by lethal injection.

Wie stehen nicht allein

Es liegt Euchern
widerwärtig
beizubringen



hier trägst Du mit

Ein Erbkrankes kostet bis zur Erreichung des
60. Lebensjahres im
Durchschnitt 50.000 RM.



Figure 2. "You Also Bear the Burden!"
A Nazi-era high-school biology book warns that "a hereditarily ill person costs 50,000 reichsmarks on average up to the age of sixty." From the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C.

The Holocaust Begins (phase 1)

- First, the Nazis ban all name changes. Why?
- **1935-Nuremberg Laws** make anti-semitism into law: they defined Jews, excluded Jews from German society and removed all of their civil rights.
- Anti-semitic feelings grow gradually over about 3 years.
- November 9, 1938: **Kristallnacht** (night of broken glass). Jewish homes and businesses are destroyed all over Germany.

The Holocaust Continues (phase 2)

- Concentration camps are built for political prisoners, then regular criminals, then anyone else.
- Jews must abandon their homes and move into Ghettos so they can be “protected”. They just happen to provide cheap labor for the war effort.
- Gradually, they are moved into the camps.

The Jewish "question"

- As Germany conquers more of Europe, they have more Jews to "deal with."
- **The Evian Conference:** many countries get together to discuss the issue. With full knowledge, nobody wants to help.
- Since Germany can't deport the Jews...

...The Final Solution (to the Jewish Question)

- German leaders get together in a secret meeting led by SS Gen. Heydrich.
- **Wannsee Conference:** all members are pressured to sign off on a plan for extermination of the Jews and other untermensch.
- Assembly line style death factories (Auschwitz, Birkenau) are created to eliminate everybody in the most efficient way possible. (Gas chambers)

Dr. Mengele's Experiments



- In addition to murder, jews were used as guinea pigs.
- Mengele used them to test new theories, both medical and military.
- The results are still banned today

The Aftermath

- By the time its all said and done, about 14 million people were murdered (6 million Jews)



"Naturally the common people don't want war: neither in Russia, nor in England, nor for that matter in Germany. That is understood. But, after all, it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy, or a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the peacemakers for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in any country." -

Hermann Goering,