

Example by StudyDriver

Source: <https://studydriver.com/my-reflection-about-holocaust/>

My Reflection about Holocaust Example

During the Holocaust, around six million individuals, the majority being Jewish, were exterminated by the Nazis. Jews that were located across Germany, and the parts of Europe that were occupied by the Nazi regime and all gathered up and sent to death camps where they would then be forced into slave labor, and starved. Those seen as not fit for work would be gassed, shot, experimented on, and abused.

The whole situation was killing and death on an enormous size, and it was a huge process, from those who ran the trains to the office workers who those who were in management, to the Police who patrolled the streets, thousands of normal every day individuals were a part of this horror story. It can be extremely difficult for us to try and comprehend how these events were possible. Many people will think that it was down to pure fear why ordinary people went along with what the Nazis wanted. But in reality, the truth is far more terrifying than what many think. Many individuals that lived in the same towns, along the same streets, and lived next door to one another quite willingly turned on the Jews, thus becoming part of the programme of mass murder. There were however a number of people in Germany and Nazi occupied Europe that did indeed help, however the vast majority became killers rather than saviors.

After the war ended in 1945 (Europe), many of the individuals said that they had no other choice but to follow the orders that they were given. However, historians and prosecutors in Germany failed to find any evidence of any individuals being put in a threatening environment or into a situation where they would be killed or be put into prison for their refusal to obey commands during the atrocities. The story of Police Battalion 101 indicates that even after they were given the option to refuse to take part, the individuals still did not hesitate to commit these atrocities. In the year of 1942, the battalion was posted to Poland in order to take part in the finding and gathering up of Jews. The majority of the battalion consisted of men that were in their middle ages, and many of them had their own families (Reich, W. (1992).

It was only several weeks after their arrival in Poland that the men were sent to a village called Józefów, it was home to around eighteen hundred Jews. Major Willhelm Trapp who was the commander of the battalion, took a stand in front of his battalion and just as he started talking, the members of the battalion had noticed that he was in tears. Trapp said to the men to gather all of the Jews in the vicinity. He stated that the Jewish men should be separated up in order for them to be sent to death camps, however women, elderly and the children should be shot, and even though he didn't favor what he had been asked to do, it was easier if they took into consideration that, back home in Germany, women and children were in an environment where they were being bombed. At the end of his speech, Trapp mentioned that those who did not want to participate didn't have too. But out of the five hundred men who were stood there listening to Trapp that day, only a measly fifteen had opted out of the participation of killing. The remaining four hundred and eighty-five men carried on to kill all of the Jewish female's the children and elderly members that lived in Jozefow, and over the time of the war, the killing at the hands of the battalion continued, thus murdering thousands of Jews in the process (Browning, 2014).

After the war, many Nazis of high rank were arrested at the Nuremberg trials, many individuals were never investigated at all. Due to the volume of individuals that were involved in the atrocities, it made it virtually impossible to find all of those responsible. At the beginning of the Cold War in 1947, the Allies spent less time seeking out more of the individual's involved and responsible for the holocaust. West German and Austrian authorities had also stated that they did not wish to investigate major numbers of their citizens. There were also a

few individuals responsible that had fled to South America, which is where right-wing dictatorships more often than not were allowed refuge. The rest of them traveled to the United States, Canada and Great Britain. Pretending to be individuals that were once living and fled from communist regimes, they were hardly questioned about who they were and where they came from if ever (The Independent, 2018). The holocaust was the most modern genocide that the world has ever seen. It was carried out using with the sole aim to be the killing of all Jews at any location in the world.

There are eight different stages that can be built up to class how not only the Holocaust was such a warped mind theory that Nazis had, but how their overall vision on the world was also warped. The first type of genocide that the Nazis used was classification. Hitler was a massive believer in the Aryan race being the best and most superior to all others. Individuals with blonde hair and blue eyes were seen as better than everyone else and anyone who did not meet Hitler's requirements was to be deemed as subhuman. The only category of people that were classed as anything much lower by Hitler were the Jews (Encyclopedia.ushmm.org, n.d.).

The next part of the Nazis genocidal plan was symbols, all soldiers under Nazi power wore swastikas which was the Nazi Party's emblem. Whilst in the concentration camps criminals were labeled with green inverted triangles, those who were political prisoners and Roma gypsies, vagrants and other groups were labeled with a red asocials. Homosexuals were issued with pink triangles and Jehovah's witnesses with purple ones. Those who were prisoners from outside of Germany were identified by the first letter of their country that they resided in being sewn onto their uniform. Another symbol used would be two triangles which formed the Jewish star, these would usually be colored yellow unless the specific prisoner was also included in one of the other categories. As an example a Jewish political prisoner would be issued with a yellow triangle but also a red triangle on top of the yellow one. The Jewish prisoners were also required to wear the star of David outside of the concentration camps too (Fenyvesi, 2006).

The next section is one of the worst and focuses on dehumanization. The Nazis dehumanization of the Jews through atrocities like the Nuremberg Laws for instance were terrible. The laws were exempt from German Jews

from Reich citizenship and they were prohibited from either marrying or having sexual relationships with individuals with German blood or relations. The Nuremberg Laws however did apply to those who had three to four Jewish grandparents regardless of their religious beliefs, many German citizens who had not practiced Judaism for years were suddenly thrown into the nightmare the Nazis were carrying out. Even those who had Jewish grandparents but had turned to Christianity were still thought as and treated as Jews by the Nazis. Jewish shops were closed down; Jewish children were not allowed to attend schools. Jews were not allowed to work, excluded entirely from military service and it was so bad that a Jew, if seen sitting next to a non-Jew could result in the death penalty (My Jewish Learning, n.d.).

The next example of the Nazi Genocide is. Polarization, the Nazis were big on propaganda, and they wanted to spread the word about how the Jewish people were plague carrying rats. Anti-semitic slurs appeared in Nazi news articles, on posters, films, on the radio and even in the classroom. Before long it became normal to see in Nazi Germany. Arguably it one of the most distasteful actions that the Nazis did, is often referred to as The 'Night of the Broken Glass'. In just a few days 7,000 Jewish places of work were destroyed and looted, many Jews were shot, and Jewish places of rest, hospitals, the schools, and their homes were destroyed and their valuables stolen, while the police and fire service just watched the events unfold in front of their eyes (Historyplace.com, n.d.).

Moving on, the next section of Nazis genocidal thoughts was preparation. During this stage the prisoners were separated and they were made to put symbols of identification on. Following this they then were split up into separate ghettos, and from there moved into concentration camps, or confined to a region that was in pure dire states and thus they starved and then they eventually died of malnutrition. The Jews were initially put into Ghettos. Several other groups of prisoners were not allowed to be with Germans and sent off to death camps. Ghettos were often deeply crowded and there wasn't much room to live in them; the bathroom facilities failed to work. Diseases were all around and people were always starving due to very little food being given to them. The prisoners were made to starve and they were only allowed to purchase an extremely bland and very limited portion of food, thus resulting in a severely poor calorific diet. Some of the prisoners however did have a small amount of money or had a few valuables they owned, they could trade their money or valuables for food that was

snuck into the ghetto; the others were forced to either beg, steal or starve. In the winter months there was not enough heating being provided and people were exposed to the cold thus resulting in much more illnesses and deaths. Thousands died in Ghettos from illnesses, from starvation, or the cold environment in the winter. Many of the prisoners killed themselves to escape the pain of life that they were going through (Gasior, 2018).

Extermination was a huge part of the Nazis Genocide. The Nazis first started to use poison gas in 1939 when they killed a huge number of mental patients. A Nazi euphemism, "euthanasia" was referring to the killing of the German soldiers who the Nazis deemed "unworthy of life" because of mental illness or physical disability". Gas chambers showed to be less costly than shooting people and in 1941 the SS decided that doing the same to the Jews would be a much more efficient way too. The killing in the gas chambers was first introduced to death camps in the year of 1942. The prisoners would be thrown small carts to be whisked off to many different death camps, upon arrival they would be informed to take showers to be disinfected due to widespread disease at the camps. The guards at the death camps would try there best to cram people into the chambers, they would try and get as many they possibly could into the gas chambers as the less space inside the chambers the faster the individuals inside died from poor circulation or crushing. Out of the eleven million people killed in the concentration camps, six million of them were Jewish (Encyclopedia.ushmm.org, n.d.).

And the last stage of the Nazis Genocide. Denial. Even though the Holocaust is one of the events in history that has been documented in extensive amounts, but even to the present day individuals will continue to deny that the events of the Holocaust ever took place; a few individuals state that the facts about the Holocaust are not clear and that many of the stories are made up by Jews to make people feel sorry for them; people who have this mindset also believe that the diary written by Anne Frank is make believe and fiction; and that people died in the death camps because they were starved or because of illness, and not by genocide. The events of the Holocaust are something that we should always look back on and never forget, if we just shrug it off and pretend like it never happened, very similar events and mistakes may happen again and again further down the line, whether the events are people being murdered for no reason or just standing by while the horror unfolds around humanity's eyes, as it did during the events of the Holocaust (Mackenzie, 2018)

The result of the Holocaust has affected the lives of millions of people in many different ways that can still be seen to the present day. After the Holocaust had ended, many Jews left Europe and fled to the United States of America. The Jewish community has been ill treated for hundreds of years, and the Holocaust brought this to light globally for people in society, finally making them see and understand how severe discrimination was. Hitler stated that the Jewish people were the problem and that they should be erased. The result of masses of people falling for and following Hitler's insane ideology and ideas was that for an horrendous couple of years during World War Two that resulted in the mass murder of many innocent members of the Jewish community which will haunt them forever, and due to the result of the events that took place at the many different concentration camps set up around Europe by the Nazis, the Jews will never be the same again as a result. It is stated that around two out of every three Jews that resided in European country's during World War Two were killed due to the result of the Holocaust taking place. If the events of the Holocaust had not happened the population of Jews in Europe today would have been much larger. To the current day the Holocaust indicates to us and is a clear reference as to how dangerous and cruel we as humans can be to one another, and what we are capable of given the proper motivation. We are impacting history every single day of our lives, whether it's positive or negative things that we do. The events and the results of the Holocaust need to be spoken about forever so that nobody can ever forget the many atrocities that happened during that period of time, and to hopefully prevent such events from reoccurring ever again in the future and I feel that We as human beings need to have an understanding of genocide, we need to know and understand how these type of events come to fruition. Governments need to be alarmed early to predict when genocides will occur. We need to be one step ahead so that we know when something like the events of the Holocaust are ever brought up again we can instantly shut it down. Working together and treating all individuals humanely is the best way to prevent genocide from ever happening in the future. Another point is that humanity should be more observant and pay more attention to detail during election processes. Looking at Hitler for instance, he was imprisoned during the twenties, but during this time period he read and studied books about how law works and he ended up getting elected in Germany. The result of his election success was the Holocaust.

Adolf Hitler went from being a convict in the nineteen twenties to being in charge of a country by the nineteen

thirties. We need to be more observant and realistic with everything that is going on around us and who we pick to run our countries and governments, as giving ultimate power of a nation to a man who was so twisted in the mind, will often end badly in the long run. Racism is something that to the present day in my opinion should be nonexistent, however to this very day we still have racism in society and I think if everyone stopped being so judgmental and racist to one another this problem would not have happened in the first place. As human beings we need to start improving our sharing of resources. Doing so will prevent further wars. If everybody was on the same side with this, then I personally believe that we would not have to worry about genocides or racism happening again. It just seems near impossible for people to agree with each other in society and also on a global scale. These are what I believe would prevent the events of the Holocaust from ever reoccurring.