

Holocaust Myths and Misconceptions: Common Questions about the Holocaust

Was Hitler Responsible for the Holocaust?

Hitler did not make the Holocaust happen by himself. In addition to the SS, German government, military, and Nazi Party officials who planned and implemented policies aimed at persecuting and murdering the European Jews, many “ordinary” people—civil servants, doctors, lawyers, judges, soldiers, and railroad workers—played a role in the Holocaust.

Some Were Workers



Stefan Kucharek drove trains full of Jews to the Treblinka killing center. Kucharek drove these transports regularly for almost a year.

--USHMM Collection, Witnesses, Collaborators, and Perpetrators

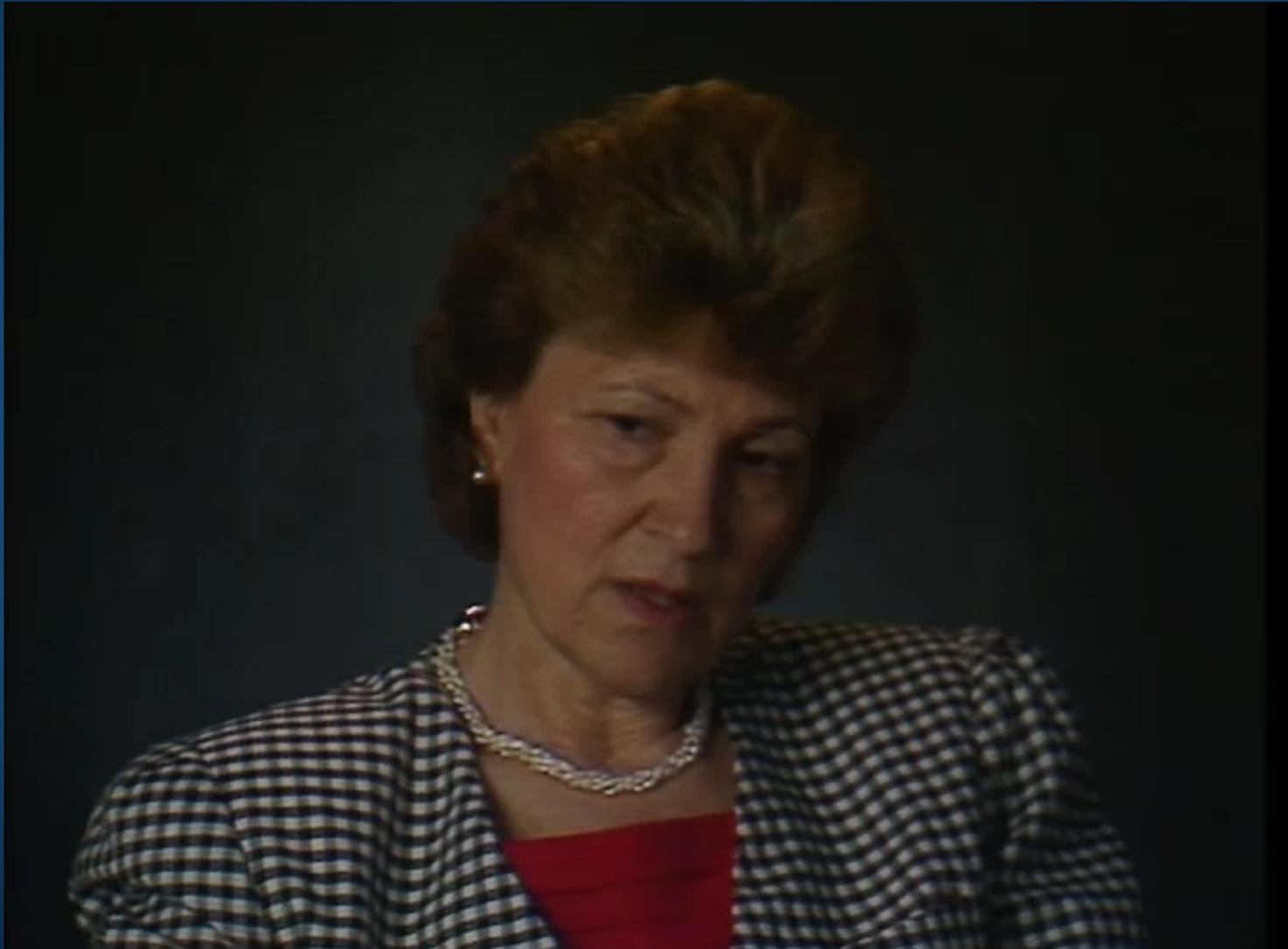
Some Were Judges



Members of the Berlin criminal court give the Nazi salute on October 1, 1936, the day that judges were required to wear the Nazi eagle-and-swastika emblem.

--USHMM

Some Were Teachers: Turned Away at the Classroom Door



Some Were Teachers



Herbert Kohn, first day of school,
Frankfurt, Germany, 1932



Herbert Kohn, candle lighting ceremony, State
Capitol, Georgia Commission on the Holocaust
Days of Remembrance, 2014

Some Were Doctors



Dr. Carl Clauberg (far left) conducted experiments at Auschwitz, mostly on Jewish prisoners in 1943–44
—US Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Panstwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau w Oswiecimiu

Some Were Religious Leaders:



Roman Catholic clerics give the Nazi salute at a Catholic youth rally in the Neukölln stadium, Berlin, Germany, August 20, 1933

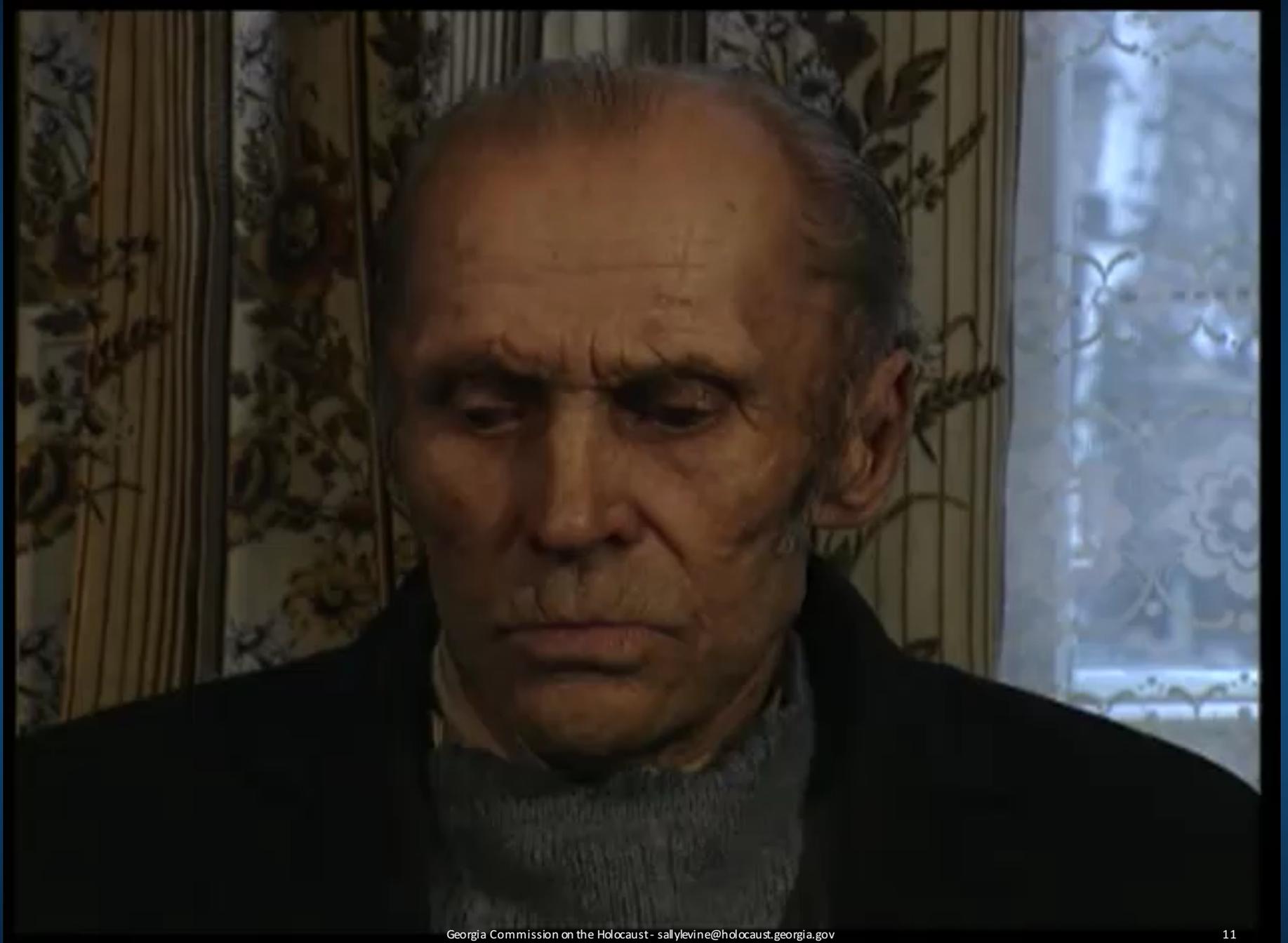
--Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz

Some Were Policemen: Local Participation in SS and Police Shootings

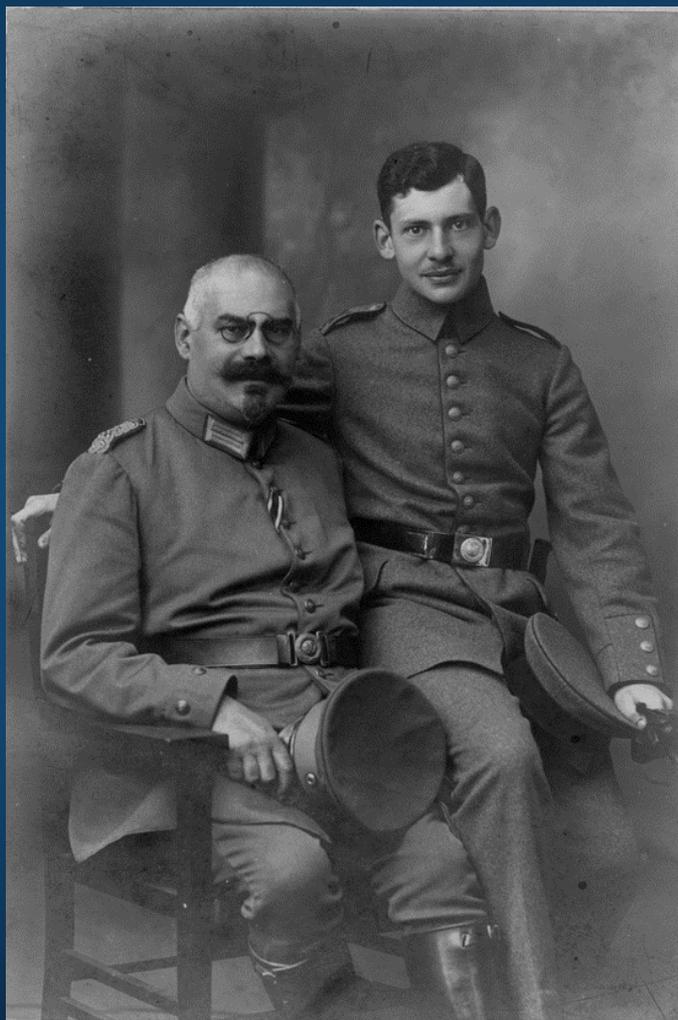


Ukrainian auxiliary police, marked by white armbands, prepare to kill Jewish women under the supervision of German army personnel. To carry out these shooting operations in hundreds of communities, Germans relied on the help of tens of thousands of ethnic German and non-German "auxiliary police."

--Hungarian National Museum Historical Photo Department
Georgia Commission on the Holocaust - sallylevine@holocaust.georgia.gov



Why Didn't the Jews Just Leave?



German Jews were patriotic citizens. More than 10,000 died fighting for Germany in World War I, and others received medals for their valor and service. Many Jewish German families had lived in Germany for centuries.

From 1933–39, discriminatory laws targeting Jews in Germany were passed incrementally. Up until Kristallnacht in 1938, many Jews in Germany hoped for positive change in German politics. Before World War II, few could imagine or predict killing squads and killing centers.

December 19, 1938

Klaus Langer

Salvaged Pages, p. 24



Klaus (later Jacob) Langer was born on April 12, 1924, in the city of Gleiwitz in Upper Silesia, which at that time was part of Germany. After Kristallnacht the Langer family desperately attempted to emigrate from Germany, but with each attempt they were met with obstacles. Klaus escaped Germany on September 2, 1939, eventually settling in Palestine. His parents and grandmother perished in the Holocaust.

The Immigration Act of 1924

was a United States federal law limiting the annual number of immigrants who could be admitted from any country to 2% of the number of people from that country already living in the United States in 1890, down from the 3% cap set by the Immigration Restriction Act of 1921.

The law was primarily aimed at further restricting immigration of Southern Europeans and Eastern Europeans.

The White Paper of 1939

was issued by the British in response to the 1936-1939 Arab Revolt in Palestine. This White Paper limited Jewish immigration to Palestine at 75,000 for 5 years, and ruled that further immigration was to be determined by the Arab majority .

This greatly upset Zionists because of the increasing persecution of Jews in Europe at the onset of World War II, particularly in Germany.

Documents Required to Obtain a U.S. Visa

- Five copies of the visa application
- Two copies of the applicant's birth certificate
- Quota number (establishing the applicant's place on the waiting list)

Two sponsors:

- Close relatives of the prospective immigrant were preferred
- The sponsors were required to be US citizens or to have permanent resident status, and they were required to have completed and notarized six copies of an Affidavit of Support and Sponsorship

Supporting documents:

- Certified copy of most recent federal tax return
- Affidavit from a bank regarding applicant's accounts
- Affidavit from any other responsible person regarding other assets (affidavit from sponsor's employer or statement of commercial rating)

Certificate of Good Conduct from German Police authorities, including two copies of each:

- Police dossier
- Prison record
- Military record
- Other government records about individual

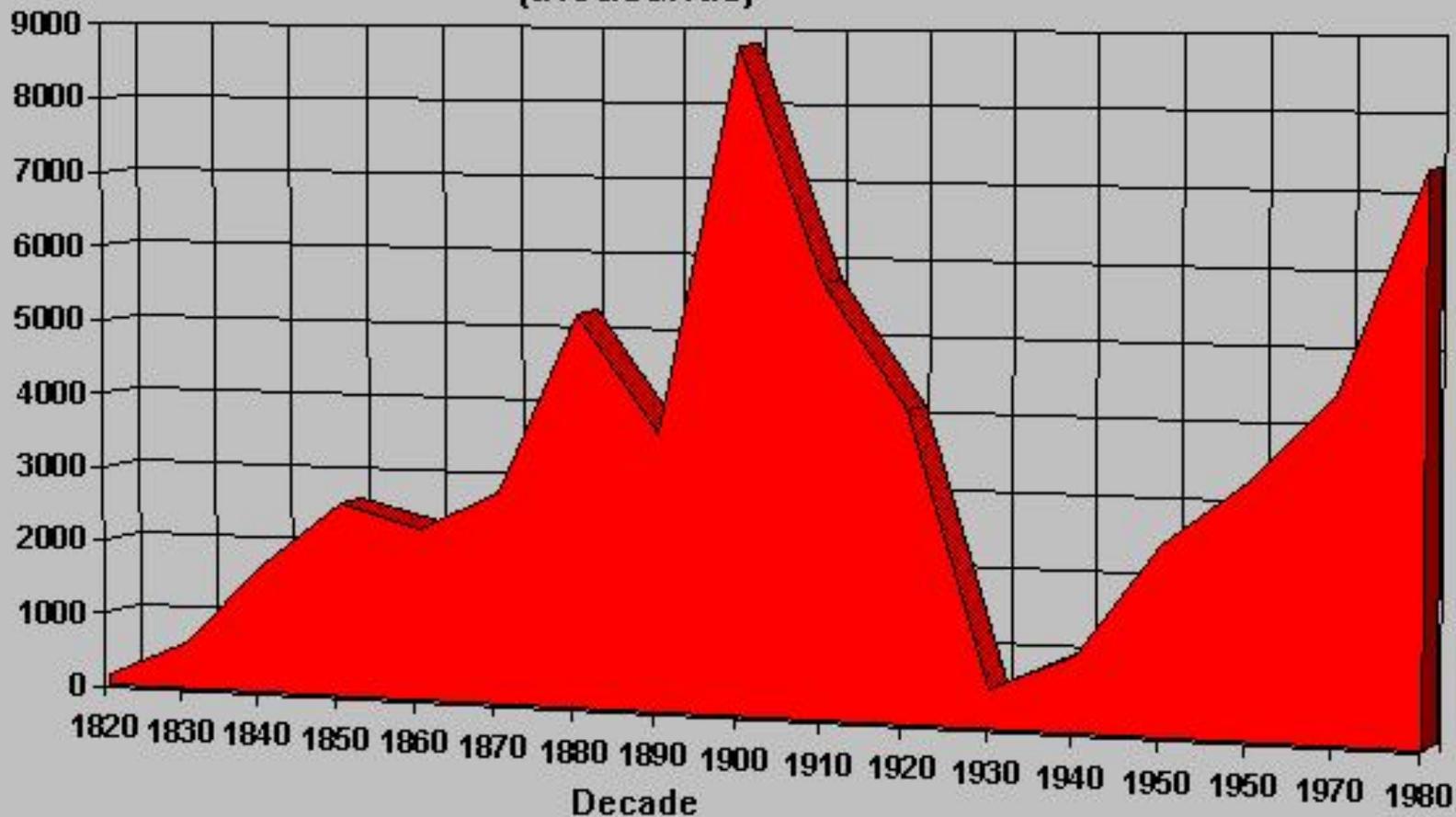
Affidavits of Good Conduct (after September 1940) from several responsible disinterested persons

Physical examination at US consulate

Proof of permission to leave Germany (imposed September 30, 1939)

Proof that prospective immigrant had booked passage to the Western hemisphere (imposed September 1939)

Number of Immigrants to the U.S. Per Decade: 1820-1990 (thousands)



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993.

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Why Didn't the Jews Resist?

Jews carried out acts of resistance in every German-occupied country and in the territory of Germany's Axis partners. Against impossible odds, they resisted in ghettos, concentration camps, and killing centers. There were many factors that made resistance difficult, however, including a lack of weapons and resources, deception, fear, and the overwhelming power of the Germans and their collaborators.



Jewish sniper takes position in the Warsaw Ghetto during the Uprising
--Jewish Virtual Library



Jewish armed resistance during the Holocaust
--jewishpartisans.org



Jewish parachutist Hannah Szenes with her brother, before leaving for a rescue mission. Palestine, March 1944.

— Beit Hannah Szenes

Georgia Commission on the Holocaust - sallylevine@holocaust.georgia.gov

Hannah Szenes was one of 37 Jews from Mandatory Palestine parachuted by the British Army into Yugoslavia during the Second World War to assist in the rescue of Hungarian Jews about to be deported to the German death camp at Auschwitz.

Szenes was arrested at the Hungarian border, then imprisoned and tortured, but refused to reveal details of her mission. She was eventually tried and executed by firing squad. She is regarded as a national hero in Israel.



A notice for a concert by a Jewish symphony orchestra in the Warsaw ghetto.
--USHMM



Pages from the "Vedem" Magazine, 1944
--Yad Vashem



Doll made by Ravensbrück prisoner
--Courtesy of MGR/SBG



Emanuel Ringelblum was a Jewish historian, chronicler of the Warsaw Ghetto
--Photographer Unknown

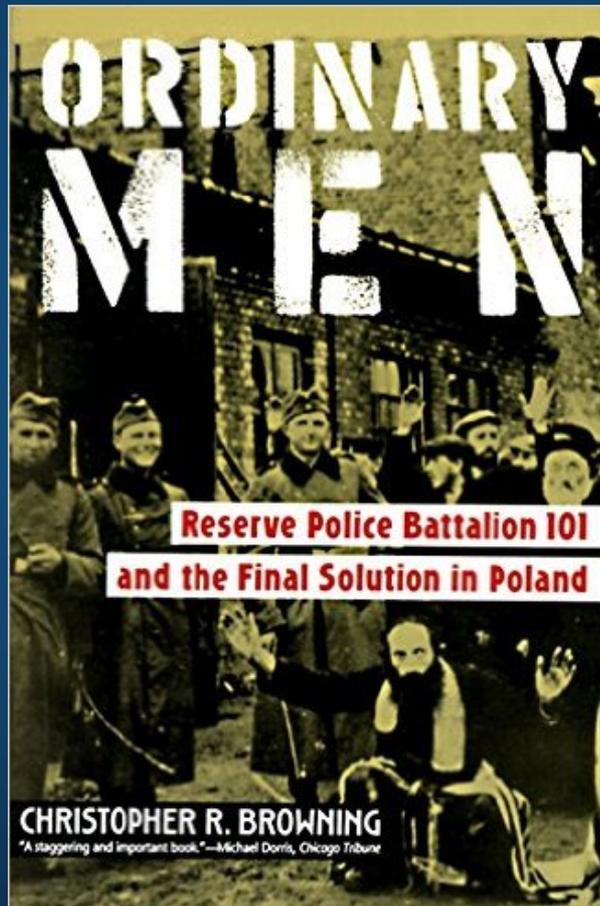


Discovery of the archive after the war
--Polish Press Agency



One of the milkcans used to hide documents. From the Ringelblum "Oyneg Shabbos" Archive

What Happened If You Disobeyed An Order To Participate In An Atrocity?



Germans who refused to participate in atrocities were generally not punished. They could request other duties, such as guard duty or crowd control. There is no reliable evidence that German soldiers or police officials were killed for refusing to kill civilians.

Non-Germans serving as auxiliaries and refusing to carry out direct orders to kill could be subject to discipline, dismissal, imprisonment, or even death.

Was Hitler Jewish?

Rumors about Hitler's ancestry were circulated by political opponents. Nazi official Hans Frank suggested that Hitler's grandmother had been employed as a housekeeper for a Jewish family in Graz, and that the family's 19-year-old son Leopold Frankenberg was the father of her illegitimate son. Research shows that no Frankenberg was registered in Graz during that period, and no record has been produced of Leopold Frankenberg's existence. Historians dismiss the claim that Hitler was Jewish.



What percentage of Germany's Population was Jewish?

According to the census of June 16, 1933, the Jewish population of Germany, was approximately 505,000 people out of a total of 67 million, somewhat less than 0.75 percent.



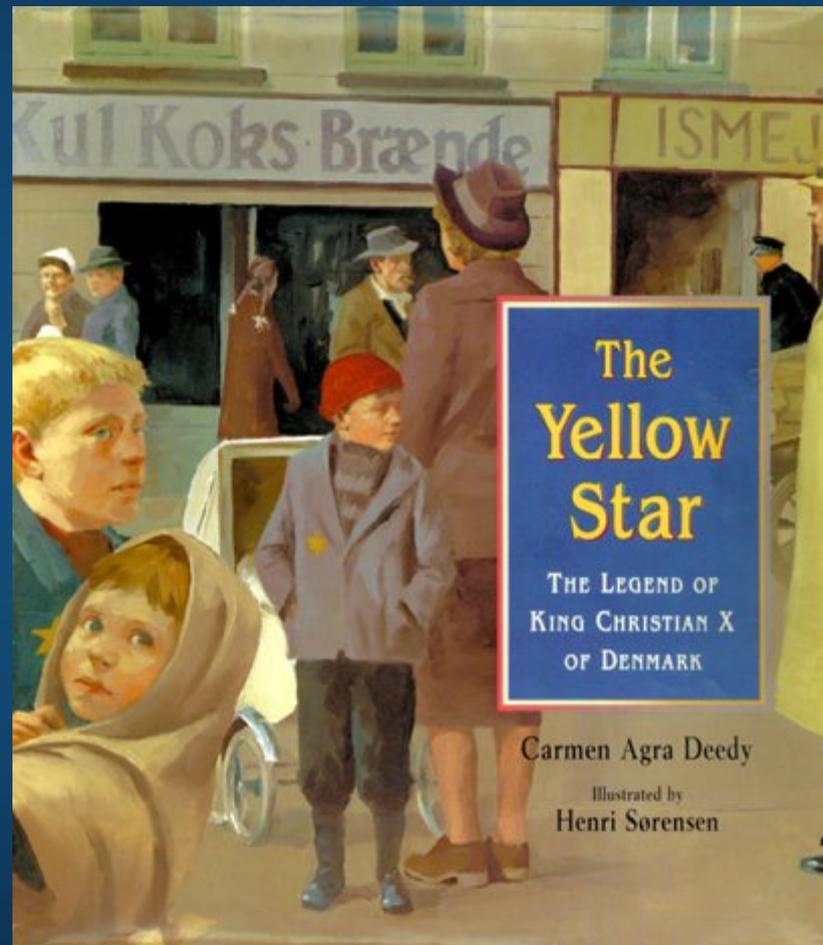
-USHMM

Did the Nazis Manufacture Soap from Human Fat?

Leading Holocaust scholars disavow the Nazi manufacture of soap. Evidence that would prove it conclusively – such as shipping bills, physical evidence from a manufacturing plant, or receipts for economic transactions – has never been found. When analyzed, bars of soap said to be made of human remains turned up no evidence of human DNA.



Did King Christian X Of Denmark Wear A Jewish Star Badge?



Did King Christian X Of Denmark Wear A Jewish Star Badge?

This never happened, despite the stories about the king's open support of his Jewish subjects that circulated throughout Europe, one of which has him threatening to wear a badge if such an order were given. However, the Germans never required Danish Jews to wear badges, possibly because they realized how much resistance this order would arouse.

As a gesture of solidarity with his subjects, the king continued his daily horseback rides through Copenhagen, alone and unprotected, and these rides became a popular protest as scores of Danes turned out to escort him.

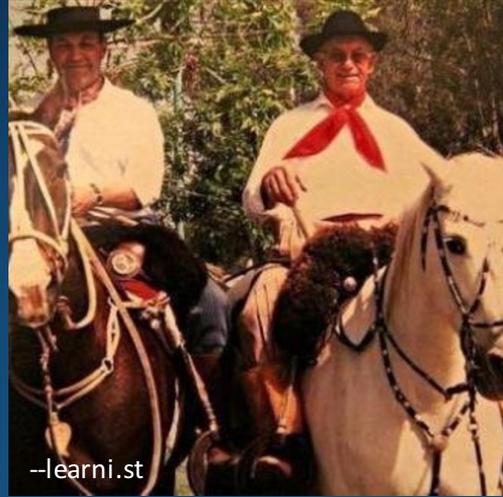


Are Jews a Race?

Jews are not a race. They are adherents of a religion – Judaism – around which a culture has evolved based on laws, rituals and customs that can vary from place to place because the Jews live in many parts of the world.

Jews are also a “people,” with a national/ethnic identity based on a shared history and historical homeland – Israel – that extends from ancient times to the present.

Are Jews a Race?



How Did Adolf Hitler Die?



Hitler committed suicide. He shot himself (and may have taken poison at the same time) in his bunker in Berlin on April 30, 1945.

His body and that of Eva Braun, whom he married just hours before their suicides, were taken out of the bunker and put into a bomb crater. Gasoline was thrown over them and they were set on fire.

Why Didn't the Poles Help the Jews?

<h2>BEKANTMACHUNG</h2> <p>Betrifft: Beherbergung von geflüchteten Juden.</p> <p>Es besteht Anlass zu folgendem Hinweis: Gemäss der 3. Verordnung über Aufenthaltsbeschränkungen im Generalgouvernement vom 15. 10. 1941 (VO. Bl. GG. S. 595) unterliegen Juden, die den jüdischen Wohnbezirk unbefugt verlassen, der Todesstrafe.</p> <p>Gemäss der gleichen Vorschrift unterliegen Personen, die solchen Juden wesentlich Unterschlupf gewähren, Beköstigung verabfolgen oder Nahrungsmittel verkaufen, ebenfalls der Todesstrafe.</p> <p>Die nichtjüdische Bevölkerung wird daher dringend gewarnt</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><u>1.) Juden Unterschlupf zu gewähren,</u><u>2.) Juden Beköstigung zu verabfolgen,</u><u>3.) Juden Nahrungsmittel zu verkaufen.</u> <p>Tschennostok, den 24. 9. 42.</p> <p>Der Stadthauptmann Dr. Franke</p>	<h2>OGŁOSZENIE</h2> <p>Dotyczy: przetrzymania ukrywających się żydów.</p> <p>Zachodzi potrzeba przypomnienia, że stosownie do § 3 Rozporządzenia o ograniczeniach pobytu w Gen. Gub. z dnia 15. X. 1941 roku (Dz. Rozp. dla GG. str. 595) żydzi, opuszczający dzielnicę żydowską bez zezwolenia, podlegają karze śmierci.</p> <p>Według tego rozporządzenia, osobom, które takim żydom świadomie udzielają przytułku, dostarczają im jedzenia lub sprzedają artykuły żywnościowe, grozi również kara śmierci.</p> <p>Niniejszym ostrzega się stanowczo ludność nieżydowska przed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><u>1.) udzielaniem żydom przytułku,</u><u>2.) dostarczaniem im jedzenia,</u><u>3.) sprzedawaniem im artykułów żywnościowych.</u> <p>Częstochowa, dnia 24. 9. 42.</p>
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--Bekanntmachung (Order) of the German General Government
in Częstochowa (Poland), 1942

NOTICE

Concerning: the Sheltering of Escaping Jews

There is a need for a reminder, that in accordance with paragraph 3 of the decree of October 15, 1941, on the Limitation of Residence in General Government (page 595 of the GG Register) Jews leaving the Jewish Quarter without permission will incur the death penalty.

According to this decree, those knowingly helping these Jews by providing shelter, supplying food, or selling them food are also subject to the death penalty.

This is a categorical warning to the non-Jewish population against:

- Providing shelter to Jews,
- Supplying them with Food
- Selling them Foodstuffs

Częstochowa 9/24/42

Der Stadthauptmann

Dr. Franke

Were There Gas Chambers at Other Camps besides Auschwitz-Birkenau?

The Germans installed and used gas chambers at Majdanek concentration/extermination camp in Lublin, Poland. There were also gas chambers at Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka – all killing centers. There were gas chambers at Dachau and in Mauthausen, Neuengamme, Sachsenhausen, Natzweiler, Stutthof, and Ravensbrück.



–USHMM

Did All Jewish Prisoners Get A Tattoo in Every Camp?

Not all Jews in the camps were given a tattoo, especially those designated for extermination, and not all camps made use of tattoos for prisoner identification.



—learning.blogs.nytimes.com

Were There 11 Million Victims Of The Holocaust?

JEWS

PERSONS WHO WERE MENTALLY
AND PHYSICALLY DISABLED

ROMA AND SINTI (GYPSIES)

HOMOSEXUALS

POLES

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

POLITICAL OPPONENTS

The number 11 million is a fictitious number. It is best when referencing the total number of victims of the Holocaust to say 6 million Jews and millions of others.

Why the Jews?

Nazi leaders considered the death of all Jews to be necessary for the survival and the eventual dominance of the “German-Aryan” race.

Nazi antisemitism linked traditional religious and cultural negative stereotypes of Jews with modern pseudo-scientific beliefs. Nazis used these images and beliefs to justify the discrimination, persecution, and, eventually, physical murder of Jewish people.

Front page of the most popular issue ever of the Nazi publication, Der Stürmer, with a reprint of a medieval depiction of a ritual murder committed by Jews.

--USHMM



How Do We Know that the Holocaust Really Happened?

The Holocaust is one of the most documented events in human history. The perpetrators left behind documentation, including films and photographs. We also have evidence from victims and survivors.

The Germans never denied their crime and court cases, beginning with the Nuremberg Trials, have established a judicial record of the Holocaust.

The evidence of what happened is massive and compelling.

The screenshot shows the website www.hdot.org with a navigation bar in multiple languages (English, Arabic, Farsi, Russian, Turkish). The main heading is "Holocaust Denial on Trial" with the subtitle "Holocaust Denial on Trial: Using History to Confront Distortions". The site is affiliated with Emory University. The content is organized into several columns:

- The Holocaust: Denial & History:** Describes how the Nazi Holocaust claimed the lives of 5 and 6 million Jews between 1939 and 1945, and how deniers have lied and minimized the history.
- Learning Tools: Myths & Facts:** Explains how deniers distort historical records to justify anti-Semitism, racism, and fascism, and offers resources like Myth/Fact Sheets, Timelines, and Glossaries.
- Irving v. Lipstadt: Denial on Trial:** Details the 1996 lawsuit by Deborah Lipstadt against David Irving, which was found to be libelous.
- Continuing Effort: News & Updates:** Discusses the impact of denial on culture and provides links to news and updates.

Additional sections include "Holocaust Denial in the News" with a link to a *Forward* article by Deborah Lipstadt, and "Highlights" featuring an "Online Holocaust Denial and Hate Podcast Series" and "Further Reading" on a controversy at Harvard.