

Hitler's anti-semitic ideas and medical experiments

[People](#), [Adolf Hitler](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In the 1930's, during the Great Depression, Hitler was presented with an opportunity to persuade the German public of his anti-Semitic ideas through the use of propaganda. This was an easy task for Hitler to accomplish with the morale of the country already low after their defeat in World War I, 15 years prior. Germany was reeling from the effects of the New York stock market crash and the German people were seeking a leader who inspired confidence and would return hope for a better future.

All of these factors gave Hitler's ideas the perfect opportunity to germinate and take root in the minds of the citizenry. Hitler's hatred was not limited to the Jewish community. Jews were only but one of the racially targeted groups that the Nazi Party sought to exterminate. Gypsies, the handicapped, homosexuals, Jehovah Witnesses, and the Poles were also considered to be threats to Hitler's cause. Additionally, the Nazi's persecution extended to political opponents such as the Communists, Socialists, Social Democrats, and trade union leaders.

Preceding Hitler's rise to power in 1933, German anthropologists, psychiatrists, and geneticists were already researching and studying racial hygiene and eugenics. These medical professionals embraced the Nazi regime who supported their study of eugenics. Scientists were attempting to prove that there was a genetic link within the superior race that would have justified Hitler's purging of the inferior being from the nation. German scientists needed political backing for government funding and the Nazi regime needed the scientists to legitimize their policies of anti-Semitism.

It was the perfect marriage that resulted in the perfect storm. As World War II began and the Third Reich's anti-Semitic views continued to infect the country, the German scientists worked diligently to perfect the Master Race through experimentation of those deemed degenerate by the Nazi Regime. In October of 1939, the Nazis initiated Action T4 (short for Tiergartenstraße 4), or more commonly known as the Euthanasia Program. This program was the result of a petition received by the parents of a German child born with severe disabilities requesting Hitler's permission to have the child put to death.

Hitler approved the deliberate murder of the child and authorized the creation of the Reich Committee for the Scientific Registering of Serious Hereditary and Congenital Illnesses which would oversee the approval of future applications to put children in similar circumstances to death. Soon the Euthanasia Program was extended to adults with physical and mental disabilities as well. Anyone deemed unworthy of life was murdered as part of the T4 Program as the Nazis attempted to cleanse the German people of racially unsound elements.

In addition to the T4 Program, many painful and inhumane experiments were performed on the gypsies, the handicapped, homosexuals, Jehovah Witnesses, and the Poles. Experiments were done by physicians from the German air force and from the German Experimental Institution for Aviation in hopes of prolonging the survival of Axis military personnel. These experiments consisted of the use of a low-pressure chamber to determine

the maximum altitude from which crews of damaged aircraft could parachute to safety.

Freezing experiments were also done on concentration camp prisoners in hopes of finding an effective treatment for hypothermia. One experiment at Dachau was conducted to study various methods of making sea water drinkable. Many Roma gypsies were deprived food and given nothing but sea water to drink and died from dehydration as a result of this experiment. Experiments were also done to determine ways to effectively treat injured German military and occupation personnel with pharmaceuticals.

Scientists used concentration camp prisoners as guinea pigs to test immunization compounds comprised of sera for the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases such as malaria, typhus, tuberculosis, typhoid fever, yellow fever, and infectious hepatitis. Bone grafting experiments were also done to test a new drug called sulfanilamide. Phosgene and mustard gas were tested on some prisoners as possible antidotes. Josef Mengele performed infamous experiments used in perfecting the Nazi's idea of the " Master Race. Mengele conducted medical experiments on twins at the concentration camp of Auschwitz. The twins would be thoroughly measured, shaved, and photographed. They were forced to sit in vats of hot water until they passed out and would be photographed again. The twins also received hot water enemas and would be forced to suffer through painful and humiliating urological examinations. After all of these examinations were complete, the twins would be put to death by an injection in the heart and dissected for further research.

In addition to these heinous experiments he also directed serological experiments on Roma gypsies, as did Werner Fischer at Sachsenhausen, in order to determine how different "races" withstood various contagious diseases. Further experiments were done in the study of sterilization to determine a cost effective way to easily sterilize those that the Nazi's determined were racially inferior. Between the Nazi's rise to power and their strong anti-Semitic teachings coupled with the studies already in progress by German geneticists, psychiatrists, and anthropologists the medical experiments performed during World War II were inevitable.

The experiments that took place on prisoners of the concentration camps were clearly not limited to the Jews. In order for the scientists to prove their theories on racial hygiene the experiments had to be conducted on each of the races and groups that were regarded as inferior. This resulted in the gypsies, the handicapped, homosexuals, Jehovah Witnesses, and the Poles falling victim to the same experiments that were conducted on the Jews in hopes of creating the "Master Race."