

# Dehumanization of jews during the holocaust

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In the Holocaust and in the memoir *Night* by Elie Wiesel, many Jews at the concentration camps were dehumanized physically and mentally. Elie Wiesel described in his memoir about his hard life in Auschwitz concentration camp. The purpose of these concentration camps was to exterminate all of the Jews. The Nazis did many different things to try and dehumanize the Jews and make their lives worse. To the Nazis, the Jews were inferior and didn't even matter in the world.

The Nazis treated these Jews like they weren't even humans. They were treated as if they were property and that the Nazis thought they could do anything to them. The Jews were in terrible conditions and lived awful lives in these concentration camps. The Dehumanization of these Jews made it very hard for them to live their lives. All of this bad treatment was helping Hitler to achieve his main goal. Hitler's goal was to eradicate all Jews and all the concentration camps were helping him do this.

Jews were clearly being dehumanized physically and mentally throughout the Holocaust. One of the ways that the Jews were dehumanized was physically. Not only were the Jews beat, but also they were blatantly disrespected and treated in terrible ways. Some of the ways these Jews were treated made them all feel like they weren't even human anymore. Many of these feelings forced people to give up on life and their families.

One way these Jews were dehumanized was that everyone had their hair cut off. Cutting everyone's hair off made all the Jews look the same. This shows the dehumanizing of Jews because the Nazis then viewed all the Jews as the same; therefore this represents no variety or uniqueness. All humans are

different so if they are all forced to look the same nobody can feel special. In the text, Elie states, “ Their clippers tore out our hair, shaved every hair on our bodies”(Wiesel 95). This quote shows how the barbers didn’t care about anyone and just cut all the hair off everyone who came into the chair.

The Nazis physically dehumanized the Jews by forcing them to wear the Star of David. This was dehumanizing to the Jews because it pretty much just marked all of them as the same. All of the Nazis viewed the Jews as nothing and acted like they didn’t matter so by making them all wear the Star of David it was labeling them as useless. If you were looked at and had a star it was a representation of every Jew as if they were all the same. The text states, “ Three days later, a new decree: every Jew had to wear the yellow star”(Wiesel 49).

This piece of evidence shows how every Jew was labeled the same. This shows how every Jew was grouped the same no matter what. Clearly, the Jews were dehumanized physically in the concentration camps. Besides being abused physically, the Jews were also dehumanized mentally at the concentration camps. Everything that happened at these camps affected the Jews mentally.

The Jews were put through so much hardship and difficulties, and this stuck in their minds forever and the bad memories will always stick with them. One of the largest reasons for the Jews being affected mentally is being told they were worthless and being forced to do work as if they were lesser people than the Nazis. Imagine always being screamed at and told that you were worthless and having to expect death every day. This is what the Jews had to

deal with for the whole Holocaust and also had to live with the memories after the Holocaust. All of the events that the Jews lived through were still affecting them years after the war was over.

Being at these camps ruined these Jews lives forever. In the text, Elie states, “ I was nothing but ashes now”(Wiesel 30). This evidence shows how even though Elie is still alive that he feels like nothing. He is saying that he feels as if his life is over even though it is not. This shows how all the Jews minds were affected negatively. Furthermore, the Jews were affected mentally was because they were in such horrible conditions.

Every day, the Jews had to wake up in crowded spaces with sick people and dealt with dirty conditions all day. No human should ever have to live the way that these Jews were forced to live. These conditions made many of the Jews think about how bad their lives were and so they would now never forget the way they lived. The text states, “ All of a sudden, he had terrible stomach cramps: (Wiesel 187). This shows how the Jews were in such bad conditions that people are just getting sick.

These memories of these conditions affected the Jews for the rest of their lives. Clearly, the Jews were dehumanized mentally in the concentration camps. Overall, the Jews all dealt with horrible physical and mental treatment during the Holocaust. Jews at the concentration camps were affected by all of the things they went through and this changed their lives in a negative way. The Nazis dehumanized the Jews mentally and physically, especially by being forced to cut their hair and wear the Star of David.

These acts made the Jews all the same and took away any specialties the Jews had. This took away anything that could identify one Jew from another. The Jews were being affected negatively by being told they were worthless and living in horrible conditions. The Jews had to deal with their memories and thoughts of what they went through at these camps forever. This is very hard for any human and caused many problems even after the war was over.

Many Jews had to live the rest of their lives realizing what Hitler tried to do to them. Hitler tried to eradicate an entire race and could have been successful without outside help. The dehumanization and bad treatment of Jews was only part of a large problem. It is obvious that all the Jews were dehumanized either mentally or physically during the Holocaust.