

Who is most
responsible for the
holocaust?



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Many humans have been discriminated against and have been treated poorly because of their race, religion and background. During World War II, one of the most terrible catastrophes in modern day history occurred; the Holocaust. This brutal event left about six million Jewish people dead by the end of the war and left many people in despair. Jewish people were not the only ones receiving this torture thought. Many other groups such as Gypsies, handicaps, homosexuals, and others were also being attacked. German scientist, businesspeople, industrialists and civil servants contributed to the killing efforts of these groups of human beings.

Many people and organizations are responsible for the Holocaust, but the actions of Hitler and his Nazis are most responsible for the Holocaust events.

Many people do recognize the history of the Holocaust, but fail to hold almost the entire country of Germany responsible. Most Germans were not associated with the Nazi party and it is believed they "were coerced into killing, followed orders blindly, succumbed to peer pressure, or simply were unaware of the ongoing genocide" (Weinstein). Many people believe that only Nazi affiliate's were the ones to eliminate Jews. Most people may not know that many German citizens who lived and everyday normal life did take part in exterminating Jewish people as well.

It appears "they were not primarily SS men or Nazi Party members, but perfectly ordinary Germans from all walks of life, men and women who brutalized and murdered Jews both willingly and zealously" (Goldhagen 1).

These German people committed just as many terrible acts as any Nazi ever did. However, some people may argue that a harsh and demanding government influenced the acts of the German society. In his article, "

Goldhagen, Browning and Expertise. Paul Kern states “The social-psychological conditions, the objective and keenly felt pressures of the group, the fear of being held in contempt by one’s comrades: these were what turned these men into killers, and kept them at it” (Kern).

It is believed that many were forced into these actions because of demands coming directly from the government. Large amounts of people felt pressured because they felt they must follow what everyone else is doing. As stated, many Germans “were coerced into killing, followed orders blindly, succumbed to peer pressure, or simply were unaware of the ongoing genocide” (Weinstein). Many historians believe that Hitler and many other German groups are the reason for the Holocaust. Hitler and his Nazis wanted to rid Germany of all Jewish people. As stated, “They acted as they did because of a widespread, profound, unquestioned, and virulent anti-Semitism that led them to regard the Jews as a demonic enemy whose extermination was not only necessary but also just” (Goldhagen 1).

Hitler spoke and wrote about these plans. In his book “Mein Kampf” he repeatedly states how he will rid Germany of Jewish people. Hitler finally came up with the “final solution”. People must become aware that the “final solution” consisted of Nazi officials, with the addition of many German civilians.

Hitler’s persecution of Jewish people took place in stages of events. He first produced an anti-Jewish legislation. Then he created ghettos where he kept every Jew he captured and then he finally created three killing centers where all the mass murdering took place. In its entirety, the “Final Solution”

consisted of gassings, shootings, random acts of terror, disease, and starvation that accounted for the deaths of about six million Jews, which were about two-thirds of European Jewry.

The events that took place during Hitler's "final solution" are most responsible for the Holocaust. There may be many people responsible for the Holocaust and the events that took place. Some may blame it on the German society, or even on the German government for being too strict and demanding to their soldiers and citizens. The main reason for the Holocaust is because of Hitler and the Nazis and their feelings towards the Jewish race.