

Abortion and the Holocaust

For there is no respect of persons with God.
Romans 2:11

Can abortion in our present age be fairly compared to the Nazi Holocaust perpetrated over sixty years ago? Some would answer with a resounding NO! After all, the Holocaust “violated international law.” It was an act of brutality which reflected “religious intolerance.” Furthermore, the holocaust was “perpetrated almost exclusively on Jews.” Abortion on the other hand does not discriminate against a religion, it does not target one class of people and it most definitely is not illegal. Therefore, what possible connection can these two practices have to each other? What could the Holocaust possibly have in common with abortion today?

But are all these assumptions about the Holocaust really true? Was the world at that time genuinely outraged as innocent men, women, and children were marched to their death? Or was this viewed by countless millions as science in action—just a medical practice that was necessary to bring balance to the human family? Is it actually possible that those who placed millions of people in death camps and subjected them to unspeakably dehumanizing torture are more like the abortion advocates and practitioners of today than we realize?

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Can we compare legal abortion to the Holocaust?

By Steve Kellmeyer
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Sadly, so many myths have arisen around the Holocaust, that it is difficult to see the merits, or lack thereof, in the comparison. Let’s clear away a few of the myths.

Myth #1: The Holocaust was an expression of religious intolerance.

Fact: As remarkable as this might be to believe, the Holocaust actually expressed the science of the day. The Franco-Prussian war, an exercise in social Darwinism, led directly to World War I, which led directly to World War II. During this seventy-year period, intellectuals commonly spoke of the “French race,” “German race” or “British race”: Nationality equaled genetics and genetics was about the “survival of the fittest.” Germany led the world in science and technology and Eugenics (how to maintain a pure race), was cutting-edge science. Scientific journals devoted to this field were common throughout Europe and the U.S. In Germany, circumcision was not a crime - being of “Jewish race” was. Hitler himself insisted that Jews were “definitely a race and not a religious community.” His war was a genetic crusade.

Myth #2: Hitler's anti-Semitism was unique.

Fact: This is another assumption that is simply untrue. Hitler was not alone in his anti-semitic views. Anti-semitism was very prevalent in the world at that time. Every one of the great ideologies of Hitler's time (liberal, socialist, conservative, or Nazi) was anti-Semitic. Hitler consciously modeled his destructive work on United States law. The Nuremberg laws which forbade Jews and Gentiles from marrying imitated Virginia law which forbade blacks from marrying whites. The German mass sterilization of mental and physical defectives such as Jews, and other "inferiors" modeled itself on U.S. state sterilization programs, upheld by the Supreme Court's *Buck vs. Bell* (1927). Abortion, which had been illegal in Germany since 1870, was legalized under Hitler, but only for defectives and inferior races. Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, admired the Nuremberg laws for their improvement on U.S. law. Hitler simply applied U.S. practice and put scientific theory to work.

Myth #3: The Holocaust was illegal

Fact: As amazing as this might sound, the Holocaust did not violate either German or international law. The British invented and used concentration camps during the Boer War. The Germans simply adopted the British practice. German courts carefully stripped victims of all legal rights prior to the Final Solution. By 1941, when the death camp system began operation, the Jews were non-persons, they had no rights (Does this sound familiar?). The Reich could then legally treat them as it wished. Everyone recognized this. Indeed, a major Allied argument against holding the Nuremberg trials was precisely the fact that these trials attempted to enforce non-existent law.

Myth #4: The Holocaust killed Jews almost exclusively.

Fact: Once again this is not true. While Jews were certainly foremost among the victims, and six million died in the various camps, so did five million Gentiles, including at least three million Catholics. Auschwitz killed Catholics for twenty-five consecutive months before the first Jews were shipped there. Some demographers point out that on a per capita basis, the Gypsies were killed at a greater rate than the Jews. Jehovah's Witnesses and homosexuals were also marked for destruction.

Myth #5: No important scientific experiments were really attempted.

Fact: Many of the death camp experiments were run by respected German scientists researching major health threats of the day, such as typhus and hypothermia. Much of the data was either captured and utilized by the Allies or was quietly published in German medical journals in the post-war years, sometimes by the very doctors who had assisted in the prison camp experiments. In fact, the saline abortion procedure used in the U.S. into the early 1980's was developed in the Nazi death camps for use on Jews, Slavs, and Poles. U.S. doctors simply lifted it from the Nazis.

So, how accurate is the legal abortion-Holocaust comparison? The Holocaust grew out of scientific work and legal precedent begun in England and the U.S. Eugenics expressed the science of the day, so legal abortion expresses today's economic and psychological sciences, which assume economic and psychological harm to women will be reduced if their children are killed.

The rhetoric used by advocates of legal abortion against the child in the womb ("a disease," "bacilli" "parasites") repeats the Nazi rhetoric against the Jews. Additionally, both German and U.S. courts stripped their victims of all rights prior to destroying them. In both cases, medical experimentation on living and dead victims grew as time went on and the number of deaths grew. Finally, in both cases, researchers support their work with the same rationales.

A Final Thought

Any objective study of the Nazi Holocaust and legal abortion would lead to some striking similarities between these practices. However, there are also some differences. For instance, the Nazis felt they had to hide their death camps in order to avoid general outrage. Nearly all such camps were in Poland or Byelorussia, not Germany. In contrast, Americans debate but largely accept abortion clinics in our midst.

In terms of pure body count, Hitler did not match Joseph Stalin and Stalin did not match Mao Tse Tung. But Mao has nothing on the U.S. Supreme Court. Since Roe v Wade became the law of the land over 40,000,000 American children have been slain. Today over 3,500 abortions are performed every 24 hours—this while the leaders stay silent.