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January 2024

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Recommended Citation

Andreasen, Riley, "A Vaccine Against Holocaust Denial: Knowledge" (2024). *Undergraduate Research Symposium*. 196.

Available at: <https://irl.umsl.edu/urs/196>

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A Vaccine Against Holocaust Denial: Knowledge

Riley Andreasen, Honors 3030: Nazi Germany & the Holocaust in American Memory, Advisor: Prof. Christoph Schiessl

What is Holocaust Denial?

Any attempt to negate the established facts of the Nazi genocide of European Jews. It is an act of antisemitism.

Who is denying it?

Fred Leuchter and other "historians"

Neo-Nazis

Why debate with them?

This is not a debate. The claims need to be denied and exposed as lies and falsehoods, not swept under the rug to fester. Data and evidence need to be shown to everyone so that the seeds of doubt coming from these deniers cannot take hold. This is not for the benefit of converting deniers but protecting the public from falling for their lies.

This cartoon shows a Jewish man smiling and writing the "Holocaust story" with his nose.



<https://www.tabletmag.com/tags/veteran-intelligence-professionals-for-sanity>

Main Claims

Hitler Did Not Order and Did Not Know about the Extermination of Jews

Hitler was the only one with the **authority** to give mass orders to do so in the middle of the war. *Mein Kampf* expressed his need to exterminate the Jews in writing. In the Reichstag speech of 1939, Hitler said, "I would then settle the Jewish problem (by) the **annihilation** of the Jewish race in Europe!"

Six Million Murdered is a Lie

The 1939 American Jewish Year-Book gave the world Jewish population as 16,633,675. The 1948 Year-Book listed the number of Jews worldwide as 11,373,350. The **Nuremberg trials** estimated the number of Jews who died during World War II as 5,700,000. Nuremberg Document PS 2738 is an affidavit from SS Major Dr. Wilhelm Hoettl, quoting Adolf **Eichmann** at the end of August 1944 saying that, "approximately four million Jews had been killed in the extermination camps while an additional two million met death in other ways, the majority of which were shot."

Auschwitz Was Not a Death Camp

Fred **Leuchter** supposedly went to Auschwitz, examined the camp, and concluded that it had never had gas chambers. The report was not accepted because a court found that he **lacked credentials** to admit his findings into evidence. Leuchter has a B.A. in history, not biology or forensics. He also admitted in court that he had misrepresented himself in violation of Massachusetts criminal law.

Psychology and Group Unity

Groups need enemies to unite them. A common enemy can act as a shared goal that connects members of the group. They have a genuine hatred of opponents and most members fully believe in their ideology. They profess to have absolute certainty about the truth and often think that America is controlled by a conspiratorial group. Members of extremist groups have little faith in the democratic process. They display a willingness to deny civil liberties to certain fellow citizens. Holocaust deniers also participate in irresponsible accusations and character assassination.



<https://www.memri.org/reports/iranian-cultural-foundation-mocks-holocaust>

Risks

It is **victim blaming** arguing that Jews were responsible for their deaths and accusing them of profiting from it. The very base of Holocaust denial centers on a hatred for Jews. It is amoral and it is antisemitic propaganda.

Studies regarding Holocaust denial advertisements **compel resistance**, especially in Jewish students. Two studies observed college students' judgments about a Holocaust denial advertisement and its publication in the college newspaper. Published in college newspapers in the 1990s, the message claimed that the Holocaust was exaggerated in favor of Jewish victims. The researchers found that the message was more likely to be published when the students were less **directly affected by the message** without regard to the impact on others. Jewish students were the least likely to publish the piece. Students who did not publish the piece explained that they worried the message influenced others in dangerous ways.

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