



Doctors from Hell: The Horrific Account of Nazi Experiments on Humans

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A chilling story of human depravity and ultimate justice, told for the first time by an eyewitness court reporter for the Nuremberg war crimes trial of Nazi doctors. This is the account of 23 men torturing and killing by experiment in the name of scientific research and patriotism. The book includes trial transcripts that have not been easily available to the general public and previously unpublished photographs used as evidence in the trial. The author describes the experience of being in bombed-out, dangerous, post-war Nuremberg, where she lived for two years while working on the trial. Once a Nazi sympathiser tossed bombs into the dining room of the hotel where she lived moments before she arrived for dinner. She takes us into the courtroom to hear the dramatic testimony and see the reactions of the defendants to the proceedings. The doctors tell of experiments involving depriving concentration camp inmates of oxygen; freezing them; injecting them with malaria, typhus, and jaundice; amputating healthy limbs; forcing them to drink seawater for weeks at a time; and other horrors.

Doctors from Hell: The Horrific Account of Nazi Experiments on Humans Details

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From Reader Review Doctors from Hell: The Horrific Account of Nazi Experiments on Humans for online ebook

Ruth says

This well written memoir/historical account reveals the horrifying torture and experiments that took place in some of the death camps. Compelling story of how these men were brought to justice.

Rohan says

A book that must be read by everyone.

Heather V ~The Other Heather~ says

Quick take (thanks to an ongoing hand injury that doesn't like typing):

3.5 stars, really, but I'll grant it a 4 because it's such a unique perspective on otherwise available information. Spitz intersperses her Nuremberg transcripts with personal wartime anecdotes that make it easier to imagine what being in the presence of evil was really like.

On the other hand, the detours outside of the courtroom may be taken as false advertising courtesy of the title of this book. It's not, as one might expect, a dispassionate 300 wall to wall pages of Nazi horrors; Spitz spends a chapter here and there illustrating postwar Germany and America, and it does take a while for her to bring us into the court with her young self. I was a bit impatient in the beginning, but by the end - and after a dozen chapters illuminating some of the most upsetting and repulsive things humanity has ever done - I welcomed the sidelines about how she dealt with her job on a personal level. It took me out of the terrible things too vividly conjured in my own head by the haunted words of Dachau survivors.

Overall this is a well-researched, finely remembered account of the doctors who were tried for war crimes. Once you get to the details of the experiments you may find yourself wishing you'd turned back; I felt quite ill at points, and I'm pretty well versed in my WWII history. The witness testimony will shake even the most unshakable reader, and the total lack of guilt or remorse from the defendants is still a total gut-punch 70+ years later. The Kindle version has some formatting problems that make a few of the transcribed sections difficult to follow, but that's a fairly minor quibble in the face of this insider access.

If you're looking for an entry-level book on the subject of the Nazi experiments and the Nuremberg trials, this will work for you. If you're a bit more advanced you may want to seek out a more specific, "deep dive" kind of book instead. Truth be told, though...for me, the level of detail in DOCTORS FROM HELL was more than enough. I can barely figure out how I'll ever get those chapters out of the front of my mind, let alone imagine wanting to read more about them.

You've been warned. It's almost certainly worse than your history classes let on. I'm at a loss.

If I were setting a curriculum for anyone seeking any degree in any medical profession and/or governmental profession, I would make this required reading. Actually, I think I would make ethics be a required course for all and it would include this book. We often think of terrible atrocities carried committed against mankind are only done by the most uncivilized, least advanced societies. This book proves that nothing could be further from the truth. People need to see what can happen when the state is exalted and science is misused to advance the state and God's teaching to love one's fellow man is rejected. It soon becomes all too easy for the individual to be 'dehumanized'. If he be considered an enemy to the state he can be referred to as a 'human guinea pig', or a 'rabbit', or even 'material' and the results can be horrific. I am confident that God has blessed and may he continue to bless Vivian Spitz for having the courage to right this book.

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Review Written by Bernie Weisz Historian contact: BernWe1@aol.com July 10, 2011 Pembroke Pines, Florida U.S.A. Title of Review: Demented Doctors infected with the insanity of National Socialism Lilian Spitz's book hands down takes the cake in showing the depravity of Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany and the depths that even their medical profession descended into. Ms. Spitz gives a bone chilling account of human depravity and the ultimate justice she witnessed as a court reporter for the Nuremberg war crimes trial of Nazi Doctors. With trial transcripts and previously unreleased photographs included in this book that were actually used as evidence in the trial, an account of torture and murder by experiment in the name of science and distorted National Socialistic patriotism is told. Aside from explaining what it was like to live for eighteen months in bombed-out, dangerous, post-war Nuremburg without hot water and electricity while working on the trial, the reader is taken with Ms. Spitz into the courtroom to hear the demonic testimony and see the reactions of the defendants to the proceedings. Adolf Hitler's doctors used unwilling Concentration Camp victims and Russian prisoners of war (as well as political prisoners) as unwilling subjects in these

experiments and tests.

These subjects were usually lied to and promised an easier life, better food, or release...of course, all lies. Spitz starts off reminding readers of the oath all doctors supposedly must take, i.e. the "Hippocratic Oath" which states: "I will neither give a deadly drug to anybody who asked for it, nor will I make a suggestion to this effect. Similarly I will not give a woman an abortive remedy. In purity and holiness I will guard my life and my art. I will not use the knife, not even on sufferers from stone, but will withdraw in favor of such men as are engaged in this work. Whatever house I may visit, I will come for the benefit of the sick, remaining free of all intentional injustice, of all mischief and in particular of sexual relations with both female and male persons, be they free or slaves". How much did the Nazi's abide by this? Ms. Spitz points out in her book that after Hitler became Chancellor, compulsory sterilization laws were enacted to sterilize people born with congenital mental defects, schizophrenia, manic-depressive psychosis, hereditary epilepsy and severe alcoholism. Nazi doctors, despite their "Hippocratic Oath" saw to this. Next, came euthanasia of "useless eaters", i.e. welfare recipients, the elderly and infirm, terminal cancer patients, and the like.

Once again, Nazi doctors saw to this "mercy killing". World War II broke out with Germany's invasion of Poland on Sept. 1st, 1939. Spitz writes: "In 1940, carbon monoxide was the agent of choice, and 70,000 mental patients in German hospitals were reported in meticulously kept records to have been killed, but cause of death was falsified. In 1941, with the invasion of Russia, "Einsatzgruppen" (unique units of soldiers) with the specific mission of murdering Jews, Gypsies, and mental patients, moved with the armies into conquered territories. In December, 1941, Heinrich Himmler and the doctors that carried out the "euthanasia" combed the concentration camps for those who were unable to work or were otherwise undesirable, resulting in a vast number of deaths by the poison gas "Zyklon B". In 1941, Jews were touted by Adolf Hitler as "beings of another species" thus dehumanizing them and giving the German nation permission to act on their most sordid impulses. What type of doctor would perform gruesome and illegal experiments on innocent human beings? Spitz suggests: "Some German doctors sought the glory of professional distinction among peers through contributing to the welfare of humanity only as an abstract art. To them it was not unlike the amputation of a gangrenous limb or excising a malignant growth.

The doctors obliterated all impulses of compassion and ruthlessly pursued those impulses that were necessary to promote the well being of the state, which they identified utterly. Add martial music, torchlight parades, and the skill of propagandists to manipulate emotions, commingling national pride and hatred for a fabricated internal enemy. All that, plus awareness of the egocentric nature of human beings, dispelled the need for esoteric theories to explain the behavior of a nation not yet recovered from the humiliating and impoverishing consequences of a lost war". To give a good idea of what Spitz graphically describes in some very difficult and painful reading, here were the charges read against the Nazi doctors at Nuremburg as quoted by Brigadier General Telford Taylor's courtroom reading. After reading this, the reader may want to reconsider if he or she can stomach this book! Telford asserted: "Between September 1939 and April, 1945 all of the defendants herein unlawfully committed war crimes involving medical experiments without the subject's consent, upon civilians and members of the armed forces of nations then at war with the German Reich, murders, brutalities, cruelties, tortures, atrocities, and other inhumane acts.

Such experiments included, but were not limited to the following: "High-Altitude Experiments". Carried out in a low pressure chamber in which the atmospheric conditions and pressures prevailing at high altitude (up to 68,000 feet) could be duplicated, many victims died as a result of these experiments and others suffered grave injury, torture and ill treatment. "Freezing Experiments" Victims were placed in a tank of ice water for up to 3 hours, or kept naked outdoors for hours at below freezing temperatures, during which numerous victims died. "Malaria Experiments" Over 1000 involuntary subjects were infected by mosquitoes, or by injections of extracts of the mucous glands of mosquitoes, who then contracted malaria, many of whom died,

while others suffered severe pain and permanent disability. "Mustard Gas Experiments" Wounds were deliberately inflicted on victims and then infected with poisonous gas, some of whom died and others suffered intense pain and injury. "Sulfanilamide Experiments" Wounds were deliberately inflicted on experimental subjects and were infected with streptococcus, gas gangrene, and tetanus, and then wood shavings and ground glass were forced into the wounds, resulting in deaths, serious injury and intense agony.

Next, there was "Bone, Muscle, and Nerve Regeneration and Bone Transplantation Experiments" Sections of bones, muscles, and nerves were removed from the victims, resulting in intense agony, mutilation, permanent disability, and death. "Sea Water Experiments" Subjects were deprived of all food and given only chemically processed sea water, causing great pain, suffering, serious bodily injury and madness. "Epidemic Jaundice Experiments" Subjects were deliberately infected with epidemic jaundice resulting in pain, suffering, and death. "Sterilization Experiments" Thousands of victims were sterilized by x-ray, surgery, and drugs, causing great mental and physical anguish. "Typhus Experiments" Hundreds of deliberately infected persons experimented upon died over 90%. "Experiments with Poison" Poisons were secretly administered to experimental subjects in their food, all of whom died or who were deliberately killed to permit autopsies. Poison bullets were shot into other victims, who suffered torture and death. "Incendiary Bomb Experiments" Burns were inflicted on subjects with phosphorous taken from the bombs, causing severe pain, suffering, and serious bodily injury.

One hundred and twelve Jews were selected, killed, and "defleshed" for completing a skeleton collection for the Reich University of Strasbourg in France under Nazi occupation. Tens of thousands of Polish nationals alleged to be infected with incurable tuberculosis were ruthlessly exterminated while others were isolated in death camps with inadequate medical facilities. Through the exercise of the "euthanasia" program of the German Reich, hundreds of thousands of human beings, including nationals of German-occupied countries, were murdered. This involved the systematic and secret execution of the aged, insane, incurably ill, deformed children, and other persons by gas, lethal injections and diverse other means in nursing homes, hospitals, and asylums. These people were termed "useless eaters" and a burden to the German war machine. Relatives of these victims were informed that they died from natural causes, such as heart failure. German doctors involved in the "euthanasia" program were also sent to Eastern occupied countries to assist in mass extermination of Jews".

Lillian Spitz goes into great detail of each experiment, the doctor(s) involved, their photos, their illogical demented justification of the necessity of these demonic experiments, their defense at Nuremberg, and the legal consequences (4 doctors and 3 assistants were sentenced to death and hung). In reading this book, I had a great deal of trouble remaining dispassionate emotionally and to keep my composure I made sure I read this nowhere close to bedtime. I must warn the reader there are some very ugly and obscene pictures of bizarre, non medical experiments, such as the "pool of detached legs". There is the deposition of former "Waffen SS" member Kurt Gersten who graphically described the entire killing process of Jewish men, women and children walking into the gas chamber, the looks on their faces, the screams of the dying coming out of the gas chamber, and the description of the bodies after the gassing that has me shaking even now as I type these words. Not for the faint hearted! This was the toughest reading I have ever come across in my life.

There is also a part where many years later Ms. Spitz is confronted with a "Holocaust Denier" who claimed that the aforementioned events never occurred. Ms. Spitz's response to this individual is inspiring, heart warming and very redemptive. This book ends with Ms. Spitz warning society with a prophetic quote from George Santana, which states: "Those who can not remember the past are condemned to repeat it. The past is prologue to the future". Among all the thousands of history books I have read in my life, this is one of the most important, vital stories I have ever come across, reminding mankind that whenever a doctor uses their medical services or professional skills against the patient's interests or deviates away from a position of

individual patient advocacy in therapy or research, he or she starts down a slippery slope paralleling the Nazi doctors discussed in this horrifying story. Please read this book

Ella Alonso says

I tried so hard and got so far (Page 190), but in the end I just couldn't finish this book.

If you're looking for a book about the accounts of Nazi experiments on humans, there are several other titles that will give you more than enough information without forcing you to wade through unnecessary descriptions of the black market value of cigarettes. This book would have fared so much better as an autobiography, as an overwhelming amount of time was spent describing the author outside of the courtroom. Many of the chapters equally split focus between transcripts and how the author felt about trivial subjects, such as her roommate or space heaters. The introduction provided just enough, if not more, information as the chapters as the author literally lists out everything that she will be talking about in the book.

The chapters include odd sub-headers in an obnoxiously large font that seem to be generated at random; some state dates, some list names, some describe a scene in the following paragraphs. Some of these sections go on for pages; some last a single paragraph.

Almost all of the chapters were laid out in a repetitive format: the date of the experiments, why the Nazis stated that they were performing the experiments, a poorly edited transcript (overloaded with unnecessary information such as the marital status and current residency of the victim), and the same conclusion that the end (that there was no scientific grounds for the experiments).

The book also had an annoying habit of referring to itself in the middle of narration.

Honestly, the fact that the author touched on so many of the experiments and victims earned her some brownie points. But please, save yourself some time and read another book.

hersh jones says

My God, my God, my God!

I wasn't taught in schools what truly happened in the Holocaust-merely that Adolph was a monster and that many Jews died. did a book report on the origins of the monster's roots-Shicklgruber. Now I have the time to study. I look at Castro, Kim Kong il, Osama, Saddam, Iran, Isis. history is repeating. We need Leaders like Netanyahu. what can I do for Israel?

Rick West says

One of my Christmas presents? Couldn't we pick something a little more more cheerful?

Mikołaj says

Książka jest wyjątkowo nieciekawa jak na temat, który porusza. Moim zdaniem zbrodnie i świadectwo tych czynów dokonanych przez doktorów już z samego swojego makabrycznego i niespotykanego charakteru wzbudza w czytelniku ciekawość.

Książka jednak skupia się bardziej na życiu i emocjach samej Vivien, która przypomina starą babcię i też w takim stylu opisuje książkę. Dowiadujemy się na jakich bankietach bywała i kto był jej fajnym kompanem w czasie wojny. Bardziej szczegółowy raport niż z procesów jest ten dotyczący jej podróży z USA do Niemiec w 46 roku... Styl i charakter tej książki pozostawia wiele do życzenia.

Jeżeli ktoś chce się dowiedzieć czegoś ciekawego o zbrodniach, ich charakterze, tego jaki był ich cel, to się nic nie dowie. Niektórym eksperymentom są poświęcone 4 strony z czego połowa to fragment z zeznania pokrzywdzonej osoby. Bardzo zawiodłem się tą książką i nie polecam.

Rachel says

In recent years I have done projects that talked about the kinds of human experimentation that went on during WWII, but I wanted more. I found out about this book while looking at site for more information. Sadly, I didn't have the money or a place to go check it out. Summer rolled around and I had happened to have taken a trip to the Holocaust Museum and in the gift shop I found what I was looking for. Reading it in about a day and then a few more time after that, I felt a little disappointed. I enjoyed that I got to read through the trials and see what it was like to see through the eyes of someone reporting on it, but honestly, I thought I was going to get to read in a little more on the kinds of doctors that had taken part of it. Getting a little more incite on them. Other than that, having read the book and enjoying the amount of information and detailed explanations of what happened, I would have to give it a 4. Overall, I enjoyed it.

Kurt Giesen says

Niezwykle ciekawa pozycja dotycząca niemieckich eksperymentów medycznych przeprowadzanych w niemieckich obozach koncentracyjnych. Szczegółowa historia lekarzy oraz ich medycznych dokonań. Dobrze opisane eksperymenty poparte licznymi fotografiami robią wrażenie na każdym czytającym książkę. Czytałem to z wypiekami na twarzy. Ogrom zbrodni jest przerażający, nawet dla osoby zajmującej się tematyką holocaustu od dłuższego czasu. Polecam!

Jami Korneder says

A very insightful book in regards to one of the most horrific moments in history. Vivian Spitz writes a factual based book about a major worldwide trial.

BAM The Bibliomaniac says

Documented history, hopefully never to be lost. A fresh approach to the Nuremberg trials and the atrocities of the Holocaust. Spitz, the youngest court reporter during this time of testimony, writes with a profound sense of truth and a no nonsense dedication to facts.

Pat says

6 novembre 1946. Vivien Spitz, 22 anni, arrivò a Norimberga con l'incarico di stenografa al processo ai medici nazisti. Vivian, per metà tedesca, non voleva credere che i tedeschi avessero veramente compiuto le atrocità di cui si parlava. Ascoltò e trascrisse le testimonianze di vittime e carnefici. Sentì descrivere gli esperimenti medici, udì dalla viva voce dei superstiti le sofferenze e torture di brutalità inaudita patite. Raccolse 11.538 pagine di documentazione. - Esperimenti sulle altitudini - Esperimenti sul freddo - Esperimenti sulla malaria - Esperimenti sulla rigenerazione di ossa, muscoli e nervi e trapianto di ossa - Esperimenti sul gas mostarda - Esperimenti con sulfamidici - Esperimenti sull'acqua di mare - Esperimenti sull'itterizia epidemica (epatite) - Sterilizzazione - Esperimenti sul tifo - Esperimenti sul veleno - Esperimenti con bombe incendiarie - Esperimenti su flemmone, polygal e fenolo - Collezione di scheletri ebrei - Eutanasia Gli imputati si ritennero "non colpevoli". In nessuno di loro ci fu un barlume di rimorso.

Questa è la storia della violazione di massa dei diritti umani, la violazione della dignità della vita. Ma è anche la storia dell'indifferenza di chi sapeva e ha taciuto, dei capi di stato che volsero lo sguardo altrove, dei capi della Chiesa che non si mossero contro quanto accadeva per paura di ritorzioni personali. È la storia dell'apatia della gente comune che si voltò dall'altra parte quando i loro vicini vennero portati via. Non si chiesero perché. Non si sentirono coinvolti. In fondo non era toccato a loro.

Riecheggiano le parole del pastore tedesco Martin Niemöller: "In Germania vennero prima per i comunisti. Non dissi nulla, perché non ero un comunista. Poi vennero per gli ebrei, e non parlai perché non ero ebreo. Poi vennero per i sindacalisti, e non dissi nulla perché non ero un sindacalista. Poi vennero per i cattolici, e non parlai perché ero un protestante. Poi vennero per me, e allora non c'era più nessuno che potesse parlare".

P.S. Alla fine del libro c'è una parte dedicata alle fotografie. Lo sguardo si fissa negli occhi di quei medici, esseri umani che nulla hanno di umano. La domanda che si ripete è: perché?

Zuza says

Uf. Pokud jsem k Laskavým bohyním doporu?ovala otrlost, tak na tohle jí, prosím, m?jte ještě? n?kolikanásobn? tolik, bylo to totiž šokující a odporný.

Mengeleho a jeho experimenty zná nejspíš každý, ale toho zde ne?ekejte (už jen proto, že po válce nebyl souzen a uprchl do Jižní Ameriky), ?ekejte naopak mnohem mén? známé nacisty, kte?í též provád?li experimenty na lidech.

Vivien Spitz je americká stenografka, která byla přítomna u Norimberských poválečných procesů s 23 nacistickými „lékaři“ a knížka je tak vlastně shrnutím toho kdo jaké experimenty na lidech v koncentračních táborech prováděl, včetně výřků ze svědectví obžalovaných i svědků. Konkrétně jsou zde kapitoly o pokusech simulujících pobyt ve velkých nadmořských výškách, experimenty s podchlazením i malárií, pokusy týkající se regenerace svalů, nervů a kostí, experimenty s yperitem, sulfanilamidem, dlouhodobým pitím mořské vody, infekční žloutenkou, tyfem, jedy, zápalnými bombami a podobně. Dále jsou zde i kapitoly o sterilizaci, vytvoření sbírky židovských koster i o masové eutanazii „neužitečných jedlíků“.

Na začátku jsem trochu musela přeskakovat autorčin úvod, protože mě opravdu moc nezajímalo třebaření o tom, že je na vojenské základně při čekání na odlet do Německa - považte! - jediná žena a podobně. Pokud chcete nějaké šokující a znechucujícíření, tak doporučuju.

Kirsten says

Well written book, but I felt a bit hoodwinked. The title suggested a more comprehensive picture of the atrocities committed by medical professionals within the Third Reich. However the book is really a summary of court room testimonies as recorded by one of the court reporters. The author also gives a brief glimpse in to the climate (physical and emotional) of Nuremberg during the secondary trials and her life after returning to the US.

Interestingly, one of the witnesses for the prosecution was Dr. Eugen Kogon who survived a concentration camp (I think it was Dachau). His book, written shortly after liberation of the camp, gives a much better account of experiences in the camp. You can find it here: <http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/45...>

Nikolas Larum says

Adolf Hitler was a cruel, self-centered man driven by demonic dreams of grandeur. It is no wonder, then, that the German medical establishment that his National Socialist Party co-opted pursued their "scientific" aims with a sadistic and brutal methodology that negated much, if not all, the vaulted aims of the enterprise. Vivien Spitz was a court reporter at Nuremberg. As a young woman, she spent nearly two years hearing first hand testimony from medical experiment survivors, coerced concentration camp "health" workers, and accused state medical personnel. The experience haunted her the rest of her long and productive life. Her book is a strong antidote against the poison of Holocaust denial.

Teresa says

Considering the author was the court reporter...of course the book is highly detailed. She also does a good job reporting from a non insider point of view, especially just about how things were run, how she got to be in the trial and all of that. When it came down to the trials themselves and what was said, if you're a world war II buff, this is really good. She definitely did a good thing, putting all this information out there. If you have any interest in the topic at all this is the book for you.

I personally got the book to find out about the nazi experiments while there was plenty of information on that topic it wasn't really what I was looking for. the book focused more on her getting to the trial and how it

changed her and what she saw back home. I feel like the title was false advertising in that regard. If you're looking for more information on the nazi medical experiments and don't already have a solid base knowledge then start here.

But for those, like me, looking for more obscure knowledge on the subject , go somewhere else.

Sezín Koehler says

If you're looking for a book that goes into great detail about what the Nazi Doctors actually did to their victims then this isn't the book for you. It's an account of one court reporter's experiences during the Nuremburg trials, and only gives an overview of the crimes committed that she transcribed and by proxy witnessed. Arguably the most horrific thing was the collection of final statements by Nazi Doctors and their collaborators at the end of the book. Even before being executed, these men and women insisted what they did was right and for the benefit of humanity. Absolutely chilling. And seeing that we have a Nazi resurgence going on in the world right now, it's worth it to go back and study this history since it's all repeating.
