GROUPTHINK, COLLECTIVE EVIL, AND THE HOLOCAUST

A MORAL LESSON FROM THE PAST

Sal Mangione, MD*
Thomas Jefferson University
Philadelphia - Pennsylvania

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jnmERJ4tYNc
http://library.jefferson.edu/librarynews/?p=8588

*Disclosure of relevant financial relationship in the past 12 months:
I have no financial relationships with commercial entities producing health-care related products and/or services.

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IMPLICATIONS FOR HEALTH CARE

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Contemplating Medicine During the Third Year: Scaffolding Professional Identity
Formation for Medical Students

Abstract

Problem

The socialization of physicians and the medical establishment is grounded in the medical profession's unique values, ethics, and skills, shaped by the political, cultural, and economic contexts in which it operates. This shaping process includes the training of students and the medical profession as a whole. It is a complex process that involves the interaction of multiple factors and the development of professional identity over time.

Approach

Our study explored the development of professional identity among medical students during the third year of medical school. We used qualitative methods to explore the experiences of medical students as they navigate the transition from novice to professional. We hypothesized that the third year is a critical period for the development of professional identity, as students begin to engage in more independent clinical work and develop a sense of responsibility.

Results

Our results suggest that the third year is a significant time for the development of professional identity. Students reported increased confidence and a sense of responsibility, as well as a greater understanding of their role as professionals. They also reported increased awareness of the ethical and moral implications of their actions, and a greater commitment to providing high-quality care.

Discussion

These findings support the idea that the third year is a critical period for the development of professional identity. The results suggest that medical students are able to develop a strong sense of professional identity by the end of the third year, and that this identity is shaped by their experiences during this period.

Conclusion

Our study contributes to the understanding of the development of professional identity among medical students. The findings suggest that the third year is a critical period for the development of professional identity, and that this identity is shaped by the students' experiences during this period. These findings have important implications for medical education and the training of future physicians.

References


American College of Physicians
[Boston, 2015]

INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY
A MORAL LESSON FROM THE PAST
Wednesday, January 27, 2021 - 3:00 PM
“Groupthink, Collective Evil, and the Holocaust”

Prof. Saverio MMorningi, Thomas Jefferson University
Zoom - Webinar ID: 963 9931 2396 Passcode: 967086
Link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/96399312396

Seventy-five years after the liberation of Auschwitz, the horror of the Shoah remains as haunting to exist in even as indicated by countless books, documentation, and monographs dedicated to the subject. Recent attention has gradually shifted away from “perpetrators” and focused instead on the “victims” – those few courageous souls who chose to risk their lives to help others could this.

As the emphasis of awareness for the betterment of mankind one would expect physicians to have been both healers and custodians during the Holocaust. Yet, German doctors were the most qualified professionals in Hitler’s Reich, with every second male physician becoming a “party member.” In fact, many were perpetrators who not only provided “scientific” legitimation and manpower to domestic campaigns of extermination and concentration, but who themselves participated in pseudo-scientific experiments on concentration camp prisoners. Hence, the need to revisit the topic.

Saverio Morningi, MD, is a clinician-educator with a long interest in physical diagnosis, medical history, community service and the role of the humanities in medicine. His innovative programs and engaging teaching style have been recognized by multiple teaching awards. He is the author of the book “Secrets in Physical Diagnosis”. 
January 27, 1945

Buchenwald Concentration Camp (4-12-1945)
"I want every American unit not actually in the front lines to see this place. We are told that the American soldier does not know what he’s fighting for. Now at least he will know what he’s fighting against."

(General Dwight D. Eisenhower)
The plague bacillus never dies completely. It can lie dormant for years and years in furniture and linen-chests; it can bide its time in bedrooms, cellars, trunks, and bookshelves; and perhaps the day will come when, for the bane and the enlightening of men, it will rise up its rats again, and send them forth to die in a happy city.

... and that’s because what is natural is the microbe. All the rest — health, integrity, purity (if you like) — is a product of the human will, and of a vigilance that must never falter. The good man, the man who infects hardly anyone, is the man who has the fewest lapses of attention.

“La Peste”, 1947
TOPICS

The Holocaust *not* as an aberration.

Why human beings do this.

Why physicians may choose the wrong path.

*What can we do to prevent another Holocaust.*

HOLOCAUST FATIGUE

So bleak and overwhelmingly negative.

It shatters our beliefs in God, in Humanity, in Governance, in Altruism.

It reminds us of a World without limits, with no ethical restraints, no religious restraints, no decency, and no checks-and-balances.

It reminds us that human beings are capable of doing *anything* to each other.

It reminds us that given the right circumstances it can happen again, any time and anywhere.
"...On this Earth there are sunrises, stars, skies, and friendly faces, and yet the planet is driven by a Force not invincible but perverse, which prefers disorder to order, medley to purity, knots to parallelism, rust to iron, and stupidity to reason. It seems that the world is heading for disaster, and we limit ourselves to hope that its advance is slow."

(Primo Levi – “If This Is a Man”)
“…There is nothing that can be learned from the Holocaust. Nothing. Absolutely nothing!”

(Melvin Jules Bukiet)*

*Professor of English, Sarah Lawrence College - From “Auschwitz, Inside The Nazi State” BBC, 2005

“…It will be enough for me, however, if these words of mine could be used by those who want to understand clearly the events that happened in the past, and which, being human nature what it is, will, at some time or other and in much the same ways, be repeated in the future.”

(Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War)

*Professor of English, Sarah Lawrence College - From “Auschwitz, Inside The Nazi State” BBC, 2005
“How do people get to the point when they’re murdering the grandmother next door?

How does that happen?

If we can start to understand it, then maybe we can figure out how to address the signs earlier.”

(Angelina Jolie)
Tell your children of it,

And let your children tell their children,

And their children to another generation.

- Joel 1:3

NEVER AGAIN!
NEVER AGAIN!
NEVER AGAIN!

Liberation of Auschwitz (January 27, 1945)
Capture of Berlin (May 1, 1945)

18 million German civilians uprooted across Central and Eastern Europe.
17 million German civilians uprooted across Central and Eastern Europe.

More than 2 millions eventually killed or died of disease/starvation.

2 million German women raped by the Red Army – many repetitively (like Helmut Kohl’s wife).

Russians eventually sat at Nuremberg as Judges.

Half of Europe delivered to 50 years of slavery.

World War II not a victory but a stalemate.
NEVER AGAIN!

THE CENTURY OF DEATH

[Just in the 20th century human beings killed more than 200 millions of their own]
Armenian Genocide (1915-1917): 1.5 million dead

Cambodian Killing Fields (1975-1979): 2 million dead (one fourth of the population)
Argentina’s Dirty War and Operation Condor (1976-1983)
60,000 people “neither dead nor alive, but disappeared”
(Half in Argentina, the rest in various South-American countries)

Sabra and Chatila Massacre (1982)
3,000 Palestinian men, women and children slaughtered in Lebanese refugee camps by Christian Arab Phalangists. Women raped, bodies mutilated, boys castrated, some scalped, a few with the Christian cross carved on their bodies. Declared a “genocide” by the U.N.
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Sabra and Chatila Massacre (1982)

Rwandan Genocide (1994): 0.5-1 million dead (20% of the population)
**Bosnian Genocide** (1992-1995): 200,000 people killed (12,000 being children), 2.2 million forced to flee their homes, and up to 50,000 women raped.

(Srebrenica Massacre 8,000 killed – the largest mass murder in Europe since WWII)

*…What good man would prefer a country covered with forests and ranged by a few thousand savages to our extensive Republic, studded with cities, towns and prosperous farms, and filled with all the improvements that art can devise and industry can execute?*

*(Karl Schmitt, Nazi Jurist and Theorist of the Lebensraum)*
“…What good man would prefer a country covered with forests and ranged by a few thousand savages to our extensive Republic, studded with cities, towns and prosperous farms, and filled with all the improvements that art can devise and industry can execute?”

(From Andrew Jackson’s address to Congress, 1830)

Over the next several years, Jackson’s idea of “manifest destiny” seized millions of acres of Indian lands in the southeast, eventually removing five nations of Native Americans from their homes.

As a result, there was widespread settlement and the establishment of new cotton plantations, which then required slaves to work them.

Although some Indian nations chose to fight, in the end, most of the tribes were removed against their will.

In fact, the U.S. Army forcibly removed more than 15,000 Cherokees and marched them westward to “Indian Territory” in Oklahoma, a journey the Cherokee called the “Trail of Tears.”

Andrew Jackson (1767-1845)
Wounded Knee Massacre (1890)

[More Medals of Honor awarded for action at Wounded Knee than for any other engagement in the history of the US Army.]
THE CONQUEST OF THE AMERICAN WEST = ETHNIC CLEANSING

[More Medals of Honor awarded for action at Wounded Knee than for any other engagement in the history of the US Army.]
“...the reduction of the North American Indian population from an estimated 12 million in 1500 to barely 237,000 in 1900 represents a vast genocide . . . the most sustained on record.”

(Ward Churchill, Professor of Ethnic Studies at The University of Colorado)
Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)

"Drug dealers, criminals, rapists" (D. Trump)
Message to Muslims: I’m Sorry

Many Americans have suggested that more moderate Muslims should stand up to extremists, speak out for tolerance, and apologize for acts committed by their brethren.

That’s reasonable advice, and as a moderate myself, I’m going to take it. (Throat clearing.) I hereby apologize to Muslims for the wave of bigotry and simple nastiness that has lately been directed at you. The venom on the airwaves, equating Muslims with terrorists, should embroil us no more than you. Muslims are one of the last minorities in the United States that it is still possible to demonize openly, and I apologize for the slurs.

I’m inspired by another journalist’s apology. The Portland Press Herald in Maine published an innocuous front-page article and photo a week ago about 3,000 local Muslims praying together to mark the end of Ramadan. Readers were upset, because publication coincided with the ninth anniversary of 9/11, and they blamed the paper with impunity.

So the newspaper published a no-nonsense front-page apology for being too respectful of Muslims. “We sincerely apologize,” wrote the editor and publisher, Richard Connor, and he added: “we erred by at least not offering balance to the story and its prominent position on the front page.” As a blog by James Pinto said of the paper’s paragraph it: “Sorry for Portraying Muslims as Humans.”

I called Mr. Connor, and he seems like a nice guy. Surely his front-page isn’t reserved for stories about Bad Muslims, with articles about Good Muslims going inside. Most coverage of “Muslims” is “Muslim terrorists” by a discussion of Muslim terrorists?

Ah, balance — who can be against that? But should reporting of Pope Benedict’s trip to Britain be “balanced” by a discussion of “Catholic terrorists in Ireland?” And what about journalism itself?

I interrupt this discussion of peaceful journalists in Maine to provide some balance. Journalists can also be terrorists, murderers and rapists. For example, radio journalist in Russia promoted terrorism.

I apologize to Muslims for another reason. This isn’t about them, but about us. I want to defend Muslims from intolerance, but I also want to defend America against extremist engineering a spasm of religious hatred.

Granted, the reason the Muslims isn’t hard to understand. Extremist Muslims have led to fear and vengeance toward Islam as a whole. Threats by Muslim fanatics just in the last few days formed a Seattle cartoonist, Molly Norris, to go into hiding after she drew a cartoon about Muhammad that went viral.

And then there’s 9/11. When I recently compared today’s prejudices toward Muslims to the historical bigotry toward Catholics, Mormons, Jews and Asian-Americans, many readers protested that it was a false parallel. As one, Carl, put it on my blog: “Catholics and Jews did not come here and kill thousands of people.”

That’s true, but Japanese did attack Pearl Harbor and in the end killed far more Americans than Al-Qaeda ever did. Consumed by our fears, we lumped together anyone of Japanese ancestry and rounded them up in internment camps. The threat was real, but so were the hysteria and the overreaction.
How to Integrate Europe’s Muslims

By JONATHAN LARSSON

Cheikh Anta Diop University

Floods of water, days of war were not right in the French city of Clermont Ferrand after a 30-year-old truck driver, Mustafa El Fassi, was roughed up and then died while in police custody. The uproar underscored the hostility of young minority men toward authority across communities in Europe, an anti-Semitism that has at times led to deadly violence.

The failure of Islamic integration in Europe is often attributed — especially by right-wing parties — to an excess of tolerance toward the large-scale Muslim immigration that began in the mid-90s. By recognizing Muslim religious requirements, the argument goes, countries like France, Britain and the Netherlands have unwittingly hindered assimilation and even, in some cases, fostered radicalism. But the swerve to gritty European suburbs stems not from religious differences, but from assimilation.

Europeans should not be afraid to allow Muslim students to take classes on Islam in state-financed schools and universities. The recognition and accommodation of Islamic religious practices, from clerics to language to education, does not mean capitulation to fundamentalism. On the contrary, only by strengthening the democratic rights of Muslim citizens to form associations, join political parties and engage in other aspects of civic life can Europe integrate immigrants and give full meaning to the abstract promise of religious liberty.

The rise of right-wing, anti-immigrant parties has led several European countries to impose restrictions on Islamic dress, mosque building and renunciation of dualism through immigration law. These policies are counterproductive. Paradoxically, people for whom religion is otherwise not at all that important become more attached to their faith’s clothing, symbols and traditions when they feel they are being singled out and denied basic rights.

Take, for example, the French debate over whether to recognize the Jewish Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, and the Muslim festival of Eid al-Adha as official holidays. Yes, the French state clings to the principle of laïcité, or secularism — but the state’s recognition of Easter and Christmas as official holidays feels, to some Jews and Muslims, like hypocrisy. It is Islam’s absence in the institutions young European Muslims encounter, starting with the school’s calendar, classrooms and curricula, that contributes to anger and alienation.

In the last few months, there have been some signs that the right-wing momentum has slowed. A French bill to ban headscarves from day care centers was killed in committee. The Dutch Parliament voted down a bill to outlaw Islamic animal slaughter. And Germany’s most populous state helped offset a judicial ban on school prayer by announcing equal access to religious courses for Muslim students.

European countries could use a period of benign neglect of the Islam issue — but only after they finish incorporating religion into the national fabric. For too long, they have instead created an absence of coherent integration policy under the cloak of “multiculturalism.” The state outmaneuvered the hard work of integration to forge diplomatic and Islamist institutions — for example, some students in Germany read Saudi-supplied textbooks in Saudi-run institutions.
“The French government’s deportation of Roma people is a disgrace” (EU Deliberation)
330 million people and 400 million personal weapons…
“They use their media to assassinate real news…

They use their schools to teach children that their president is another Hitler…

They use their movie stars and singers to repeat their narrative over and over again.”
“Violence is considered to be the essence of evil. It is the prototype of immorality. Yet, an examination of violent acts and practices across cultures and throughout history shows just the opposite.

When people hurt or kill someone, they usually do it because they feel they ought to: they feel that it is morally right or even obligatory to be violent.”
Capitol Rotunda

The Apotheosis of Washington (Constantino Brumidi, 1865)
The Apotheosis of Washington (Constantino Brumidi, 1865)

How to Create One from Many…
"We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together like fools" (MLK)
During the 1935-1936 invasion of Ethiopia the Italian army deployed between 300 and 500 tons of mustard gas. At last 30,000 Ethiopians were killed as a result.

Yet, the deployment was not restricted to the battlefield, as civilians were also targeted as part of an attempt to terrorize the local population (300,000 dead).

The Italians also carried out gas attacks on Red Cross camps and ambulances, and this despite having signed the 1925 Geneva Protocol.

Many Italian troops had themselves photographed around chests full of decapitated heads or next to cadavers hanging from gallows.
The Last Jew in Vinnitsa (Ukraine - 1941)

General Nguyen Ngoc Loan summarily executing Nguyen Van Lem (Saigon, February 1968) (Pulitzer Prize Winning Photo)
“…It should not be thought that war, often accompanied by genocide, is a cultural artifact of a few societies. Nor has it been an aberration of history, a result of the growing pains of our species’ maturation. Wars and genocide have been universal and eternal, respecting no particular time or culture.”

(E.O. Wilson, The Social Conquest of Earth)

General Nguyen Ngoc Loan summarily executing Nguyen Van Lem (Saigon, February 1968) (Pulitzer Prize Winning Photo)

An undercurrent of pseudoscience
DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE DEVIL? YOU KNOW, A SUPREME EVIL BEING DEDICATED TO THE TEMPTATION, CORRUPTION, AND DESTRUCTION OF MAN?

I'M NOT SURE MAN NEEDS THE HELP.
Man not a social animal.

“The life of man is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.”

“The war of every man against every man” is intrinsic to mankind.
"The individual is capable of both great compassion and great indifference. He has it within his means to nurture the former and outgrow the latter."

– Norman Cousins
M.C. Escher, Circle Limit IV Heaven and Hell (1960)
From Darkness to Light

Individual Authority

Institutional Authority
Individual Authority

Stanley Milgram (1933-1984)

Institutional Authority

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

The LUCIFER EFFECT
Understanding How Good People Turn Evil
Philip Zimbardo

"Powerful...an excellent discussion of the role of the psychology of violence in our time." — The American Prospect"
Stanley Milgram (1933-1984)

Philip Zimbardo (1933 - )

Class of 1950 -- James Monroe High School Bronx, NY
The Experimenter (E) orders the Subject (S) of the experiment, to give painful electric shocks to a Learner, who is actually an Actor (A) and confederate.

The Subject believes that for each wrong answer, the Actor is receiving actual electric shocks, though in reality these are faked.

The goal, the ideology, is to improve memory, and thus seemingly sound.

And the lab-coated authority is perceived as knowledgeable and just.
After a number of voltage increases, the Actor starts to bang on the wall separating him from the subject.

After much banging and complaints about his heart condition, all responses eventually cease.

At this point, many subjects express a wish to stop the experiment and check on the Actor.

If at any time the subject indicates his desire to halt the experiment, he is given a succession of verbal prods by the experimenter.

The goal, the ideology, is to improve memory and thus seemingly sound.

And the lab-coated authority is perceived as knowledgeable and just.

1. Please continue.

2. The experiment requires that you continue.

3. It is absolutely essential that you continue.

4. You have no other choice, you must go on.

If after all prods the subject still wishes to stop, the experiment is halted.

Otherwise, it’s only halted after the subject has been given 3 times the maximum 450-volt shock to an unresponsive learner.
Before conducting the experiment, Milgram polled both senior students and 40 colleagues as to what would be the results.

All respondents believed that only 1-2% of subjects would have progressed beyond a strong shock.

In Milgram's first set of experiments, 65% of participants administered the experiment's final massive 450-volt shock.

Similar experiments in different labs yielded similar results.

Milgram also investigated the effect of "locale" on obedience levels by experimenting in an unregistered, backstreet office in Bridgeport, CT.

Obedience was the same.

Women gave similar results.

In meta-analysis studies 61–66% of participants were willing to inflict fatal voltages regardless of time or place.

In Germany and among young individuals this increased to 85%.

But in Australia only 28% obeyed.

Still what made more of a difference was authority, and the subject's proximity to the authority figure.
Hence morality becomes obedience to authority.

Milgram concluded that:

“...ordinary people, simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in a terrible destructive process.”

Stanley Milgram (1933-1984)

The Stanford Prison Experiment (August 15-21, 1971)
A study of the psychological effects of being guard or prisoner.

Hence, *institutional* evil.

24/75 undergrads were selected to play the roles of prisoners and guards, in a mock prison placed in the basement of the Stanford psychology building.

The 24 students were mostly white and middle-class, and considered the healthiest and most psychologically stable.

Roles were assigned at random.

Philip Zimbardo (1933 - )

Zimbardo set up a number of conditions to promote disorientation, depersonalization, *dehumanization*, *deindividuation*.
Zimbardo set up a number of conditions to promote disorientation, depersonalization, dehumanization, deindividuation. He provided “guards” with batons, and clothing that simulated that of a prison officer. He also provided them with mirrored sunglasses to prevent eye contact.
Prisoners wore ill-fitting smocks and stocking caps, rendering them constantly uncomfortable.

They also underwent degradation rituals, getting stripped, naked, and kept standing with bagged heads.

Chains on their ankles reminded them of being prisoners.

Guards called prisoners not by name, but by their assigned numbers, sewn on their uniforms.

Zimbardo held an "orientation" session for guards the day before the experiment, during which he informed them that they could not physically harm the prisoners.

"...We're going to take away their individuality in various ways. In this situation we'll have all the power and they'll have none."
Things soon grew out of hand. Several guards became increasingly cruel. Eventually, one-third exhibited genuine sadistic tendencies. Most were upset when the experiment concluded early (six days instead of the fourteen originally planned.)

Zimbardo held an “orientation” session for guards the day before the experiment, during which he informed them that they could not physically harm the prisoners. "...We're going to take away their individuality in various ways. In this situation we'll have all the power and they'll have none."

Prisoners suffered — and accepted sadistic and humiliating treatment.

The high level of stress progressively led them from rebellion to inhibition.

By the experiment's end, many had severe emotional disturbances.
The experiment demonstrated the impressibility/obedience of ordinary people when given a legitimizing ideology plus social and institutional support. The high level of stress progressively led them from rebellion to inhibition. It also confirmed Milgram's study, insofar as ordinary people fulfilled orders to administer painful treatment to fellow human beings who had done nothing to them.

It suggested that participants' behavior was more the result of the situation rather than their individual personality.
When the Abu Ghraib scandal became known, Zimbardo immediately noticed the similarities to his experiment.

Eventually, he defended prison guard Ivan Frederick, an army reservist as all others on trial.

He was especially dismayed by military/government efforts to shift the blame onto “a few bad apples”.

“The problem” said Zimbardo “is not bad apples, but bad barrels.”

“In fact, sometimes the real problem is bad barrel-makers”.

Except for the sexual abuses, all other abuses at Abu Ghraib had been directly ordered by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld.

No officers went to trial.

It’s a moral obligation to resist immoral laws.
“Noncooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good.”
“...Human history began with an act of disobedience, and it's not unlikely that it will be terminated by an act of obedience.”

“In fact, at this point in history the capacity to doubt, to criticize and to disobey maybe all that stands between a future for mankind and the end of civilization.”
November 9, 1938

“The Nazis – A Warning from History” (BBC)
"I hate the bystanders.

I can’t stand their whining of innocence.

I hold each of them accountable for the job that life asked of them and keeps asking daily. I hold them responsible for what they’ve done, and more importantly for what they have not done.

In this I’m merciless.

I can’t waste my compassion, and I can’t share my tears.

I’m a man of commitment, and thus loathe those who refuse to commit.

I hate the bystanders.”

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937)

GENOCIDE AS DISEASE
SOME PERSONAL DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA

Blind obedience to authority (Group, Herd, Flock Psychology).

A humiliated or threatened nation.

Dehumanized minority (“vermin, microbes, cockroaches & snakes”): the ‘other’ reduced to object rather than subject.

Demagogic and evil leadership.

A Savior...
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Mass propaganda...
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Mass propaganda.

“...The ideal subject of totalitarian rule is not the convinced Nazi or the convinced Communist, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction (i.e., the reality of experience) and the distinction between true and false (i.e., the standards of thought) no longer exist.”

(Hannah Arendt)
How Facebook Incubated the Insurrection

Right-wing influencers embraced extremist views and Facebook rewarded them.

DOMINICK MCGEE DIDN'T ENTER the Capitol during the siege on Jan. 6. He was on the grounds when the mob of Donald Trump supporters broke past police barricades and began smashing windows. But he turned around, heading back to his hotel. Property destruction wasn't part of his plan. Plus, his phone had died, ending his Facebook Live video midstream. He needed to find a charger. After all, Facebook was a big part of why he was in Washington in the first place.

Mr. McGee is 26, a soft-spoken college student and an Army veteran from Augusta, Ga. Look at his Facebook activity today, and you'll find a stream of pro-Trump fanfare and conspiracy theories.

But for years, his feed was unremarkable — a place to post photos of family and friends, musings about love and motivational advice.

Most of his posts received just a handful of likes and comments.

That changed after the presidential election, when he began posting about what he believed was suspicious activity around the vote.

He saw a sharp rise in engagement — more than 50 comments and nearly a dozen shares.

On Nov. 6, he wrote that he'd "rather die on my feet than live on my knees," garnering 106 comments and 134 likes.
According to a 2018 Pew study, seven in 10 US adults are on Facebook, and about half of all Americans check the platform every day. Those who have liked and shared pro-Trump posts, or who have mostly pro-Trump friends, are being bombarded with fear- and aggression-driven advertising warning them to stockpile weapons and accessories. Most of the paths presented lead deeper into the rabbit hole. Few lead out.

The problem we face as a society isn’t just fake news or political advertising. It is the math that drives the whole system. The platforms claim that their advertising algorithms give us what we want. That may be the case with the first few clicks or friends, but very quickly the algorithm is in control. Like the pied piper, it leads us into a land of extremes.
GENOCIDE AS DISEASE
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A Savior (“Anointed by God”, “Chosen by God”, “The Man of Providence”)

Mass propaganda...

The silence/inaction of the good guys

“I don’t fear the shouts of Evil, I fear the silence of Goodness” (MLK)

“The path to Auschwitz was paved with indifference” (Ian Kershaw)
"I don't fear the shouts of Evil, I fear the silence of Goodness" (MLK)

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GENOCIDE AS THE ULTIMATE SHORTCUT TO A LOST EDEN

“ONENESS” NOT THROUGH LOVE AND BEAUTY BUT THROUGH HATE AND VIOLENCE

…joining the SS was to become part of an elite, an aristocracy, a religious order, a secret society, a gang, an army, a family, a cult – all at the same time.

Comradeship was everything. It gave us the mental and physical strength to do what others were too weak to do.”

(An SS veteran in E. Staub, “The Roots of Evil”)

THE “JOINER” MENTALITY
909 people took their own lives (10 more were killed)
[The single largest loss of American civilian life other than 9/11]
Group Psychology

Cohesion → Conformity → Evil

Jonathan Sacks, the former Chief Rabbi of the UK

Cohesion → Conformity → Evil
"The nail that sticks out will be hammered..."

"Wired" for Conformity
• In 1951 Solomon Asch of Swarthmore College conducted a key conformity study.
• He showed two cards to a group of eight subjects.
• One with just one line.
• The other with instead three lines of different lengths.
• Then he asked which of the three lines was as long as the line on the first card.
• Unbeknownst to one participant, all others had been asked by Asch to give the right answer for the first few cards, and then the wrong one for most of the test.
• The group also sat in such a manner that the real participant was always the last to respond.

• On a significant number of occasions the experimental subject chose to give an answer that (s)he knew was wrong, and only because everyone else had done so.
• Overall, 75% of the subjects gave an incorrect answer to at least one question.
• Only 25% never gave an incorrect response.
• Hence, the pressure to conform can lead us to say what we know is actually not true.
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• Hence, the pressure to conform can lead us to say what we know is actually not true.

“The Emperor has no clothes!”
“The problem with children is that they turn into grownups.” (Gemma Mangione)

“By the time we reach puberty, the world has shaped us to a greater extent than we realize.

Our family, friends, and society in general have told us – by word and example – how to be.

Yet, people begin to become leaders only when they decide for themselves how to be.”

(Warren Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*)
“By the time we reach puberty, the world has shaped us to a greater extent than we realize. Our family, friends, and society in general have told us – by word and example – how to be. Yet, people begin to become leaders only when they decide for themselves how to be.”

(Warren Bennis, On Becoming a Leader)
Ivy League Scholars Urge Students: 'Think for Yourself'

As the fall semester begins, 15 professors from Yale, Princeton, and Harvard have published a letter of advice for the class of 2021.

Fifteen highly accomplished scholars who teach at Yale, Princeton, and Harvard published a letter Monday with advice for young people who are headed off to college: Though it will require self-discipline and perhaps even courage, "Think for yourself."

The "vice of conformism" is a temptation for all faculty and students, they argue, due to a climate rife with group think, where it is "all-too-easy to allow your views and outlook to be shaped by dominant opinion" on a campus or in academia generally.

They warn that on many campuses, what John Stuart Mill called "the tyranny of public opinion" doesn't merely discourage students from dissenting from prevailing views:

It leads them to suppose dominant views are so obviously correct that only a bigot or a crank could question them. Since no one wants to be, or be thought of, as a bigot or a crank, the easy, lazy way to proceed is simply by falling into line with campus orthodoxies. Don't do that. Think for yourself.
GENOCIDE AS A ‘DISEASE’
### GENOCIDE AS A ‘DISEASE’ — OUTCOME?

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<tr>
<th>Perpetrators</th>
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189

### GENOCIDE AS A ‘DISEASE’ — OUTCOME?

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190
“Under conditions of terror, most people will comply but some people will not. Humanly speaking, no more is required, and no more can reasonably be asked, for this planet to remain a place fit for human habitation.”

(Hannah Arendt)
“Under conditions of terror, most people will comply but some people will not. Humanly speaking, no more is required, and no more can reasonably be asked, for this planet to remain a place fit for human habitation.”

(Hannah Arendt)

Resisters

Rescuers were mostly outsiders, who could view life in a wide array of grays rather than stifling black-and-whites, were not only compassionate but willing to act upon it, were so independent-minded to be often a religion and party of one, and moreover were usually blessed with an amiable disregard for rules and authority.

Physicians tend to be instead primarily mainstream, often intolerant of ambiguity, usually conservative, prone to authoritarianism, and less empathetic as a result of going through schooling and training.

Although these traits make us “good citizens” in normal times, in times of emergency they may prevent us from doing the right thing.

In fact, they can predispose us to do the wrong thing.
"Distinctions of race, nationality, colour, and creed are unknown within the portals of the temple of Aesculapius." (W. Osler)

Twins Research (From Mengele's personal documents)

Rudolf Mengele (1911-1979)
“Over 90% of the members of the medical profession at the highest level were involved in work carried out in German hospitals, universities, and concentration camps... involving experiments on human beings, in which the subject was either sacrificed or permanently or seriously wounded.”

(From Mengele’s personal documents)
Berlin's new memorial to the victims of Nazi eugenics (2014)
[400,000 sterilized – 300,000 killed]
In Guatemala, on the other hand, the U.S. Public Health Service went even further.

Between 1946 and 1948 it deliberately infected with syphilis (and, in some cases gonorrhea & chancroid), hundreds of men and women, in order to assess the effects of PCN to then use for American GIs deployed abroad.

Victims were Guatemalan prisoners, soldiers, mental patients, prostitutes.

Germs were injected into the victims’ eyes, CNS and genitalia.

The American physicians had the cooperation of Guatemalan health ministries and officials.

The U.S. apologized in 2010.

No compensation has been offered.
Guatemala STD tests 'may have infected 2,500'

The extent of US medical experiments in Guatemala on STDs during the 1940s is greater than previously thought, health authorities have told the BBC.

The number of infected people could be as high as 2,500, says the president of the Medical Association of Guatemala.

According to a US report released on Monday, 1,500 Guatemalans were infected without their knowledge to study the effects of penicillin.

US scientists knew they were violating ethical rules, the report found.

There is also enough evidence to conclude there was collaboration between US and Guatemalan authorities at the time of the tests, Carlos Mejia, a member of the commission established by the Guatemalan government to investigate the experiments, told BBC Mundo.

At least nine Guatemalan doctors were involved in these experiments, he said.

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US sorry over deliberate sex infections in Guatemala

The United States government has apologised for deliberately infecting hundreds of people in Guatemala with gonorrhoea and syphilis as part of medical tests more than 60 years ago.

None of those infected - mentally ill patients and prisoners - consented.

Guatemalan President, Otto Perez Molina accused the US of "crimes against humanity."

US President Barack Obama has called Mr Perez Molina to apologise and has said the acts ran contrary to American values.

"Shocking, tragic, reprehensible"

Syphilis can cause heart problems, blindness, mental illness and even death, and although the patients were treated it is not known how many recovered.

Evidence of the programme was unearthed by Prof Susan Reverby at an archive at Tufts University in the US.
“It is better for all the world if instead of waiting to execute degenerate offsprings for crime, or to let them starve for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind. The principle that sustains compulsory vaccination is broad enough to cover cutting the Fallopian tubes. . .

*Three generations of imbeciles are enough.*

* Supreme Court majority decision, Buck vs. Bell [1927]

With this decision the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of a Virginia law allowing for the compulsory sterilization of patients in state mental institutions. The argument being that, as in the case of smallpox vaccination, the public health outweighed individual rights.

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**EUGENICS**

Founded in 1883 as the "science of improving the stock" it was pioneered in the U.S., where more than thirty states passed laws for the forced sterilization of the "unfit", which eventually led to the coercive sterilization of more than 60,000 Americans.

These eugenics laws predated Germany's 1933 legislation on *Preventing Hereditarily Ill Progeny*, were praised by Hitler in his *Mein Kampf*, and in fact continued unabated even after Nuremberg declared such practices a crime against humanity.

One third of all coercive sterilizations in the U.S. were indeed carried out *after* World War II.

Hence, America provided an influential model, not only intellectual but also political, for Nazi theorists in search of international legitimacy.
**EUGENICS**

Eugenic laws were eventually repealed by various states only with "Madrigal vs. Quilligan", a 1978 class-action suit wherein working-class women of Mexican origin sued the State of California for violating their rights by coercing them into postpartum tubal ligations within minutes after cesarean delivery.

Similarly, the Sterilization Act of Alberta and British Columbia was only repealed in 1972 and 1973 respectively.

Sweden (that sterilized more people than any other European state except Nazi Germany) repealed its own “Sterilization Act of 1934” only in 1975.

In fact, only in 1999 the Swedish government began paying compensation to the victims and their families, but just a small amount (21,000 USD per case), and only to those who had "not consented" and who subsequently applied for compensation.

Yet, the supreme court never expressly overturned Buck vs Bell, which still stands.


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**IMPLICATIONS**

These issues remain timely for Medicine considering the latest explosion in genetics, which is now allowing a shift from “negative” eugenics (that is the elimination from the genetic pool of people deemed biologically inferior) to “positive” eugenics.

Hence, we can now manipulate human heredity to produce a “superior race”.
Woody Guthrie
(1912-1967)

PHYSICIANS AT RISK

Conservative views

Authoritarianism

Decline in empathy over training

Intolerance of ambiguity
PHYSICIANS AT RISK

Conservative views

Authoritarianism

Decline in empathy over training

Intolerance of ambiguity

“A distressing feature in the life of which you are about to enter...is the uncertainty which pertains not alone to our science and art, but also to the very hopes and fears which make us men.

In seeking out the absolute Truth we aim the unattainable, and must be content with finding broken portions.”

(William Osler, Aequanimitas, 1889)
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(William Osler, *Aequanimitas*, 1889)

The Truth

VS

The Truth

“The Truth is a rabbit in a bramble patch.

And all you can do is to circle around, point, and say, ‘It's somewhere in there’.

But you can't put your hand on it. You can’t touch that furry and quivering body.”

(Pete Seeger, 1919-2014)
"The Truth is a rabbit in a bramble patch.
And all you can do is to circle around,
point, and say, ‘It’s somewhere in there’.
But you can’t put your hand on it. You
can’t touch that furry and quivering body."

(Pete Seeger, 1919-2014)

"When I was young I thought that the opposite of a
Truth was necessarily a lie, and the opposite of a lie
necessarily a Truth.
Now that I’m older I’m starting to wonder whether
the opposite of a truth might be another truth, and
the opposite of a lie might be another lie."

(Ennio Flaiano, 1910-1972)

INTOLERANCE TO AMBIGUITY

Individuals who are intolerant of ambiguity tend to view the
world in black or white absolutes.
Individuals who tolerate ambiguity are instead more receptive
to new ideas, can look at concepts from different
perspectives, and often cope better with difficult situations.
Tolerance of ambiguity is a desirable trait in physicians,
and yet one frequently lacking.

"When I was young I thought that the opposite of a
Truth was necessarily a lie, and the opposite of a lie
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(Ennio Flaiano, 1910-1972)
INTOLERANCE TO AMBIGUITY
DEMOGRAPHICS AMONG PHYSICIANS

Physicians often experience anxiety when confronted with the inevitable uncertainties of daily practice.

Intolerance of ambiguity is significantly higher among internists as compared to family practitioners, younger and male students, and those with an undergraduate major in the natural and physical sciences as opposed to the humanities.

Studies conducted during the late ‘80s have also shown an overall greater intolerance to ambiguity as compared to similar studies conducted in the early 1960s.

INTOLERANCE TO AMBIGUITY
CONSEQUENCES AMONG PHYSICIANS

Intolerance of ambiguity may affect career choice, with more intolerant students preferring a residency in Anesthesia, Surgery, or Radiology as opposed to Internal Medicine and Psychiatry.

Difficulty in dealing with uncertainties may even result in negative attitudes towards patients with frustrating complaints, such as those afflicted by psychological ailments, chronic pain, or alcohol/substance abuse.

Lastly, intolerance of ambiguity often results in greater number of tests, and thus higher cost and greater likelihood of complications.

Should medical school admissions and curricula try to select and then foster more tolerant students?
Tolerance for Ambiguity: An Ethics-Based Criterion for Medical Student Selection

S. Toller, MD

Abstract

Medical education in the United States and Europe is predicated on the assumption that students will be trained to manage and make decisions in the face of ambiguous situations. However, most educators have not systematically examined the assumptions underlying this approach. The purpose of this paper is to report on a survey of third-year medical students at the University of California at San Francisco Medical Center. The survey was conducted during a class on medical ethics and included questions about students' attitudes toward ambiguity, their willingness to continue their education in a field in which ambiguity is a significant feature, and their willingness to participate in research projects involving ambiguous ethical issues. The results of the survey indicate that most students are willing to continue their education in a field in which ambiguity is a significant feature and that they are willing to participate in research projects involving ambiguous ethical issues. The survey also suggests that students' attitudes toward ambiguity are shaped by their personal experiences and beliefs, as well as by the educational environment in which they are trained.
“Intolerance of ambiguity is the mark of an authoritarian personality”
(Theodor W. Adorno, 1903-1969)

AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY - DEFINITION

An authoritarian personality was first described by Adorno as one characterized by dogmatic beliefs, an hierarchical orientation in interpersonal relationships, significantly greater distrust and authoritarianism in relationships with others, and the pursuit of material rather than social values.

In Adorno’s original study this was quantified by the “Adorno F scale”, which was found to correlate with the Antisemitic scale.

Which may explain why physicians were the most nazified profession in Germany, with one out of two being party members.
In a study by Merrill et al., 19% of more than the 2,000 students surveyed at Baylor were found to be authoritarian (which was significantly higher than scores for law students).

Authoritarianism increased during medical school, with seniors scoring 27% higher than in their freshman year.

Although women had lower scores than men, they also experienced the greatest increase in authoritarianism as a result of going through medical school (42% vs. 21%).

Higher scores on authoritarianism predicted a career in surgery, anesthesiology, radiology or pathology.

The least authoritarian students chose instead residencies in psychiatry, internal medicine, pediatrics or family medicine.
“...a classic among anatomical atlases” (JAMA)

“...one of the most important anatomic atlases since the work of Vesalius” (NEJM, 1990)
Some of Pernkopf's artists were indeed either SS or proud Nazis. Karl Endtresser used the SS runes in his signature (although they've been airbrushed back to normal in current editions of the atlas). Lepier put a swastika after his name. The 800 corpses used for dissections and illustrations belonged to political prisoners executed in Vienna, and thus Pernkopf's team.

If using the illustrations in this atlas can save lives today, should we use it?

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**The New York Times**

November 26, 1996

**Doctors Question Use Of Nazi's Medical Atlas**

By NICHOLAS WADE

A CLASSIC anatomy atlas, famed for the beauty and fine detail of its paintings, has come under attack because of issues over its shameful didactic use in the past. A letter appearing in tomorrow's issue of The Journal of the American Medical Association says that the author of the atlas was a leading Nazi who urged the University of Vienna's medical faculty of Jews and that the cadavers portrayed in the paintings "may have been victims of political murder."

The book is known as the "Pernkopf Anatomy" and it is still in use among specialists. Although there have long been rumors of its dubious origins, the evidence now emerging seems not to be widely known to anatomists, despite their general admiration for the book.

An effort to publicize the background of the atlas is being led by Dr. Howard A. Israel, an oral surgeon at Columbia University, and Dr. William E. Schaefer, director of an AIDS unit at the University of Toronto, who wrote the letter to the journal. They want the University of Vienna to inquire into the identity of the cadavers portrayed in the atlas and for the publisher to include in the next edition a historical account of the atlas so readers can then decide whether it is ethical to make use of the material.

Edward B. Butten, president of "Pernkopf Inc.," the American publisher of the atlas, agreed that the University of Vienna should undertake an inquiry into the identity of the cadavers shown in the paintings, and said his company would contribute to its cost. If the cadavers depicted should be found to be from concentration camps, the victim would be commemorated in future editions of the book, Mr. Butten said.
“You are called to assume the medical care of the people who have been entrusted upon you, not only in the positive sense of furthering the propagation of the fit, but also in the negative sense of eliminating the unfit and defective.

The methods by which racial hygiene proceeds are well known to you: control of marriage, propagation of the genetically fit whose genetic, biologic constitution promises healthy descendants; discouragement of breeding by individuals who do not belong together properly, whose races clash; finally, the exclusion of the genetically inferior from future generations by sterilization and other means.”

A fervent member of the Nazi Party since 1933, he quickly joined the storm troopers or brown shirts.

Regularly gave the Nazi salute, wore the Nazi uniform and badge.

As Dean of the Vienna medical school, Pernkopf dismissed 153/197 faculty members (including four Nobel laureates), mostly because of Jewish religion.

Most victims managed to emigrate, many died in concentration camps, and others committed suicide.

Replacements were bystanders/perpetrators, who after the war rose to leadership positions.
Doctors Who Aid Torture

Disturbing new questions have been raised about the role of doctors and other medical professionals in helping the Central Intelligence Agency subject terrorism suspects to harsh treatment, abuse and torture.

The New York Times

June 8, 2010

The New York Times

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/01/opinion/01xenakis.html?hp=&pagewanted=print

Vulnerable people have encountered 'shocking discrimination' during pandemic, says Mencap charity

People with learning disabilities have been given do not resuscitate orders during the second wave of the pandemic, in spite of widespread condemnation of the practice last year and an urgent investigation by the care watchdog.

NHS figures released last week show that in the five weeks since the third lockdown began, Covid-19 accounted for 69% of deaths of people with learning disabilities. Figures from the Office for National Statistics show that the rate for the general population was 39%, although the two statistics are drawn from different measurements.
Twins Research
(from Mengele’s personal documents)

“Reverence for Life” (1952)

Parsifal the Pelican
"Reverence for Life" (1952)

"Out of the Lab and into the Light"

"Reverence for Life" (1952)

"Out of the Lab and into the Light"
Current rates of human-induced animal extinctions are about 1,000 times greater than past natural (background) rates of extinction.
Normal individuals who once put in abnormal circumstances react neither by passivity nor by blind obedience, but through ‘heroic imagination’.

Hence, ‘The Banality of Goodness’.
Normal individuals who once put in abnormal circumstances react neither by passivity nor by blind obedience, but through “Heroic Imagination”.

Hence, “The Banality of Goodness”.

Giorgio Perlasca (1910-1992)
"...I saw women and children being killed and could not remain idle. What would you have done in my place?"

(Giorgio Perlasca, 1989)
“...I think back to what Camus wrote about the fact that ours is a world in which children suffer and get tortured, and that perhaps this will always happen. But at least we can lessen the number of suffering children.

And if we do not do this, then who will do it?

What would have you done in my place?

(In an interview with David Frost just before his death)
... All this is simply to say that all life is interrelated. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny... Strangely enough, I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. And, in turn, you can never be what you ought to be, until I am what I ought to be. This is the way the world is made. I didn’t make it that way, but this is the interrelated structure of reality.”

(MLK)
TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

Always be a party and a religion of one.

When the pyres go up always side with the witches.

And when the beast finally rears its ugly head again (which it will, since "being human nature what it is, events of the past will sooner or later repeat themselves") try to find the moral courage:

- Not to be a perpetrator
- Not to be a victim
- *Not to be a bystander*
- But instead to be a resister and rescuer
“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”

(Martin Luther King)

“That which has happened is a warning. To forget it is guilt. It must be continually remembered. It was possible for this to happen, and it remains possible for it to happen again at any minute. Only in knowledge can it be prevented.”

(Karl Jaspers, 1883-1969)
Remembrance and Beyond
International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust

American Journalist Sam Donaldson
[May 5, 1994]
Bariloche, Argentina
(April 5, 1994)
Ardeatine Caves Massacre
(335 Italian Civilians murdered on March 24, 1944)

Including three children as young as 14, a 75-year-old man, and a priest
Extradited to Italy in November 1995
"[Nazism] is my way of looking at the world. It's my 'Weltanschauung' (worldview), which has to do with honor and self-respect also today."

Responsibility lies with the Jews… due to their religious beliefs most consider themselves better than and above all other human beings. And they had amassed huge economic and political power. It's a fact that even today most of the 1,000 rich and powerful individuals in the world are Jewish.

*The gas chambers are an invention of the Allies to cover their crimes. And the films of the camps taken in 1945 were propaganda by Hitchcock.*
From this distant vantage point, the Earth might not seem of particular interest. But for us, it's different. Consider again that dot… That's here, that's home, that's us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives. The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every "superstar," every "supreme leader," every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there – on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.

The Earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that, in glory and triumph, they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot. Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner, how frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds.

Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the Universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity, in all this vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.”

(Carl Sagan)
INTERNATIONAL
HOLOCAUST
REMEMBRANCE DAY
January 27