



Over one million children under the age of sixteen died in the Holocaust - plucked from their homes and stripped of their childhoods, they lived and died during the dark years of the Holocaust and were victims of the Nazi regime ...

Nazi persecution, arrests, and deportations were directed against all members of Jewish families, as well as many Gypsy families, without concern for age. Homeless, often orphaned, many children had frequently witnessed the murder of parents, siblings, and relatives. They faced starvation, illness, brutal labor, and other indignities until they were consigned to the gas chambers.



At Auschwitz [Josef Mengele](#) did a number of twin studies

At death camps like [Auschwitz](#) children did not fare well: they were generally killed upon arrival. Children born in the camps were generally killed on the spot, especially if the child was Jewish.

So called camp doctors, especially the notorious Josef Mengele, would torture Jewish children, Gypsy children and many others. "Patients" were put into pressure chambers, tested with drugs, castrated, frozen to death, and exposed to various other traumas.

Dr. Josef Mengele was born on March 16, 1911, the eldest of three sons of Karl and Walburga Mengele. Josef was refined, intelligent and popular in his town. He studied philosophy at Munich and medicine at Frankfurt University. In 1935 his dissertation dealt with racial differences in the structure of the lower jaw.

In 1937 he joined the Nazi party, then in 1938 he went to the SS. In 1942 he was wounded at the Russian front and was pronounced unfit for duty. After that he volunteered to go to the concentration camp, he was sent to the death camp, Auschwitz. Dr. Josef Mengele, nicknamed "the Angel of Death", became the surviving symbol of Adolf Hitler's ["Final Solution"](#).



Mengele was always immaculately prepared for the long-drawn-out rituals of death, the hellish selections which the young SS doctor so regularly attended during his twenty-one months at Auschwitz.

Josef Mengele was the chief provider for the gas chambers and their crematoria. "He had a look that said 'I am the power,'" said one survivor. When it was reported that one block was infected with lice, Mengele solved the problem by gassing all the 750 women assigned to it. At the time, Mengele was only 32 years old.

The Angel of Death fed his legend by dramatizing murderous policies, such as his drawing a line on the wall of the children's block between 150 and 156 centimeters (about 5 feet or 5 feet 2 inches) from the floor. Then sending those whose heads could not reach the line to the gas chamber ... (Lifton, p. 346.)



Mengele - and a victim ..

The memory of this slightly built man, scarcely a hair out of place, his dark green tunic neatly pressed, his face well scrubbed, his Death's Head SS cap tilted rakishly to one side, remains vivid for those who survived his scrutiny when they arrived at the Auschwitz railhead. Polished boots slightly apart, his thumb resting on his pistol belt, he surveyed his prey with those dead gimlet eyes. Death to the left, life to the right. Four hundred thousand souls - babies, small children, young girls, mothers, fathers, and grandparents - are said to have been casually waved to the lefthand side with a flick of the cane clasped in a gloved hand.

In another case in which a mother did not want to be separated from her thirteen-year-old daughter, and bit and scratched the face of the SS man who tried to force her to her assigned line, Mengele drew his gun and shot both the woman and the child. As a blanket punishment, he then sent to the gas all people from that transport who had previously been selected for work, with the comment: "Away with this shit!" (Robert Jay Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*.)

There were moments when his death mask gave way to a more animated expression, when Mengele came alive. There was excitement in his eyes, a tender touch in his hands. This was the moment when Josef Mengele, the geneticist, found a pair of twins.

Mengele was almost fanatical about drawing blood from twins, mostly identical twins. He is reported to have bled some to death this way.

Once Mengele's assistant rounded up 14 pairs of Gypsy twins during the night. Mengele placed them on his polished marble dissection table and put them to sleep. He then proceeded to inject chloroform into their hearts, killing them instantaneously. Mengele then began dissecting and meticulously noting each and every piece of the twins' bodies.



[The Holocaust Children](#)

At Auschwitz Mengele did a number of twin studies, and these twins were usually murdered after the experiment was over and their bodies dissected. He supervised an operation by which two Gypsy children were sewn together to create Siamese twins; the hands of the children became badly infected where the veins had been resected.

Mengele injected chemicals into the eyes of children in an attempt to change their eye color. Unfortunately a strict veil of secrecy over the experiments enabled Mengele to do his work more effectively. The full extent of his gruesome work will never be known because the records he sent to Dr. Von Verschuer at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute were shipped out in two truckloads and destroyed by the latter.

Twins undergoing his experiments didn't know what the objectives were. It is known that he had a special pathology lab where he performed autopsies on twins who had died from experiments. It was located next to the crematorium.

Any remaining notes Mengele carried with him on his escape to South America and those were never found. Some forty years after the war, only a few of these twins could be found, many living in Israel and the United States. Strangely enough, many of them recall Mengele as a gentle, affable man who befriended them as children and gave them chocolates. Since many had immediately been separated from their families upon entering the camp, Mengele became a sort of father figure. Still a tension existed, that at any time they could be killed if they did not keep a low profile. Older twins recognized his kindness as a deception ...



[The horrors of the Holocaust](#)

Mengele performed both physical and psychological experiments, experimental surgeries performed without anesthesia, transfusions of blood from one twin to another, isolation endurance, reaction to various stimuli. He made injections with lethal germs, sex change operations, the removal of organs and limbs, incestuous impregnations.

The book *Children of the Flames* by Joe E. White chronicles the notorious medical experimental activities of Josef Mengele on approximately three thousand twins who passed through the Auschwitz death camp during WWII until its liberation at the end of the war. Only a few of the three thousand twins survived and now fifty years later they have told their story of how they were given special privileges in Auschwitz due to Mengele's interest in twins and how as a result they have suffered during the past fifty years as the children who survived the still unknown and unexplained medical experiments and injections which they were subjected to at the hands of Josef Mengele.



[Photos: Medical experiments](#)

The survivors tell how as children in Auschwitz they were visited by a smiling "Uncle Mengele" who brought them candy and clothes. Then he had them delivered to his medical laboratory either in trucks painted with the Red Cross emblem or in his own personal car to undergo his experiments.

One twin recalls the death of his brother:

"Dr. Mengele had always been more interested in Tibi. I am not sure why - perhaps because he was the older twin. Mengele made several operations on Tibi. One surgery on his spine left my brother paralyzed. He could not walk anymore. Then they took out his sexual organs. After the fourth operation, I did not see Tibi anymore. I cannot tell you how I felt. It is impossible to put into words how I felt. They had taken away my father, my mother, my two older brothers - and now, my twin ..."



Josef Mengele's twins

The twins, Bernard and Simon Zajdner, born Dec. 28, 1929, were deported with their sister, Micheline, on May 20, 1944. They were victims of Josef Mengele's inhuman "medical experiments." Eva Mozes and her identical twin, Miriam, were survivors of the deadly genetic experiments conducted by Josef Mengele. Their parents, grandparents, two older sisters, uncles, aunts and cousins were killed in the Holocaust. After the liberation of the camp, Eva and Miriam were the first two twins in the famous film taken by the Soviets - often shown in footage

about the horrors of Holocaust.

Likewise at Auschwitz Dr. Herta Oberhauser killed children with oil and evipan injections, removed their limbs and vital organs, rubbed ground glass and sawdust into wounds. She drew a twenty-year sentence as a war criminal, but was released in 1952 and became a family doctor at Stocksee in Germany. Her license to practice medicine was revoked in 1960. (Laska)

Near the end of the war, in order to cut expenses and save gas, "cost- accountant considerations" led to an order to place living children directly into the ovens or throw them into open burning pits.

According to U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum full statistics for the tragic fate of children who died during the [Holocaust](#) will never be known. Some estimates range as high as 1.5 million murdered children. This figure includes more than 1.2 million Jewish children, tens of thousands of Gypsy children and thousands of institutionalized handicapped children who were murdered under Nazi rule in Germany and occupied Europe.

Josef Mengele left Auschwitz disguised as a member of the regular German infantry. He turned up at the Gross-Rosen work camp and left well before it was liberated on February 11, 1945. He was then seen at Matthausen and shortly after he was captured as a POW and held near Munich. He was released by the allies, who had no idea that he was in their midst.



[Mengele - the Angel of Death](#)

By the fall of 1948, Mengele had made up his mind to leave Germany and build a life elsewhere. Argentina was the preferred choice of sanctuary. There was a groundswell of Nazi sympathy in Argentina. And his father, Karl Sr., who owned a firm that manufactured agricultural equipment, thought that though his company had no branches in Argentina, he had made several business connections there that Josef might develop.

Today it seems that Nazi war criminals escaped to Argentina using false identities supplied by the Red Cross, the humanitarian organisation has admitted ... The International Committee of the Red Cross has said it unwittingly provided travel papers to at least 10 top Nazis, including *Adolf Eichmann*, *Klaus Barbie*, *Erich Priebke* and *Josef Mengele* ... A statement issued by the ICRC, from its Geneva headquarters, said they were among thousands of people found in refugee camps who were given Red Cross travel documents.

One of the most feared and hated Nazi leaders of World War II, [Eichmann](#) was responsible for the deaths of millions of Jews. After the war, he escaped capture and lived in Germany for several years before moving to Argentina where he would live under an alias for another ten years. Israeli agents finally captured him in 1960.



Adolf Eichmann was taken to Israel where he was tried as a war criminal. On May 31, 1962, the State of Israel carried out the only death sentence in its history on the man whose defense was, "I was just following orders."

Klaus Barbie, a Gestapo leader in Lyon, France, was convicted of crimes against humanity in 1987.

SS captain *Erich Priebke* also obtained Red Cross travel documents. He was convicted in 1997 for his role in the 1944 massacre of 335 civilians at the Ardeatine Caves outside Rome and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Mengele gave an Italian residency document with a false name and permission to enter Argentina. He received his passport in 1949. So Mengele fled to South America, but moved from country to country afraid of being caught. There were many warrants, rewards, and bounties offered, but he was lucky.



Josef Mengele hid in South America after the war and he divorced Irene Mengele. In 1958, Mengele married his brother Karl's widow, Martha, and later she and her son moved to Argentina to join Mengele. Mengele's life had now established itself into the comfortable and secure routine of a family man in a 9-to-5 job with good prospects.

Despite international efforts to track him down, he was never apprehended and lived for 35 years hiding under various aliases. He lived in Paraguay and Brazil until his death in 1979. One afternoon, living in Brazil, he went for a swim. While in the ocean he suffered a massive stroke and began to drown. By the time he was dragged to shore, he was dead.

People didn't find out about Mengele's death until the mid 1980's when Nazi hunters, using newly discovered information, uncovered his grave marked "Wolfgang Gerhard" at Embu. It was then that his family admitted they

had shielded him all those years and they turned over his diaries and letters to investigators.

But the possibility of a hoax kept the case open for several years. It was not until 1992, after coaxing DNA from a bone, and matching it to DNA in blood samples taken from Mengele's son and wife that the official conclusion is announced: *"The remains are those of Josef Mengele"*.

The mystery of Josef Mengele, the evil symbol of the Nazi's, was solved.



www.auschwitz.dk www.oskarschindler.com www.emilieschindler.com www.shoah.dk

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