

Holocaust Introductory Notes

"holocaust"	Complete destruction by fire
Holocaust	Methodical persecution and murder of over six million Jews by Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1945
Anti-Semitism	Hatred towards the Jews
History of anti-Semitism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diaspora (re: no longer had a "home land"; seen as visitors/intruders) • Growing popularity of Christianity by fourth-century in Roman Palestine • Early Christian beliefs about Jewish people (Jews seen as "Jesus killers" and devil-worshippers) • Anti-Semitism in the New Testament (Some people believed that Jewish people sacrificed small children to "drink the blood of a lamb") • History of Jews as tax collectors in Middle Ages • Slave barter involvement • Jewish people accused of poisoning wells, causing the growth of the Black Plague • Impact of the Spanish Inquisition • Dreyfus case
Germany's economic disparity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treaty of Versailles • Economy extremely poor after World War I • Basic needs (milk, food) ended up costing some people their entire life's savings • Germans' morale down; reputation for being unbeatable ruined • Rise/threat of Communism • Germans looking for an answer to their despair • Political mismanagement
Enter Adolf Hitler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radical ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Jews as scapegoats ◦ Desire for the perfect "Aryan" race ◦ <i>Mein Kampf</i>—Social Darwinism • Germans thought his ideas extreme and unable to survive but saw him as the answer to hopelessness • Hitler's use of propaganda powerful in a time when Germans were vulnerable • Hitler promised to restore German economy and pride