

The Legacy of Nazi Germany:  
An Analysis of the World's Most Infamous Leader

Austin Harning  
Senior Division  
Individual Website

The World Wars of the twentieth century are an interesting topic of study to me. So much happened politically, socially, economically, and technologically, and how that all ties together makes for a compelling story. The political drivers of this period were my biggest point of interest. Führer Adolf Hitler is of interest to me, because of how he went from an impoverished nobody, to the infamous dictator of Nazi Germany, the methods he utilized, and the motives behind his actions. This inspired me to study the motives behind his leadership, and the legacy he left behind.

I had some background information from previous classes, but I also pulled from many unique Internet secondary sources, such as a variety of websites, a docudrama that aired on the History Channel, and even a published article of Hitler's psychology. Later, I purchased a book, which would become my most important primary and secondary source. The author William L. Shirer used quotes and journal writings of Hitler's in the book, along with his interpretation of those events. This gave me a great view of the time period and an idea of his possible motives or reasoning for his actions.

I felt that a website was most appropriate to present my research with. This is because I can easily organize my work into manageable sections, it will be easier to explain key points in Hitler's history, and I have much experience working with computers, so I know a few shortcuts or methods to make it easier to understand. I divided the website into sections detailing Hitler's history, final analysis, and conclusion. The reason for the sections is because many of Hitler's actions and ideology have a motive or reasoning behind it. Collectively, the experiences he has at certain points in his early life influence in some way or another his later actions.

Hitler and his Nazi Germany are very important examples of leadership and legacy in history. The Nazis have left a damaging legacy in the many years following its end. For example, German citizens were often harassed and humiliated by the public, Germany was split into two very different neighboring states, and some individuals in the modern era still struggle to come to grips with what Hitler has done. Though he is fading away with time, the impact of what they have done is still visible.

Although his actions were controversial, Hitler had the qualities a strong leader in some respects. He was vocal, charismatic, determined, and was very good at turning people toward his goals. He was also very single-minded. He was not interested in abusing his power or using it for personal profit. He really was committed to making Germany a better place. The shaming fact is that he used those qualities in a fundamentally evil way. He remains a standout example of what can happen to a man with too much power.