

DACHAU: A FIRST HAND PERSPECTIVE TO BUILD EMPATHY AND TOLERANCE

Part 1: INTRODUCTION: EMPATHY

Hi, I'm Scott Warrick and welcome to my backyard.

This is where I come to relax ... to get away from everything.

But what if one day someone from the government came up to me and said, "We don't like your religion. We don't like your politics or we think you are socially or mentally inferior and we're going to take everything from you. And then we're going to take you and your family and put you in a concentration camp."

Now clearly, when I say things like that, people think of Nazi Germany. But don't kid yourself. This type of thing has happened time and time and time again all throughout history all over the world.

Now, that's got to make you wonder: How do things like this keep happening? Why do we human beings do such horrible things to each other? Where does all this bigotry and intolerance come from?

Well, actually it's pretty simple: We're human! And human beings tend to "objectify" anyone who's different from them and anyone they do not understand. That is the root cause of all bigotry: Objectification ... and we human beings are neurologically wired to do just that. A human being is neurologically wired to distrust and fear anyone who's different from them and anyone they don't understand. You see, that's why this type of intolerance and bigotry wasn't just limited to just Nazi Germany.

You see, the danger is that as soon as I objectify you, I turn you from a "you" into an "it." As a result, you're no longer a human being to me anymore. You're just an "animal" or a "dog." As a result, I can do all kinds of horrible things to you and still feel pretty good about myself because you're nothing but an animal ... you're not a human being.

And we hear ourselves when we do it. We say things like:

You know, all those people are stupid.

Boy, you know, all those people are lazy.

Boy, all those people, they're cheap, you know.

What do you mean, "All those people?"

That is bigotry.

Now, “empathy,” on the other hand, is what we use to combat bigotry.

“Empathy” is the skill or ability to see things from someone else’s perspective. You see, if I can see things from someone else’s point of view and understand them, then they’re no longer just one of “all those people.” I don’t objectify them. They’re a human being.

A large part of my practice lies in testing and training people in Emotional Intelligence. And I’ll tell you, one of those areas where people routinely score low is in the skill of “empathy.” Now, the good news for us human beings is that we can develop our empathy by developing our “mirror neurons.”

Now, in 1992, a team of Italian neuroscientists accidentally stumbled onto a whole new set of neurons in the brain that they called “mirror neurons.” “Mirror neurons” give us the ability to have empathy for other people. You see, our mirror neurons fire or “reflect back” whenever we see someone else laugh, or cry or yawn because our mirror neurons actually fire in sync with the other person’s mirror neurons. We think it’s happening to us.

You see, this is why if you walk into a room full of toddlers and you accidentally step on one of them, they all cry. Now, they all cry because little toddlers haven’t yet discovered that they’re separate from the world. So, when you step on one of them all their little mirror neurons will fire. They think it’s happening to them.

In one study, a team of researchers examined the brain activity of concert pianists as they played the piano and compared their brain activity to people that were just listening to the music. What the researchers discovered was that the people who were just listening to the music ... their brain activity fired in sync with the concert pianists. That is empathy.

Now, your mirror neurons are just any other part of the body: If you don’t use them ... you lose them. So, in order to develop your skill of empathy, you’ve got to practice seeing things from someone else’s perspective. You’ve got to practice seeing things from someone else’s point of view because you’re going to have your mirror neurons fire, that’s going to develop your sense of empathy, which makes you a more Emotionally Intelligent person.

Well, that’s what this video is designed to do. We are going to take you and put you first hand into Dachau ... the Nazi’s first state run concentration camp. We’re going to take you first hand and you are going to walk through those gates at Dachau, you’re going to walk across the yard, you’re going to walk into that barracks, you’re going to crawl into the bunks and you’re going to go into the gas chamber. You are going to relive Dachau just like as if it was you all along. All of this is designed to fire those mirror neurons and to build your sense of empathy to make you a more Emotionally Intelligent person.

So, you are going to Dachau.

On January 30th 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed Reich Chancellor of Germany, marking the beginning of Nazi rule. ¹



Hitler with Hermann Goering and Joseph Goebbels



NAZI Party Rally

Since he came to power without a bloody revolution, Hitler had political opposition that he needed to eliminate. Hitler's solution? The concentration camp system. ²

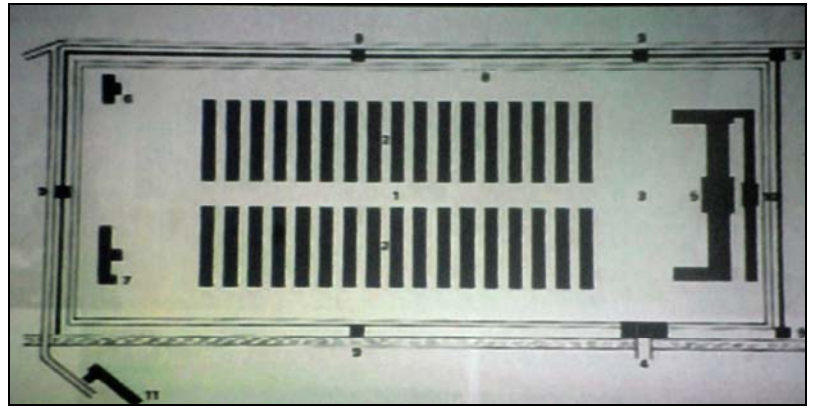


Aerial View of Dachau Concentration Camp



Map of Germany

Two months after coming into power, the Nazis opened the first state run concentration camp near the small town of Dachau. Located just 10 miles north of Munich, the Dachau concentration camp would remain open for all 12 years of Nazi rule and the entirety of World War II in Europe. ³



Dachau Camp Layout

The camp's main section was laid out with two rows of 15 barracks for a total of 30 barracks with the camp's administration building overseeing it all. ⁴



Heinrich Himmler, Reich Minister of the Interior and head of the German Gestapo, was charged with overseeing the concentration camp system. Under Himmler, Dachau served as the "model" for all the future concentration camps that followed. ⁵



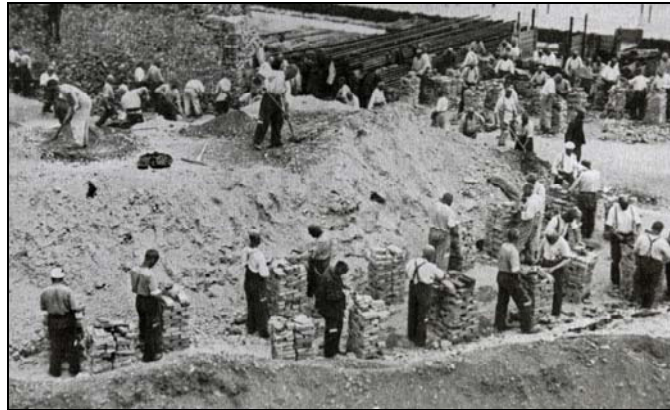
Himmler was so proud of Dachau that he allowed political dignitaries to tour the camp in order to impress them with Dachau's "efficiencies." ⁶

After the war started and the Nazi blitzkrieg overwhelmed Europe, Dachau became the model concentration camp for Himmler's "General Plan East."⁷



Jews being marched off to Dachau

Under this plan, the Nazis intended to "reduce" the population of the eastern block countries by 31 million people.⁸



Those who remained were to work on the land as "serfs." It was all part of the Nazi plan to rule Europe.⁹



By the time of its liberation on April 29, 1945, over 200,000 people would have been imprisoned here.¹⁰



The American soldiers also rounded up the local Hitler Youth and took them to see what had been done by the Nazi's in the name of "superiority."

Over 40,000 would die here and almost 240,000 people would be cremated at Dachau. ¹¹

At the end of the war, millions of people had been imprisoned in over 20,000 German concentration camps and sub-camps. When the destruction was finally tallied, over 11,000,000 people had been murdered by the Nazis. ¹²



And this is where it all started: Dachau.

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- ¹ “The Dachau Concentration Camp. 1933 to 1945,” Barbara Disel, Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Comite International de Dachau, 2005, p. 57.
- ² “That Was Dachau 1933-1944,” Dr. Stanislav Zamecnik, le cherche midi, 2004, p. 19.
- ³ “The Dachau Concentration Camp. 1933 to 1945,” Barbara Disel, Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Comite International de Dachau, 2005, pp. 17, 59.
- ⁴ “The Dachau Concentration Camp. 1933 to 1945,” Barbara Disel, Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Comite International de Dachau, 2005, p. 103; “That Was Dachau 1933-1944,” Dr. Stanislav Zamecnik, le cherche midi, 2004, p. 85.
- ⁵ “The Dachau Concentration Camp. 1933 to 1945,” Barbara Disel, Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Comite International de Dachau, 2005, p. 96; “Holocaust: Dachau and Sachsenhausen,” Artsmagic Ltd, Chronos Productions, 2006, 2:23; “That Was Dachau 1933-1944,” Dr. Stanislav Zamecnik, le cherche midi, 2004, p. 92.
- ⁶ “That Was Dachau 1933-1944,” Dr. Stanislav Zamecnik, le cherche midi, 2004, p. 92.
- ⁷ “The Dachau Concentration Camp. 1933 to 1945,” Barbara Disel, Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Comite International de Dachau, 2005, p. 57.
- ⁸ “The Dachau Concentration Camp. 1933 to 1945,” Barbara Disel, Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Comite International de Dachau, 2005, p. 21.
- ⁹ “The Dachau Concentration Camp. 1933 to 1945,” Barbara Disel, Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Comite International de Dachau, 2005, p. 57.
- ¹⁰ “The Dachau Concentration Camp. 1933 to 1945,” Barbara Disel, Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Comite International de Dachau, 2005, p. 10. “Holocaust: Dachau and Sachsenhausen,” Artsmagic Ltd, Chronos Productions, 2006, 26:30; “Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site Website,” <http://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/index-e.html>; Dachau Scrap Book Website, <http://www.scrapbookpages.com/DachauScrapBook/deathstatistics.html>.
- ¹¹ “The Dachau Concentration Camp. 1933 to 1945,” Barbara Disel, Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Comite International de Dachau, 2005, pp. 10, 206; “That Was Dachau 1933-1944,” Dr. Stanislav Zamecnik, le cherche midi, 2004, p. 379; “Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site Website,” <http://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/index-e.html>; Dachau Scrap Book Website, <http://www.scrapbookpages.com/DachauScrapBook/deathstatistics.html>.
- ¹² The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Website, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005144>; <http://www.ushmm.org/research/library/faq/details.php?lang=en&topic=03#02>; <http://www.ushmm.org/research/library/faq/details.php?lang=en&topic=03#03>.