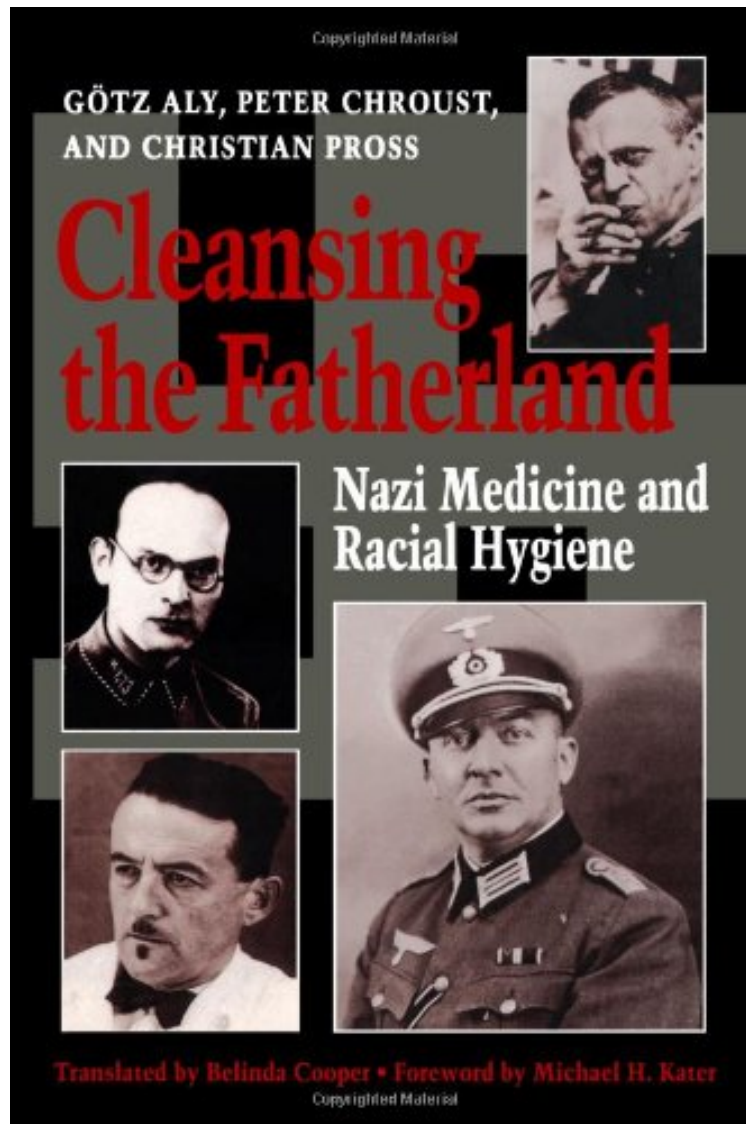


## Cleansing the Fatherland: Nazi Medicine and Racial Hygiene

*Gotz Aly, Peter Chroust, Christian Pross MD*  
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**Gotz Aly, Peter Chroust, Christian Pross MD : Cleansing the Fatherland: Nazi Medicine and Racial Hygiene**  
before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cleansing the Fatherland: Nazi Medicine and Racial Hygiene:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Disturbing and depressing. By steve uk  
Insightful and disturbing history of the Nazi obsession with removing any form of life that didn't fit into their masterplan. It is truly horrendous how many of the medical profession willingly and viciously involved themselves in some of the most barbarous acts of violence and murder with little or no conscience. The fact most of them did what they did for purely material gain,

position in the party and personal hateful beliefs. The old adage "Everyone has a use, price and weakness" never rang so true. This book should be read alongside *The Origins of Nazi Genocide*. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent book. By Lawre Very informative book; I read it for a university paper and ended up loving it and wanting a personal copy for myself. 4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. "Nazi Economics of Therapeutic Extermination" By Russell A. Rohde MD "Cleansing the Fatherland: Nazi Medicine Racial Hygiene," Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore 1994, ISBN 0-8018-4824-5 (PB) 296 pgs., 6" x 9" No index, a few notes B/W photos. In the foreword, Michael Kater warns despite passage of those Nuremberg, Helsinki Tokyo covenants after WW-11 to safeguard medical ethical standards (prevent hideous medical abuses as done by Nazis Japanese during the war) that many countries of the world persist in violation of these codes of conduct he mentions a few countries including India, Canada, Lebanon Germany in Bavaria. Kater informs us the authors including Ernst Klee are of a "new generation of German Scholars" whose aims are to further rectify uncover Nazi medical irregularities - that some of the Aly Pross writings have been declared controversial "exaggerated or twisted out of all proportion." He details various ways the Jewish physicians were eliminated starting in 1934 replacing them with "Aryan" doctors, noting some 4,500 to 6,000 Jewish doctors were expelled from Germany several hundred committed suicide. Pross states crimes (persecution Holocaust) were not only by "the tiny number of 350 black sheep among the German medical profession...involved in medical crimes, but... many more...directly or indirectly, ...the cream of German medicine, ...professors, ...scientists and researchers." The only plausible explanation to me is that some residuum of the "old generation of German scholars" remain in the medical citadels refuse to leave their chairs for the likes of Aly Pross. The book contains 5 chapters: Introd. by Pross has information on recent attempts to introduce various types of euthanasia a provocative discussion of Robert Lifton's neologistic "doubling" to account for Nazi physicians' mass murdering ("The Nazi Doctors"). Goetz Aly has 3 interesting chapters on medicine against the "useless" discussion of Operation T-4, the Posen diaries of Dr. H. Voss, "Pure Tainted Progress" which examines economic forces driving "therapeutic extermination" including taking all of patients' possessions including dental gold, charging for meals during starvation billing the mandated Insurance coverage after inmates were "treated" (code word for "exterminated"). The final chapter "Selected Letters of Doctor Friedrich Mennecke" by Dr. Chroust appear to have been added on as an after thought, offering one interesting Mennecke tidbit: "You can tell by looking at the Russian people that they are born and raised right in the dirt, so they don't know any better. These people are..." Overall, the book is well-written, provides many details on ruminations of the Nazi mindset to evoke rules regulations to promote active killing as "medical euthanasia" with the least amount of discussion protest by the Volk. Aly is a freelance historian political scientist with a personal agenda, but knowing that, it still makes a good read.

"The chapters in this volume painfully drive home the point that certainly as far as Germany is concerned, the lessons of the Third Reich have not yet been learned... These significant attempts by younger recruits to the larger medical establishment to change things through eye-opening reflection and analysis, however uncomfortable, need support." Michael H. Kater, author of *Doctors under Hitler*, in the foreword. The infamous Nuremberg Doctors' Trials of 1946-47 revealed horrifying crimes ranging from grotesque medical experiments on humans to mass murder committed by physicians and other health care workers in Nazi Germany. But far more common, argue the authors of *Cleansing the Fatherland*, were the doctors who profited professionally and financially from the killings but were never called to task and, indeed, were actively shielded by colleagues in postwar German medical organizations. The authors examine the role of German physicians in such infamous operations as the "T 4" euthanasia program (code-named for the Berlin address of its headquarters at Number 4 Tiergartenstrasse). They also reveal details of countless lesser known killings all ordered by doctors and all in the name of public health. Maladjusted adolescents, the handicapped, foreign laborers too ill to work, even German civilians who suffered mental breakdowns after air raids were "selected for treatment." (One physician who persisted in speaking of "killings" was officially reprimanded for his "negative attitude.") The book also includes original documents never before published in English that give unique and chilling insight into the everyday workings of Nazi medicine. Among them: Minutes from a 1940 meeting of the Conference of German Mayors, at which a Nazi official gives the assembled politicians detailed instructions for the secret burial of murdered mental patients. A pre-Nazi era questionnaire sent by the head of a state mental institution to parents of disabled children. (Sample question: "Would you agree to a painless shortening of your child's life after an expert had determined him incurably imbecilic?" Sample answer: "Yes, but I would prefer not to know.") The diary of Dr. Hermann Voss, chief anatomist at the Reichs University of Posen (and later a highly respected physician in postwar Germany), who delights in the flowers blooming outside his window and worries that the overstock of Polish cadavers from his Gestapo suppliers might cause his crematory oven to break down. Letters of Dr. Friedrich Mennecke, director of the notorious Eichberg Clinic, who writes with cloying sentimentality to the wife he calls "mommy" and comments offhandedly about visiting concentration camps to select "patients" for death. Today, as reports of mass death in Europe are once again cast in terms of public hygiene, and as euthanasia is advocated even applauded on U.S. television, the relevance of what Michael H. Kater here calls "the lessons of the Third Reich" is perhaps greater than ever. Against this background, *Cleansing the Fatherland* sends a stark message that is difficult to

ignore.

From Publishers Weekly It's no wonder this book caused a flurry when first published in Germany. The authors, who are German, offer compelling evidence that the 350 doctors tried at Nuremberg in 1946-47 were not the so-called black sheep of the German medical profession, but rather a small part of a much larger group of doctors, university professors, scientists and researchers involved in medical crimes. The authors draw their chilling conclusions directly from the archives of mental institutions, hospitals and experimentation centers. An abundance of evidence, sometimes absorbing, sometimes overwhelming, demonstrates how the Nazis employed medicine to "cleanse" Germany of the "sick, alien, and disturbing"-a goal firmly supported by the intelligentsia. By 1939, euthanasia was the method ordained by the Nazis to eliminate the infirm, mentally ill, socially or racially "inferior" and anyone unable to work. Hundreds of thousands, including children, were killed while medical professionals profitted. Dr. Hermann Voss, chief anatomist at the Reich University of Posen, turned a handsome profit on the sale of the skeletons and skulls of dead Poles. His diary is an illustration of Hannah Arendt's banality of evil, "Yesterday, two wagons full of Polish ashes were taken away. Outside my office, the robinias are blooming beautifully, just as in Leipzig." Much of this information, which was available at the end of WWII, was suppressed because many of those involved in these heinous crimes still hold leading positions. Readers may be driven to examine their own beliefs concerning the benefits of doctor-assisted suicide, when confronted with a society that takes this seemingly benign idea and turns it into a great evil. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Thanks to the work of Aly and his associates, those areas of medical criminality that escaped the retribution the Allies visited on the more obviously ghoulish experimenters... have at long last come out of the shadows." (Michael Burleigh Times Higher Education Supplement) "The gruesome medical experiments that *Cleansing the Fatherland* describes... were exposed during the Nuremberg doctors trials of 1946-47. But the book also contains annotated selections from the diaries of German anatomist Hermann Voss [which] offer a long look into the mind of a German medical scientist who by 1964 was widely regarded as 'the most influential and respected anatomist in East Germany' even though he had spent the war years dissecting unmistakably murdered bodies." (Lingua Franca) Language Notes Text: English (translation) Original Language: German