



## Psychiatry and the dark side: Eugenics, Nazi and Soviet psychiatry (Cambridge University Press)

### Description

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"Summary psychiatrist thomas szasz fought coercion (compulsory detention) and denied that mental illness existed. although he was regarded as a maverick, his ideas are much more plausible when one discovers that between 1939 and 1941, up to 100 000 mentally ill people, including 5000 children, were killed in nazi germany. in the course of the nazi regime, over 400 000 forced sterilisations took place, mainly of people with mental illnesses. other countries, including denmark, norway, sweden and switzerland, had active forced sterilisation programmes and eugenics laws. similar laws were implemented in the usa, with up to 25 000 forced sterilisations. these atrocities were enabled and facilitated by psychiatrists of the time and are only one example of the dark side of the profession. this article reviews some of these aspects of the history of psychiatry, including germany's eugenics programme and the former ussr's detention of dissidents under the guise of psychiatric treatment."

[psychiatry-and-the-dark-side-eugenics-nazi-and-soviet-psychiatry](#)



See also

Zeidman, L. A.. (2011). Neuroscience in Nazi Europe Part II: Resistance against the Third Reich. *Canadian Journal of Neurological Sciences / Journal Canadien Des Sciences Neurologiques*, 38(6), 826–838.

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"Previously, i mentioned that not all neuroscientists collaborated with the nazis, who from 1933 to 1945



tried to eliminate neurologic and psychiatric disease from the gene pool. oskar and cécile vogt openly resisted and courageously protested against the nazi regime and its policies, and have been discussed previously in the neurology literature. here i discuss alexander mitscherlich, haakon saethre, walther spielmeyer, jules tinel, and johannes pompe. other neuroscientists had ambivalent roles, including hans creutzfeldt, who has been discussed previously. here, i discuss max nonne, karl bonhoeffer, and oswald bumke. the neuroscientists who resisted had different backgrounds and motivations that likely influenced their behavior, but this group undoubtedly saved lives of colleagues, friends, and patients, or at least prevented forced sterilizations. by recognizing and understanding the actions of these heroes of neuroscience, we pay homage and realize how ethics and morals do not need to be compromised even in dark times."

### Category

1. General

### Tags

1. Eugenics
2. nazi germany
3. Soviet psychiatry

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