

Name: _____

Date: _____

Psychoanalysis of Hitler

All of the below are excerpts from Victor, George. Hitler: The Pathology of Evil. Washington, D.C., 2007. They are not intended to invoke sympathy for Adolf Hitler, but merely to try to understand why he did the things he did. In a groups, decide whether you agree or disagree with the psychoanalysis.

1.) Adolf's father, Alois, was intolerant of disobedience, and he was angered at his eldest son's (Alois, Jr.) disobedience and refusal to show interest in a civil service career that his father wanted for him. Alois, Jr. ran away and Adolf's father took his resentment out on Adolf by beating him. It is from this experience that Hitler learned scapegoating. He was beaten for what he was, not necessarily for what he did. Do you agree or disagree with this psychoanalysis? Why?

2.) Adolf's beatings were severe and one almost led to death. He resolved that no matter how severe the beatings, he no longer cried. By this feat, he considered himself the winner in their confrontations. And not crying may have helped with his father; Alois stopped beating him. A child who hates a parent nonetheless imitates and takes in aspects of the parent. Later in life, Adolf would become a man of ruthless violence, which would later be applied to the Jews. Do you agree or disagree with this psychoanalysis? Why?

- 3.) Adolf's sense of good and bad was confused at a young age. No matter what rule he broke, he hardly had to deal with consequences - not from his mother because she didn't punish him since he was her favorite, and not from his father because he was beaten even if he had not broken any rule. Do you agree or disagree with this psychoanalysis? Why?
- 4.) Hitler had many close calls - his regiment in WWI had been reduced from 3,600 to 611, he was injured twice in WWI yet survived, and he survived a failed attempt to overthrow the government. Adolf's near-death survivals convinced him of his fate to have a greater role. Do you agree or disagree with this psychoanalysis? Why?
- 5.) Hitler had a mincing step and limp-wristed gestures, a tender way of touching his chest and cupping his hands around his face, and his easily aroused weeping. He also made homosexuals in charge of the Hitler Youth and some of his closest associates were well-known homosexuals, like Ernst Rohm and Heinrich Hoffmann. There is enough to suggest a kinship with homosexuals and that in destroying them, he was effacing part of himself. Reversing himself when in power, he denounced homosexuals among his Storm Troopers and had many killed. Later he had many more homosexuals put in concentration camps and killed. Do you agree or disagree with this psychoanalysis? Why?

6.) Hitler let hundreds of thousands of British and French troops evacuate from Dunkirk after having been trapped by the Germans, he stopped the Battle of Britain to start fighting the Soviet Union, and declared war on the United States when he didn't have to. These obvious military mistakes were caused because Hitler believed he was winning the war too quickly. His ultimate goal was to prolong the war so he could accomplish his real objective – the extermination of the Jews. Do you agree or disagree with this psychoanalysis? Why?

7.) Hitler was trying to get rid of the Jews because it was a way to purge himself of all the qualities he didn't like. Parallels can be drawn between Hitler and Jews in regards to tainted blood, not working, evading military service, egoism, corrupting Germany morally in family values, corrupt business practices, and used people. Do you agree or disagree with this psychoanalysis? Why?