Though there have been many statements given by top Nazi officials to suggest the intention of Jewish annihilation during the Holocaust, such as the ones mentioned above, much of the revisionist controversy stems from the absence of written orders requiring the mass murder of all of European Jewry. However, it is a widely accepted fact that Hitler preferred verbal orders to ensure secrecy of the regime's plans. For example, Shermer and Grobman note that one reason for Hitler's secrecy is due to the uproar that surrounded the euthanasia program created for handicapped people, when, due to the surfacing of a written order for the program's purpose, Hitler was portrayed negatively by the press. Because of this particular situation, it is assumed that Hitler discontinued the use of written orders, and thus relied heavily on verbal communication instead (Shermer & Grobman, 2000, 126).

However, Hitler's verbal orders were also few and far between, preferring to give instructions for mass murder only in the presence of a few people at a time, while also using ambiguous terminology as to leave room for individual interpretation, and to deter from incriminating his own regime (Longerich, 2001, 15). One specific example of this ambiguity is the fact that the Nazis commonly used euphemistic phrases such as the Final Solution and the Jewish Question when, in reality, they were actually speaking of the policy for mass murder of Europe's Jewish population. However, because of the constant use of ambiguous terminology, Hitler insured that an outsider would not easily be able to interpret that the Final Solution referred to complete annihilation of the Jewish race. In spite of this, though, most scholars agree that the systematic annihilation of Europe's Jewish population was Hitler's main intention and that mass murder progressed over time (Seltzer, 1998, 512).

The claim presented most often by revisionists when refuting the Holocaust is that the gas chambers were not created and used with the intent of murder, but rather solely for the purpose of delousing clothing and blankets of prisoners concentrated within the camps (Cole, 1993, 11-12). Making the same argument as presented earlier that the Nazis intended only to deport the Jews and not kill them, revisionists say that while the Jews, along with other minority groups, were housed in the overcrowded, unsanitary concentration camps, lice and disease became heavily prevalent, and thus delousing chambers were created in order to sanitize the inmates and their living conditions (Shermer & Grobman, 2000, 118). Though standard history does not deny the existence of delousing chambers, historians believe that gas chambers existed alongside delousing chambers. The delousing chambers, which were created first, are often too small to even realistically fit people into. In addition, the gas chambers featured gas-tight doors that locked from the outside, as well as small windows with thick glass, just big enough to be used as peepholes. These new features were not found in the original delousing chambers, and can most sensibly be explained if their purpose was murder. Otherwise, these additions would not be as crucial, especially when

considering that not all chambers had them, only the alleged homicidal ones (Shermer & Grobman, 2000, 137 & 163).

Another discrepancy between delousing and homicidal gas chambers is the lack of Zyklon B gas staining found on homicidal gas chamber walls compared to the significant findings on delousing chamber walls (Cole, 1993, 12). Based on these findings, revisionists argue that homicidal gassings could not have realistically taken place, because the staining would have been much more prevalent. However, this theory is proven incorrect. To kill lice with Zyklon B gas it takes between twelve and eighteen hours, much longer than it does to kill humans who die within a matter of minutes. Based on this evidence, the walls in the delousing chambers should have had much higher levels of staining because they were exposed to the gas for a far longer period of time than the walls in the homicidal gas chambers. In addition, prisoners were not gassed all day, every day, but rather periodically in larger numbers, further proving that the stains would not be as high as one might imagine them to be (Shermer & Grobman, 2000, 131).

In *The Leuchter Report*, written by Revisionist and self-proclaimed engineer Fred Leuchter, Leuchter analyzed cement samples taken illegally from gas chamber walls and found little staining present, thus concluding that they could have never been used as homicidal gas chambers. However, the samples he took had been exposed to open air, as well as other forms of nature since the war ended in 1945, and were therefore found to be unreliable. In addition, Leuchter is not, nor never was, an engineer, erasing any credibility he could have possibly had if the samples he analyzed were valid (Shermer & Grobman, 2000, 129-130).

However, Zyklon B gas, though perhaps the most widely discussed, was not the only gas used in homicidal gas chambers to asphyxiate prisoners. Carbon monoxide (CO) was also used. In fact, Treblinka, Belzec, Sobibor, and Chelmno used only CO in their gas chambers, resulting in a total of approximately 1,902,000 deaths. Majdanek also used CO to suffocate prisoners in gas chambers, but Zyklon B was also used. Therefore, out of the six accepted death camps, only in Auschwitz-Birkenau was Zyklon B the only gas used (Shermer & Grobman, 2000, 128). The use of CO in gas chambers is important to note because it is ineffective for sanitization purposes and does not kill lice. In fact, it is only effective against warm-blooded animals (Shermer & Grobman, 2000, 165). As a result, the only purpose for using CO in these camps was to kill people, not lice, disproving the revisionist theory that the only reason gas chambers were built was for delousing.

In addition, there are many survivor accounts and perpetrator confessions of homicidal gassings that revisionists attempt to discredit in whatever way they can. With survivors, revisionists oftentimes intentionally try to confuse them, because with the exception of what happened to them, they remain largely uninformed about the events of the Holocaust. Because of their ignorance, it is common for survivors to misdate an event, or fall victim to rumors pertaining to aspects of