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Debunking the Claims of Revisionist Theory

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> The great masses of the people in the very bottom of their hearts tend to be corrupted rather than consciously and purposely evil, and that, therefore… more easily fall a victim to a big lie than to a little one... yes, even when enlightened on the subject, they will long doubt and waver... Therefore, something of even the most insolent lie will always remain and stick – a fact which all the great lie-virtuosi and lying-clubs in this world know only too well and also make the most treacherous use of (Hitler, 1939, Causes of the Collapse).

Though the genocide of European Jewry during the Nazi Holocaust is arguably one of the most well-known aspects of World War II, starting as early as the 1950s and '60s, Holocaust denial has existed in the United States (Lipstadt, 1993, 73). Accepting the fact that Jewish casualties were present, Holocaust revisionists argue that much of the Holocaust as taught in schools is exaggerated, such as the claim that six million Jewish citizens perished at the hands of the Nazis, there existed no systematic plan for Jewish annihilation, and gas chambers were not used for homicidal purposes (Shermer & Grobman, 2000, 40). Despite objection from historians and scholars however, revisionism continues due to the strategic use of, and value of, propaganda, as well as the large amount of anti-Semitism still present in today's society. Revisionists are also known to argue for the sake of argumentation, in order to elicit responses from historians and other Holocaust believers (Shermer & Grobman, 2000, 91-92). In addition, the majority of their arguments tend to be crude, oftentimes accompanied with traces of anti-Semitism, and lacking in any real proof, which, when looked at closely, discredits much of what they say (Lipstadt, 1993, 73).

Often described as a fringe group, revisionists have been known to offer inadequate proof for their claims, while demanding solid proof from historians who accept the Holocaust as fact (Lipstadt, 1993, 73). According to fringe movement scholars John George and Laird Wilcox, fringe groups, or extremists, often replace adequate proof with methods such as name calling, double standards, and generalizations, all while assuming superiority over others (as cited in Shermer &

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