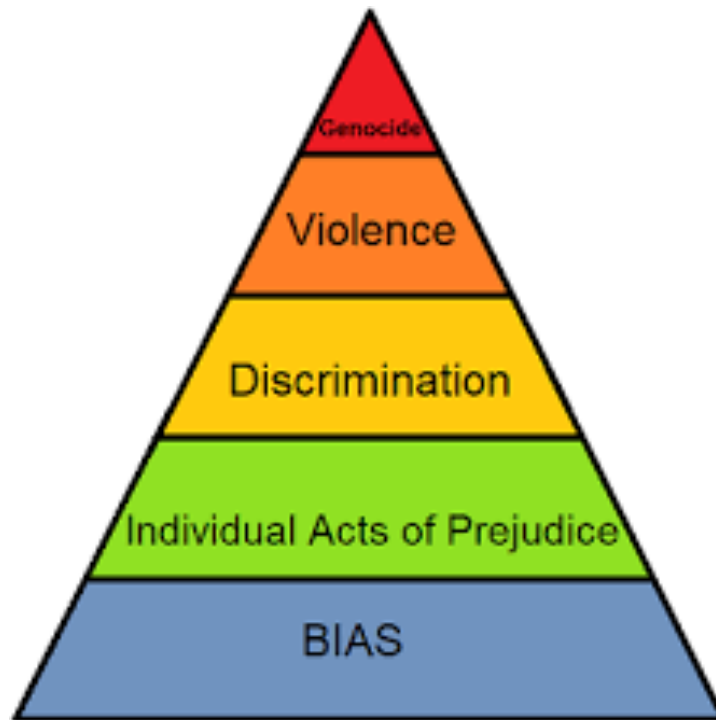


Pyramid of Hate



When we hear stories of the Holocaust, or other acts of genocide and violence, we wonder how people could do these things.

How did the German people ever allow the killing of millions of people?



None of these acts of genocide start out as a decision to exterminate people.

They are built on smaller acts of hate, sometimes seemingly meaningless bias or rudeness.

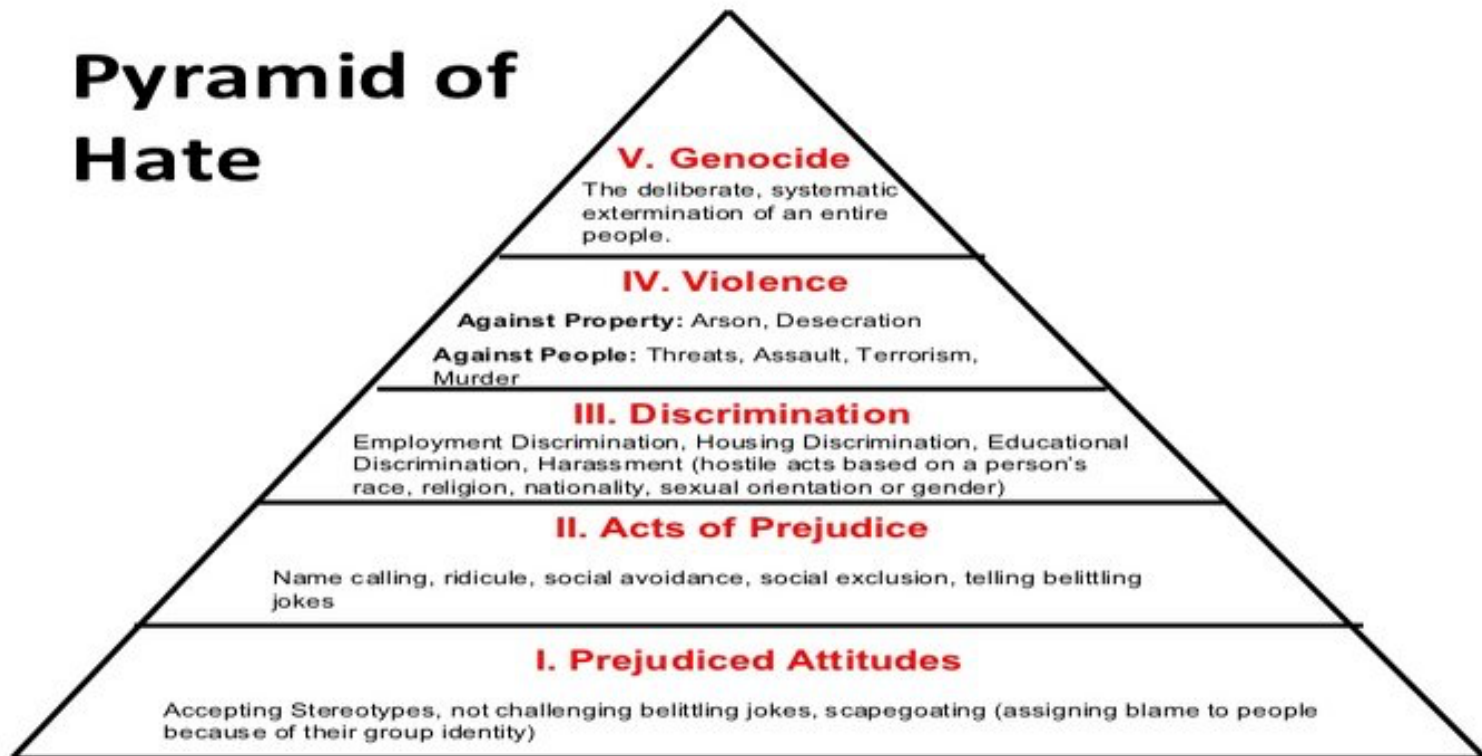
However, these acts lay the groundwork for greater and greater levels of hatred to grow into violence.

Please read through the information on the papers as a group.

Discuss anything you find interesting or surprising.

When you are done, we will put these events into a timeline.

Pyramid of Hate



Discuss:

Which parts of the pyramid primarily are acts by individuals?

Did the events on this pyramid always follow an upward progression or were there instances when the actions would represent an earlier segment of the pyramid? (e.g. violent acts followed by acts of discrimination and then back to violent acts again.) What are some possible explanations for why this might have happened.

How was the Kristallnacht Pogrom an escalation of Anti-Jewish acts?

What does the Pyramid of Hate model explain about Nazi anti-Jewish attitudes and policies, and their development?

What other factors should also be considered? (e.g. antisemitism)

Which parts of the pyramid reflect state-sponsored acts that need government support to continue?

Read this quote by Reverend Martin Niemoller, a German minister who was sent to the camps for his outspoken criticism of the Nazis:

“In Germany, the Nazis came for the Communists, and I didn’t speak up because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the Jews and I didn’t speak up because I was not a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn’t speak up because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn’t speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me... and by that time there was no one left to speak up.”

Answer these questions:

1. Why do you think many people did not “speak up” when Hitler’s government began its persecution of various groups in Germany?
2. Why do you think it was difficult to oppose the government’s actions?
3. At what point in the escalation of anti-Jewish policies in Nazi Germany did non-Jews have a responsibility to interrupt what they saw happening? What actions could they have taken?
4. Do you think it is difficult for individuals to do these kinds of things? Why or why not?
5. What is the cost to the individual who does not act to interrupt injustice? What is the harm to the victims? What is the harm to society as a whole?
6. Thinking about the key events that you have learned about in this lesson, what, in your opinion, is the power of peer pressure?

Desecrating or destroying places of worship is an all-too common form of violence in both historical and contemporary times—in the United States, the bombing of Atlanta’s oldest synagogue in the late 1950s, burning down African-American churches across the South in the mid-1990s, and vandalizing mosques in the Midwest following 9/11—are but a few examples.

Discuss:

Why are houses of worship so often targets of hate?

Dr. Seuss, born Theodor Seuss Geisel, drew nearly 400 political cartoons for the New York daily newspaper *PM* between January 1941 and January 1943. In the cartoons, he expressed his support for the war against Hitler while criticizing the slow-to-act American political bureaucracy and organizations/politicians that were opposed to the war.

Go online to <https://www.brainpickings.org/2012/08/10/dr-seusss-wartime-propaganda-cartoons/>

Answer these questions:

1. What was the artist's point of view or purpose in creating the cartoon?
2. Analyze both the message and the medium; and comment on the overall effectiveness of the cartoon.