



## Death of Medicine in Nazi Germany

*By Wolfgang Weyers*



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Only one generation ago, the world watched as highly trained physicians abandoned medical ethics in response to the Nazi regime. Weyers' book takes an in-depth look at the circumstances which allowed this to happen and the steps necessary to ensure such genocide never happens again.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Has Hippocrates' injunction to physicians to "do no harm" ever been so betrayed as in Nazi Germany? The evidence of that betrayal and its tragic social, moral and physical consequences, particularly on Jews and Jewish physicians, is presented with erudition and passion in this history from Weyers, codirector of the Center for Dermatopathology in Freiburg. To examine the "death of medicine" under the Nazis, Weyers uses his particular expertise to focus on the fate of dermatologists and dermatopathologists, many of them Jews, in Germany and German-occupied lands. He begins with a sophisticated overview of anti-Semitism from early Christian days through the Weimar Republic and Hitler's ascent to power. He then delves into the decimation by the Nazis of Jews from medical fields, dermatology in particular, and the acquiescence of many German physicians to Nazism and the atrocities it spawned. Weyers's grasp of political-social currents is strong, but what gives his book its particular power is his tracing of history primarily through the fates of individuals. As one example among many, the fate of George Groscurth, lecturer in internal medicine at the Moabit Hospital in Berlin, who formed a resistance group only to be arrested by the Gestapo in 1943; Weyers reprints Groscurth's farewell letter to his wife, written half an hour before his execution. Touches like these, plus a stunning array of 392 b&w photos and illustrations, many gruesome but all essential, give Weyers's study a deeply human face. Impeccably researched and clearly written, Weyers's book, worthy of a wide readership, will compel all who encounter it to echo the author's question: "Where would we stand? Where would I stand? If exposed to pressure and control like that exerted by the Nazis?"  
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