

THE PATTERN OF HATE

Identify the group of victims

Know whom to hate. It is easy if the targets are visually identifiable by skin color, dress, habits or behavior, or by some other means. If it is not that simple, force them to wear a special badge, such as the Jewish star, or carry special identification cards. At the same time, the group should be segregated and isolated. This allows all members of the group to be treated in the same cruel way, without regard for individual differences.

Dehumanize the victims

It is far easier to prompt yourself and others to be cruel toward victims if the victim group is first portrayed as subnormal or even subhuman. The perpetrators want to believe that they themselves do not deserve the same sort of treatment as the victim because **they** are superior while the victims are inferior (look for evidence of such patterns in the museum exhibits).

Deprive the victims of some key rights

Isolate them in some way; deny them the right to live in certain areas; to hold certain jobs or professions; to belong to certain organizations or clubs; to hold certain forms of property – or even any property at all! This helps to dehumanize them and demonstrates the ways the victims are **different**.

CONTROL

The media: With control of the media, it becomes possible to falsify or distort written or spoken materials, even the news, so that the victims can be portrayed as subnormal or “deserving” of the ill treatment they are to receive. This is a continuation of the dehumanization process. When carried out systematically we might call it propaganda or even a form of brainwashing. Remember that Hitler had a propaganda minister, a master of disinformation.

The judiciary: Before making it possible to mistreat selected groups of people it is usually first necessary to have a legal system that will not upset

the malevolent plan. This might come about either through original incompetence of the legal system or by effective, often forceful, change so that the victims' rights disappear.

The government: Governments can be and have been controlled to make racial discrimination, even slavery, possible. With majority consent even a democracy can be guilty of discrimination. With support and/or participation of the military, government control becomes overpowering and resistance from persons who do not succumb to hatred may be silenced through **fear**, a principle weapon of the haters.

The resistance: Some people of conscience will always stand up against the inhuman treatment of our fellow human beings. But those who hate will bring the force of raw fear to bear on them to overcome their resistance. They may be portrayed by **propaganda** as fools or even traitors. At the same time, a form of **mob mania** can occur when swarms of people are encouraged to visibly and vocally endorse the message of hatred (e.g. public rallies). It takes extreme courage to disagree with a strong appeal toward hatred especially when terror and fear are used along with an appeal to "patriotism" or "group loyalty."

THE RESULT

Once all these steps have been taken, a specific identifiable group will have been singled out and the public given a despicable—though untrue—image of them as the "enemy." They will in some way be isolated and defenseless, and the haters can then work their will against any or all of them. At that point the entire population is at the haters' mercy.

It is hoped this outline affords rich opportunities for vigorous classroom discussion. Please share your comments and suggestions with us.

(compiled by the New Mexico Holocaust Museum and Gellert Center for Education)

