

## What was the SS?<sup>1</sup>

The **Schutzstaffel (SS)**; also stylized as *ᚱᚱ* with Armanen runes; German pronunciation: [ˈʃʊtsˌʃtafəl] ⓘ<sup>ⓘ</sup> listen); "Protection Squadron") was a major paramilitary organization under Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party in Nazi Germany, and later throughout German-occupied Europe during World War II.

It began with a small guard unit known as the *Saal-Schutz* ("Hall Security") made up of party volunteers to provide security for party meetings in Munich. In 1925, Heinrich Himmler joined the unit, which had by then been reformed and given its final name. Under his direction (1929–1945) it grew from a small paramilitary formation during the Weimar Republic to one of the most powerful organizations in Nazi Germany. From the time of the Nazi Party's rise to power until the regime's collapse in 1945, the SS was the foremost agency of security, mass surveillance, and state terrorism within Germany and German-occupied Europe.

The two main constituent groups were the *Allgemeine SS* (General SS) and *Waffen-SS* (Armed SS). The *Allgemeine SS* was responsible for enforcing the racial policy of Nazi Germany and general policing, whereas the *Waffen-SS* consisted of the combat units of the SS, with a sworn allegiance to Hitler. A third component of the SS, the *SS-Totenkopfverbände (SS-TV; "Death's Head Units"*<sup>[2]</sup>), ran the concentration camps and extermination camps. Additional subdivisions of the SS included the Gestapo and the *Sicherheitsdienst (SD)* organizations. They were tasked with the detection of actual or potential enemies of the Nazi state, the neutralization of any opposition, policing the German people for their commitment to Nazi ideology, and providing domestic and foreign intelligence.

The SS was the organization most responsible for the genocidal murder of an estimated 5.5 to 6 million Jews and millions of other victims during the Holocaust.<sup>[3]</sup> Members of all of its branches committed war crimes and crimes against humanity during World War II (1939–45). The SS was also involved in commercial enterprises and exploited concentration camp inmates as slave labor. After Nazi Germany's defeat, the SS and the Nazi Party were judged by the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg to be criminal organizations. Ernst Kaltenbrunner, the highest-ranking surviving SS main department chief, was found guilty of crimes against humanity at the Nuremberg trials and hanged in 1946.

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<sup>1</sup> From the Wikipedia

## The Schutzstaffel (The SS)

One of the big surprises in this research, and one of the key pieces in the puzzle involved the Schutzstaffel, the SS. The SS was the organization most responsible for the genocidal murder of an estimated 5.5 to 6 million Jews and millions of other victims during the Holocaust. It is popular belief that the SS was constituted of a group of uneducated thugs. Thugs perhaps, but not uneducated.

- In 1933, when Hitler took power, 40% of the psychiatrists in Germany were members of the SS.
- The level of education in the SS was far superior to that of the German public in general.

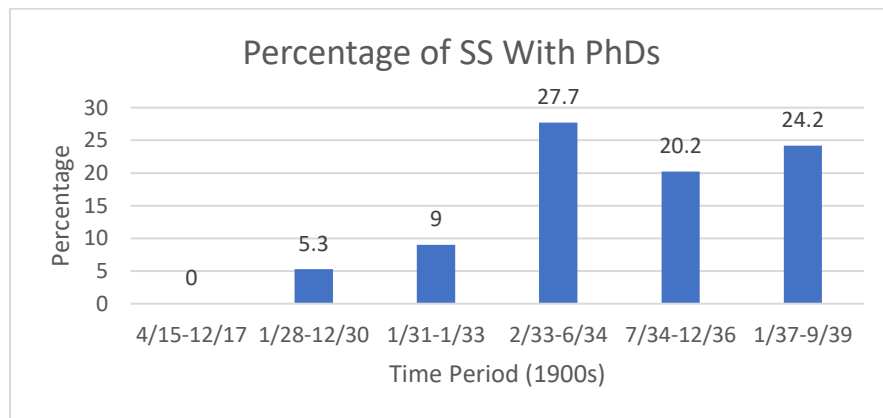


Figure 1 – Percentage of SS Members With PhDs

While it is true that the SS troops that did the “grunt” work (mostly NCOs), the actual operation of the killing camps, were *relatively* poorly educated, the SS was run by the intellectual elite of Germany.

It should not be missed that in the period immediately following Hitler's ascension to power, the education level in the SS nearly tripled. These numbers are even more surprising considering the rapid growth of SS membership in the same period.

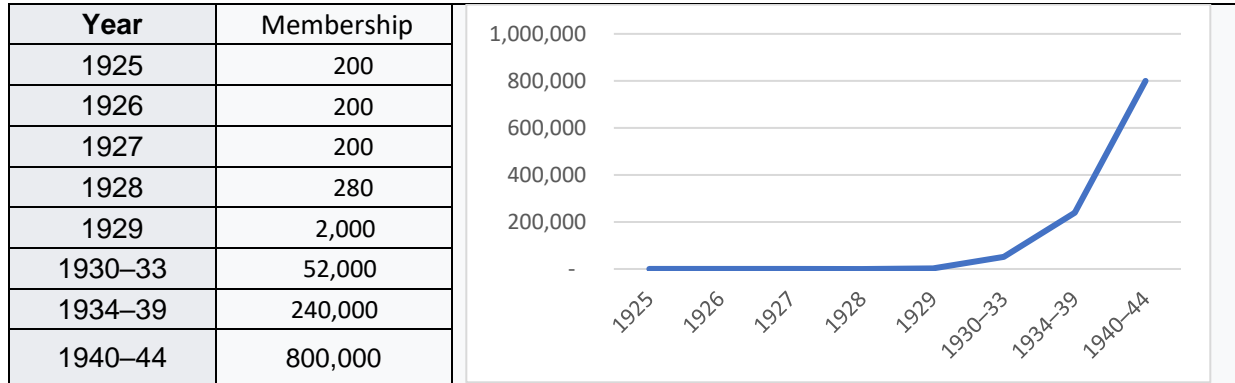


Figure 2 - SS Membership

Combining these two sets of figures, we see that:

- In 1933 we have approximately 5,000 PhDs in the SS
- In 1940 we have approximately 60,000 PhDs in the SS
- By the end of the war, we have close to a quarter million PhDs in the SS.

So, while it is attractive to think of the SS as a bunch of ignorant goons, instead we find a highly educated, well trained membership with the mission of enforcing the "ethnic hygiene" rules.