

reprehensible acts (if these are considered reprehensible)? And how far does the stain extend? To people who cite the tainted the work? To the funders of such work?

Such questions are by no means limited to medicine. Similar quandaries confront the reflective reader of Martin Heidegger, the Nazi rector of the University of Freiburg, who celebrated the "inner truth and greatness of Nazism" while purifying that university of Jews;⁶⁷ or Paul de Man, the literary theorist who authored pro-Nazi Belgian tracts prior to becoming the dean of American deconstructionists. But what about the anarchic Paul Feyerabend, who spent 1943 and 1944 as an officer of the German army on the eastern front but recalls that period in his autobiography as a kind of fog,⁶⁸ or Karl H. Bauer, who enjoyed postwar success as chief of Germany's National Cancer Institute, despite having enthusiastically supported the Nazi Sterilization Law? The question is easier asked than answered, once we broaden the inquiry: does Plato's defense of slavery blacken the elegance of his ethics and aesthetics? Is Jefferson the statesman diminished by Jefferson the slave-owner?

In the Pernkopf case, most commentators agree that it was wrong to have ignored the origins of the victims, and that steps must be taken to find out who they were. The forgetfulness we find with regard to Nazi-era cancer research raises different issues, but is also similar in certain respects. The Nazi war on cancer has been ignored because we do not seem to be comfortable with the idea that people with rotten ethical ideals could have been "ahead of their time" in the spheres of medicine and public health. The more comfortable image seems to be a sweeping chiaroscuro: if Nazism is the absolute embodiment of evil, we need not look at the disturbing links to what came before or after. We need not dwell on Hitler's vegetarianism, or campaigns to ban food dyes, or struggles against tobacco, radiation, and asbestos that were at least partly inspired by Nazi ideology.

Nazi medicine is rightfully remembered for its murderous legacy—but that is only part of the story and, if taken for the whole, distorts our understanding. Not because the crimes have been exaggerated—that would be difficult—but rather because there is a

danger of our failing to understand the origins and appeal of German fascism. We have to understand the fertility of fascism and not just its cruelty. Nazism has to be seen as more than a demonic caricature, a straw man fabricated to efface the links to other times and places. It is not very pleasant to think about American doctors debating the gassing of their mental patients,⁶⁹ or the fact that Josef Mengele has a paper listed in the *Index Medicus*,⁷⁰ or that Nazi doctors looked to America to defend their policies of racial sterilization, racial segregation, and abusive experimentation. We need to challenge the comfortable notion that Nazi Germany was unique and defies comparison. The threads stretch before 1933 and after 1945, east into the communist block and Asia, and west into the rest of Europe and the Americas.

THE FLIP SIDE OF FASCISM

By focusing on Nazi efforts in the area of public health, my goal has not been to fabricate banalities (that "good can come from evil," for example), or to rescue the honor of this era. My point is not to deflect attention from well-documented atrocities, or to "put Hitler behind us," as James Watson has urged (to get the biotechnology ball rolling in the Federal Republic of Germany).⁷¹ My intention is not to argue that today's antitobacco efforts have fascist roots, or that public health measures are in principle totalitarian—as some libertarians seem to want us to believe.⁷²

My point is rather to show that the Nazification of German science and medicine was more complex than is commonly imagined. The history of science under Nazism is a history of both forcible sterilization and herbal medicine, of both genocidal "selection" and bans on public smoking. We do not want to forget Mengele's crimes, but we should also not forget that Dachau prisoners were forced to produce organic honey and that the SS cornered the European market in mineral water. Both elements—the monstrous and the prosaic—are key.

I do not believe, per Horkheimer and Adorno, that there is an inherently authoritarian tendency in modern science or an