



**GOEBBELS:**  
PHILANDERER

**HITLER:**  
HYPOCHONDRIAC

**GOERING:**  
DRUG ADDICT

**HIMMLER:**  
SEVERE HEALTH PROBLEMS

**HESS:**  
PARANOID SCHIZOPHRENIC

# THE SECRET LIVES OF THE NAZIS

# A look behind the closed doors of the Third Reich

Hosted by Guy Walters, historian

“We like to think that we know a lot about those who led the Nazi regime. As someone who has broadcast and written extensively about the Third Reich for over two decades, I assume that I know the personalities of Hitler, Himmler and Goebbels etc. But we really only know the public faces of these men – the sides that they presented to the world.

That needs to be corrected.

I want to examine the secret lives of Nazi leaders, and to get to know them as fully-rounded human beings, and not just to know them by their actions, or indeed to regard them as two-dimensional monsters.

To do that, I need to look deeply into their most private lives. I want to find out what these men were like as husbands, lovers, parents, and patients. I want to see their frailties and fears, and their clandestine vices – be it alcoholism, sexual infidelity, drug addiction, or gluttony.

By looking at newly-released archival material such as letters, photos, home movies, and even prescriptions, and combined with interviews with surviving children and relatives, the *Secret Lives of the Nazis* will finally lift the lid on who these terrible men really were.”

## About Guy Walters

Guy has been a historian, journalist, broadcaster, TV presenter and contributor for twenty-five years.

The author of ten books, a former Times journalist, and a regular feature writer for the Daily Mail, Guy's most recent TV series was presenting Nazi Victory for Yesterday, and he has contributed extensively to series such as Nazi Hunters, World War Weird, Forbidden History, Royal Murder Mysteries, The Great War in Numbers, Raiders of the Lost Past, and What on Earth.

His books on the Nazi period have been translated into at least twelve languages, and have covered topics such as Nazi hunting, the 1936 Berlin Olympics, the real story of the Great Escape, the occupation of the Channel Islands, and British members of the Waffen-SS.

[His showreel can be seen here](#)





## A unique visual approach

From his 'incident room' Guy collates the evidence and on a series of large screens charts out the secret lives of each subject. He'll invite experts in to help review evidence and then head out on the road to follow leads and meet the people who can help him look behind the facades.

Some of his investigations lead him directly into the stills and archive itself. We will use several visual techniques in order to take Guy into the world our subjects inhabited. At key points in the narrative we will use 2D photogrammetry techniques to place Guy within the still images, creating a 3D effect within each. Used sparingly, he'll sit in Hitler's chair at the Berghof, beside him on the terrace or in his office at the Chancellery. He'll explain Magda Goebbels fetishes whilst sitting beside her bath. We'll colorize the black and white images and bring them all to life by adding Cinemagraph moving elements, real physical props and sound effects.

Within the moving archive Guy will be able to walk and talk as the camera pans across scenes shot in the 1940's. He'll be able to walk out of the archive and into the present day using motion capture techniques.



## THE SERIES

Guy gathers together a whole range of archival material, such as letters, diaries, prescriptions, photo albums and home movies. Just like a law enforcement incident room, accomplices, party allegiances and notorious events are linked together to help get to the truth. He will also rely on a team of experts, including psychiatrists, doctors, relationship counsellors and others, who will help to draw up compelling profiles of what these men were really like in secret, and to establish how their inner lives drove their public lives. As his investigation hits the road he'll explore what remains of the places they lived and he'll track down and talk with those who knew these men, or were indeed brought up by them.

In each episode the subjects will be examined by looking at the following:

- **childhood**
- **psychological profile**
- **physical health**
- **sexuality and relationships**
- **domestic life**



## Episode One – Adolf Hitler

The series will open by examining the secret life of the Führer himself. While he tried to present a public face of temperance and asceticism, Hitler's secret life was anything but. A **hypochondriac**, Hitler was constantly worried about his health, and he was prescribed so many drugs, including cocaine and methamphetamine, that he effectively became a **drug addict**. This was partly a product of his **severe narcissistic personality disorder**, which made him utterly self-obsessional, and incapable of forming close attachments, especially with women. The nature of his **sexual relationships** with those such as his half-niece, Geli Raubal, and the woman who would become as his wife, Eva Braun, have long been debated, and it seems likely that he was largely celibate, with unconfirmed rumours that he had a **tiny, malformed penis**. Towards the end of his life, Hitler's health certainly did deteriorate, and it is likely that he was suffering from **Parkinson's Disease** during the last days in the bunker.



Himmler, the family man

## Episode Two – Heinrich Himmler

As head of the Waffen-SS, Heinrich Himmler fetishised the whole notion of Aryan 'supermen', supposedly perfect physical specimens who would act at the Third Reich's warrior class, and breeding a race of similarly 'perfect' humans. However, in his secret life, Himmler himself was very far removed from such an ideal. His health was largely poor, and he suffered from **severe stomach complaints** all his life, which were partly alleviated by a masseur called Felix Kersten, who would use his influence with Himmler to save people from concentration camps. As a teenager and well into his twenties, Himmler also suffered from a severe crisis of **masculinity**, during which he struggled to come to terms with what his role as man should be, and which worsened his refusal to come to terms with the fact that he had narrowly missed out serving in the First World War. Although he supposedly had a happy marriage and was on the surface a devoted family man, **writing sweetly paternal letters to his daughter as he toured extermination camps**, in reality, Himmler had a mistress by whom he fathered illegitimate children.



Goebbels with his Mistress Lida Baarova (1914-2000)



### Episode Three – Josef Goebbels

The Reich propaganda minister famously had a **deformed right foot**, which naturally meant that he was unable to fight in the First World War. Corrective surgery had failed, which meant that one leg would grow shorter, and he walked with a defined limp. The psychological effect of such a disability meant that Goebbels would constantly **try to prove himself intellectually**, and there was a masochistic element to his personality that saw him assume that people were always thinking the worst of him. Despite this, Goebbels was a **philanderer**, and would regularly cheat on his wife Magda with a succession of actresses and starlets. He would be extremely sentimental about these women, and would even keep a lock of hair from one of them for the rest of his life. Hitler strongly disapproved of Goebbels's cheating, and stopped him getting a divorce as it would look publicly bad. However, in private, the Goebbels's marriage was essentially a **ménage a trois**, as Hitler and Magda were in love – although it was a love that was unconsummated. Goebbels loathed Hitler's closeness to his wife, but tolerated it, as it gave him access to the Führer that very few others enjoyed.





Eichmann and his son Horst, 1942



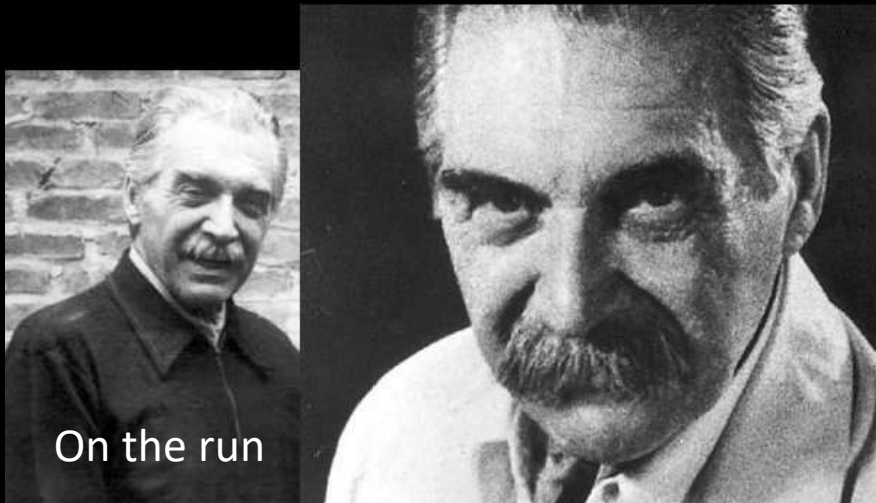
With his wife Veronika

#### Episode Four – Adolf Eichmann

The character and secret life of Adolf Eichmann are among the most understood of all the notorious characters of the the Third Reich. Thanks to the philosopher Hannah Arendt, who attended Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem, Eichmann has long been regarded as a 'banal' bureaucrat, a conscientious civil-servant type, who followed his orders as a desk murderer unflinchingly. In truth, Eichmann was a rabid Nazi, who suffered from acute **neuroticism**, and was eager to destroy the Jews. As the war continued, the man who would be seen as the 'architect of the Holocaust' turned to the bottle, and he became an **alcoholic**. Another defining characteristic of Eichmann was that he was **friendless**, and he would remain so even when he was living in hiding in Argentina after the war. A **strict disciplinarian with his sons**, Eichmann once beat one of his sons before he went on the run, simply to teach him 'German discipline'. While he was held by the Israelis in Jerusalem, Eichmann underwent several **psychiatric evaluations** of varying quality, and, as one academic paper concluded, 'even experts of the mind could never be certain whether Eichmann was putting on an act in order to mislead primarily himself or those around him'.



Mengele's doodles



On the run

### Episode Five – Josef Mengele

In this episode, the secret life of Mengele can be examined while he was at the height of his power in Auschwitz, and then at his lowest, when he was hiding in various countries in South America. A **workaholic**, Mengele was also extremely **controlling** of those around him, and demanded obedience from his wife, children and colleagues. Although he was to commit some of the worst and most horrific crimes imaginable when he experimented on children, there is **nothing that indicates that Mengele was in any way insane**. Instead Mengele operated in an environment which provided an inverted morality that told him he was doing the right thing for humanity, and it was a morality he was to maintain throughout his life. His controlling nature would get worse when in hiding, and he would also suffer from crippling anxiety, that saw him chew the ends of his moustache so frequently, that he once got a **hairball that had to be surgically removed**. His post-war diaries reveal him to be vain, conceited and with a monstrous ego that insisted he was innocent.

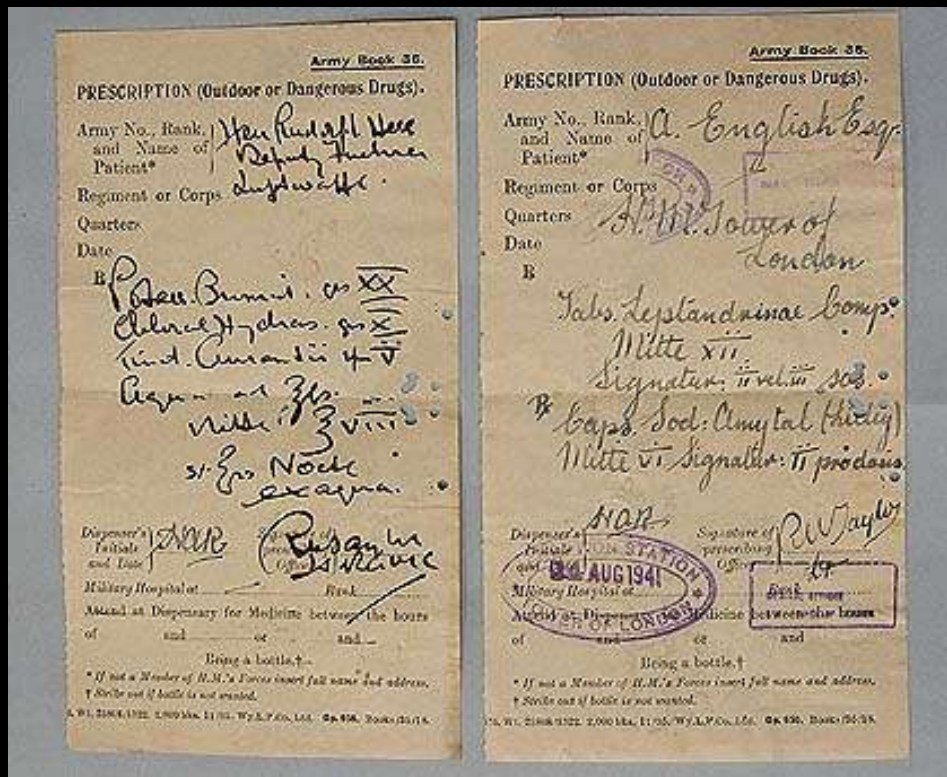


### Episode Six – Hermann Goering

Famously, Goering was enormously fat, public proof that the head of the Luftwaffe was extremely greedy in private. A **glutton**, Goering did not just consume vast quantities of food, but he also consumed nearly everything he came into contact with – especially fine art and property. That greed was rooted in the fact that Goering always felt that he was one of life's aristocrats and that he deserved the best, despite the fact that his relatively comfortable childhood was largely because of the munificence of his Jewish godfather, who had provided his family with a home. Wounded in the Beer Hall Putsch, Goering would develop an **addiction to morphine** that would last all the way through to the Nuremberg trial – in essence, he was a heroin addict. A **widower**, Goering would always dwell on his late first wife, and name both a house and a boat after her. He would revel in his role as a Nazi 'celebrity', and his **enormous ego** would make him a laughing stock among his colleagues, and – in private – many citizens of the Third Reich.



Restored boat named after his wife Carin



Sedative prescriptions for Hess

## Episode Seven – Rudolf Hess

Undoubtedly the most manifestly unhinged member of the Nazi leadership, Hess was utterly **obsessed with his health**, and, like Hitler, was a **hypochondriac**. He was also guided by **quackery such as clairvoyance and astrology**, and by the time he was imprisoned after the Nuremberg trial, he descended into **paranoia and schizophrenia**. Of course, the greatest enigma about Hess is the reason behind his ill-fated flight to Britain, and this episode will carefully examine his mental state before he flew, and try to establish whether conspiracy lay behind the flight, or simply some form of madness. When he was imprisoned in Spandau after the war, the only secret life that Hess would enjoy would be inside his mind, and whatever lay there would lead him to **suicide**.



Heydrich with wife Lina and their daughter

### Episode Eight – Reinhard Heydrich

As head of the Reich Security Main Office and the governor of Bohemia and Moravia, Heydrich was one of the most powerful and feared men in the Third Reich. His cold, haughty exterior was in fact a good reflection of his private self – which was **ruthless**, fiercely **competitive**, and extremely **industrious**. ‘He never wasted a minute of his time,’ his widow would write after the war. ‘Every minute had to have its aim and purpose.’ Cashiered out of the German Navy for breaking off an engagement in an ungentlemanly fashion, Heydrich would always have ‘women trouble’, and often had affairs and **frequented brothels**, one of which was established by his own department in Berlin to spy on his colleagues and visiting VIPs. Rumours that he was partly Jewish would dog him until his assassination, and like Eichmann, he seemed incapable of forming friendships. His only ‘human’ side, appeared to be his **musicality**, and he would spend hours playing the violin – a sensitive activity for a man who destroyed so many.